

**A Critical Review of Mentorship Policies and Their Impact on Disruptive Behaviours
in Selected Schools in Informal Settlements in Nairobi County, Kenya**

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Abstract

The study aimed to critically review mentorship policies on disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in informal setups in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study found that although there was a mentorship policy provided by the Ministry of Education in Kenya, only 18.8% of the schools under the study had the government policy document. Findings indicated that peer mentorship programmes existed rudimentary, with limited time allocation. The Heads of Departments had a full teaching load, and no time to properly coordinate peer mentorship activities. There is a need to continuously update and disseminate government mentorship policies to all secondary schools' education stakeholders to fast-track its implementation. The study has important implications for policy and practice in Kenya's education sector, highlights the need for the government to provide adequate support and resources for the implementation of mentorship policies and programmes in these schools to address student misbehaviour and improve learning outcomes.

Key words: Policy, Disruptive Behaviour; Peer mentorship

1. Introduction

In the Republic of Kenya's Vision 2030 report (2018), the Government pledged to introduce mentoring, along with other strategies such as guidance and counselling, to ensure the well-being of students in all Kenyan schools. It has also been observed that students tend to share personal issues with peers instead of adults (Gordon et al., 2013). The Ministry of Education's Sessional Paper No. 1 (Republic of Kenya, 2019c) highlights that young people face challenges such as sexuality, peer pressure, drug and substance abuse, harmful traditional practices, and negative media influences, emphasizing the need for mentorship in learning institutions. However, the paper notes that the delivery of mentorship in these institutions is not comprehensive or coherent, and there is a need to investigate gaps in the peer mentorship policy to address disruptive behaviours in secondary schools.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify policy gaps in peer mentorship and provide valuable information to policymakers in the Ministry of Education to facilitate the implementation of the mentorship policy in learning institutions.

1.2 Objective

The objective of this study was to explore gaps in mentorship policies concerning disruptive behaviours in selected secondary schools situated in informal settlements in Nairobi County.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Ryan's Self-Determination theory (2017), which proposes that individuals are driven by three fundamental elements - competence, connection, and autonomy - that motivate them to change. The theory posits that people become self-determined when their need for competence, connection, and autonomy is satisfied. Therefore, it is crucial for mentees to internalize the values, working methods, and behaviour change guidelines provided by peer mentors, and this process can be reinforced by a mentorship policy and program that outlines the framework for how things should be done (Vansteenkiste et al., 2018).

2. Literature Review

Compared to those in formal setups, schools in informal settlements in Kenya encounter particular difficulties that may have an impact on students' learning and behaviour. Especially of concern is

the rise in student misbehaviour and involvement in disruptive activities that negatively affect the learning process in secondary schools. Having policies in place to enforce the strategies being employed by different stakeholders to address distractive behaviours, with clear implementation frameworks, would contribute in the reduction of the negative influence to learners in schools.

2.1 Global policies underpinning the wellbeing of learners

For the purpose of simplifying governance within institutions, policy is typically an intention, a set of guidelines, and a set of values. It is crucial for schools to have implementable policies because they serve as a connecting thread between the administration of the school, the faculty, the students, the parents, and the legal system. Policies are crucial because they enable a school to establish procedures, expectations, and standards of excellence for learning and safety

Policy makers alongside parents and other key stakeholders are all interested in the positive development of youth both in school and out-of-school (Lerner, 2018). To ensure this development is happening, a number of strategies are being tried across the world to ensure the wellbeing of the learners. A research conducted on trends on age of smoking initiation in the Netherlands indicated that in the 20th century, tobacco smoking caused the early deaths of 100 million people worldwide (Nuyts et al., 2022). Because tobacco use has been migrating from the developed to the developing world since the 1960s and 1970s, there is a strong likelihood that there will be a significant rise in the number of premature deaths in the twenty-first century. Following this worrying trend, the European countries came up with a smoke-free school policy (Schreuders, 2020). They argue that if the policy is rolled out in schools beginning with children at an early age, the vice can be checked since the children spend most of their time in school. The effectiveness of smoking free school policies can be increased by ensuring that they are implemented properly and that they are integrated into ongoing cycles of monitoring and adaptation. This will enable schools to proactively address the cognitive and behavioural responses that result in unfavourable or undesirable outcomes.

According to the public health in the United States, infections caused by sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancies are the two main issues that need to be addressed (Rabbitte & Enriquez, 2019). While refraining from sexual activity is the best course of action to prevent these issues, abstinence-only education (AOE) programs in schools have been shown to be ineffective in postponing sexual initiation or reducing the teen pregnancy rate. On the other hand, comprehensive sex education (CSE) programs have shown to be effective in reducing teen pregnancies and delaying the initiation of sex.

However, according to Sprague, R. & Walker, M., (2022), a uniform approach may not work well with all students. To succeed, students who exhibit persistent problem behaviours need extra help or assistance that is highly individualized and focused. The magnitude and complexity of the behavioural issue determine the level of support's intensity. Counsellors, special educators, school psychologists, and even mentors from the school may be needed to assist with some students' interventions.

In a study conducted in the United Kingdom (UK) on parenting programmes to address disruptive behaviours among children, it indicated that disruptive behaviour was a problem that was taking toll on families and if not adequately addressed, it increased the risk of drug use, criminality, unemployment and poor (mental) health later in life (Gardner et al., 2017). The study went on to explain that addressing disruptive behaviours was increasingly becoming expensive for the government. It also posed a social risk to the individuals who were perpetrators of disruptive

behaviours. Therefore, arresting the situation at early stages was more advantageous than at later stages in life. In addition, a different study conducted in the UK, on the teachers' perception on disruptive behaviour in schools, it stated that for most troubled learners, effective behaviour control at school called for a fostering, and collective approach together with current corrective policy being put in place (Nash et al., 2016).

In the Australian state of New South Wales, there is a policy that students who engage in disruptive behaviours are put in separate 'behaviour' schools as a way of inculcating in them correct behaviours. However, this has led to some of the children disliking school at a very early age. The findings of a study of the students in the separate behaviour schools indicate clearly that separate special educational settings are not a solution to disruptive behaviour in mainstream schools (Graham et al., 2016). A majority of the students wanted to return to the mainstream schools to learn with the rest of their peers. Hence, separation of learners in line with the behaviours they present is not in itself effective. There is need to explore other strategies of dealing with the vice and have policies that practically provide guidelines on how to address this problem that remains a challenge to education stakeholders and more so, the teachers (Moore et al., 2019).

Non-parental support is considered crucial as a growth intervention for adolescents because they are likely to drift away from parents for guidance. Youth mentoring – mentoring given to teenagers by adults who aren't their parents or more experienced peers – is a successful strategy for assisting them in navigating their transitional period and developing holistic competencies. Research has shown that, when done well, youth mentoring has a positive impact on adolescents' social, emotional, behavioural, and academic outcomes (Chan & Luo, 2022). Mentorship is being embraced across the globe as an approach that can be used for behaviour change and attain some desired results. It would, therefore, be important to also understand the global policies that are in place on which mentorship is embedded. One such policy is *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* of 1989 which emphasizes the protection of children from harm, and the delivery of services necessary for the enjoyment and the guarantee of the fundamental rights of the child. This implies that whatever affects a child, at whatever level, is of global importance.

The Sustainable Development Goals (*SDG*) 4: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all* stipulates the need to “*build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.*”

This means that safety of all in schools is important to attaining learning outcomes. This explains why there is a global concern to address disruptive behaviours in learning institutions and there are many scholars conducting different studies to provide tried and tested approaches that can be adopted. The COVID pandemic and the war, for instance in Ukraine, have been a major setback in the realisation of this goal (United Nations, 2022). During 74 World Assembly and OMEP International Conference on Children's Rights, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that due to COVID-19, a staggering 66% of countries reported a disruption in services to address violence against children. Even with global policies in place, matters of ensuring that the wellbeing of children is taken care of remains a challenge. As the schools reopened, the stress, emotional and psychological destabilisation of the children needed to have been dealt with but this was not the case. Hence, the many cases of disruptive behaviours that have been experienced in the recent past in learning institutions in countries such as Kenya (Bundi, M. J.; Mugwe, M.; Ochieng,

P.; Reche, 2020; Ochola, 2020) may be a projection of the strain that the children have gone through.

2.2 Policies in the education sector in Kenya

There are a number of policies in Kenya that have been developed to foster learning and the wellbeing of the learners in schools. If the different policies that have been developed can be implemented effectively, significant change can be realised in the learning sector. Vision 2030, for instance, among its recommendations, was to introduce a guidance, counselling, moulding and mentoring policy to all Kenyan schools as part of the curriculum review and reform (Republic of Kenya, 2018). This was to help support the students in addressing some of the disruptive behaviours students engage in either out of peer influence, stress or coping with the developmental complexities (Republic of Kenya, 2019c). Setting policies is a big step forward; however, it is in the implementation that change occurs. The Ministry of Education came up with Kenya's 2017 basic education curriculum framework (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2019). The policy states the need to have mentorship programs to support the learners in their growth and development alongside the academic curriculum that has been ongoing. According to the policy, this is one way to ensure that the learners leave school when they are all-rounded and have the required skills to navigate through challenges in life.

In addition, the Ministry of Education Sessional Paper No.1 of 2019 on a policy framework for reforming education, training and research, outlines some factors that are hampering the attainment of secondary education. The factors identified include insecurity and inhibitive cultural practices (Ministry of Education, 2019b). To address these challenges, policy-makers and findings from studies have given recommendations that include having school chaplains and mentoring programmes in place. This is to ensure that the learners are well equipped not just with book knowledge, but also with skills to enable them make informed life choices in school and outside school. The Mentorship policy for Early and Basic Education in its rationale indicates that different types of mentorship are needed by students in Early Learning and Basic Education institutions. This is demonstrated by the problems that some students exhibit, such as bullying, radicalization, risky sexual behaviour, psychological disturbances, substance abuse, poor nutrition and health, poor goal-setting and psychological disturbances (Education, 2019a). This policy recognises that effective mentorship services must be implemented and sustained with the help of stronger partnerships and connections with various stakeholders. It also acknowledges the crucial role that partners have played in cooperative efforts. In order to pool resources and create synergy in the implementation of the mentorship programmes, there will be need to collaborate with and involve all levels of Basic Education institutions, line ministries and departments, County governments, civil societies, Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), alumni associations, the private sector, and development partners.

In the recent past in Kenya, learning institutions and religious institutions have been involved in coming up with strategies to such as rallies, symposiums and even youth camps where they are teach the youth on good values and exposed to role models to emulate. According to Mathai, (2022), in order to address the issues of drug and substance abuse, schools adopt a variety of solutions; they include providing after-school programs, incorporating life skills training into drug education curricula, assisting parents in becoming more knowledgeable, offering counselling, identifying problem behaviours for early intervention, and promptly referring students to medical professionals for intervention. However, despite efforts made by the government, the Church, schools, and parents, the issue of alcohol and drug abuse still exists, particularly among young people.

A review of the basic curriculum framework revealed that a number of stakeholders, government agencies and individuals began going to schools to mentor children (Heto, 2020) using different

approaches ranging from motivational talks, exposure visits, career talks and scholarships. To harmonise what was going on, the Ministry of Education developed a mentorship policy for early learning and basic education (Ministry of Education, 2019a). The mentorship policy has clear guidelines on how mentorship ought to have been conducted in schools. The policy has clear provisions, an implementation framework and on the different roles for clear monitoring and reporting on the implementation progress. The financing of the implementation is to be done by the state and non-state actors. The mentorship policy had peer mentorship as one way of running the mentorship programmes in schools and a way of curbing disruptive behaviours such as “*negative peer pressure, substance abuse, risky sexual behaviour, psychological disturbance, poor nutrition & health, poor goal-setting, bullying, radicalization and violent extremism among others*” (Republic of Kenya, 2019b).

It was realised that although the Kenya’s 2017 basic education curriculum framework was in place, and that different individuals, stakeholders, were doing their best to do mentorship for the learners, there was no proper coordination of these activities which were conducted as career talks, motivation speakers being invited to schools, peer education clubs being formed, life skills, guidance and counselling programmes and even sponsorship (Republic of Kenya, 2019b).

2.3 Identified policy gaps

It is worth noting that the framework mentorship policy framework was well crafted to ensure the child reaped maximum benefits while in school. However, consideration was not given on how this would fit into the current academic curriculum that focused mainly on the assessment aspect of the learners as opposed to their personal development. This means that the teachers concentrated mostly in completing the curriculum that is to be assessed by the Kenya National Examination Council which would contribute greatly to the placement of the learners in the next level of their academic journey. Hence, the implementation of the mentorship programs was not given the seriousness that it deserved, despite being critical in contributing to behaviour change.

In addition, the *Sessional Paper No.1* on the policy for reforming education and training (Republic of Kenya, 2019c), stated that as the younger people face issues of sexuality, peer pressure, drug and substance abuse, harmful traditional practices and negative media influences, there was need for mentorship programs to be introduced in the learning institutions and incorporated into the learning curriculum. The sessional paper went on to shade more light on the prevailing circumstances in the learning institutions; it stated that mentoring services currently were not in existence in sufficient depth, neither provided in a comprehensive nor coherent manner. This was so, despite having a mentorship policy (Republic of Kenya, 2019b) that was to be rolled out in schools and the monitoring of the same to be done by the Ministry of Education. This formed the backdrop for the current study, to investigate the impact of policies on disruptive behaviours in schools. Notably, between 1976 to date, the lack of strong policy has largely been blamed on lack of government commitment to financing, implementation and oversight. They however report the state’s recognition of the need for peer mentorship in schools to control student behaviours and avert crimes such as arson, rape, drug and substance abuse, theft, bullying, terrorism and affiliation terrorist networks, and other aspects of indiscipline that have characterized these learning institutions (Wambu & Fisher, 2015; Wango, 2015).

In most cases, peer mentorship, is more geared towards addressing indiscipline, improving the school’s academic performance, making school governance easy, and giving the affected school a good name, as opposed to addressing the growth and development challenges and needs of the high school students who are trying to understand themselves. Rutttoh, (2015) reported that often times, schools also prioritize games and other mandatory activities which take up the time allocated for

mentorship activities. According to the mentorship policy, the mentors are expected by the Ministry of Education to conduct mentorship on a voluntary basis. There are no incentives for the mentors. At the national level, among the other policies that have existed include *Kenya Education Sector Support Program [KESSP] (2005-2011)*, and *The National Children's Policy Kenya 2010 (GoK, 2010)*. The children's policy for instance stipulates that each and every child deserves access to a secure, safe setting with a quality education that is also current, inexpensive, and child-friendly. Protection rights are realized through actions that guarantee children have access to birth registration and identity as well as methodical safeguards against drug abuse, physical abuse, child labour, trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect, eviction, disasters, wars, and conflicts, among other things. That explains why it is a global concern when children are exposed to disruptive behaviours.

On the other hand, the Education Sector Support Programme recommends the use of both guidance and counselling and mentorship to assist the learners. Further, to address the disruptive behaviours among students in schools, suggestions have been given and they include the implementation of a disciplinary policy in the schools (Jinot, 2018), using the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategy (McKevitt et al., 2012). This strategy entailed rewarding the learners when they do positive things. Some teachers did not see the practicability of this approach which they felt was like bribing students do what is expected of them. In addition, coming up with a standardised rewarding system for all learners to avoid discrepancies was not possible. This meant that the behaviour challenges facing learners remained unaddressed.

3. Methodology

The research approach used in the study was pragmatic, which allowed the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative data through various methods in order to gain a better understanding of the research problem. A mixed method approach was adopted, utilizing surveys, focused group discussions, and key informant interviews to gather data from 9 schools, 368 students, and 16 Heads of Department of Guidance and Counselling. The questionnaires used a five-point scale and covered all objectives of the study, while the interviews focused on policy gaps and the influence of peer mentorship on disruptive behaviour in schools. The collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, with the reliability of instruments determined using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, which yielded a value of 0.867 from 43 indicators.

3.1 Results and Discussions

Research instruments were piloted and data was collected using Focus Group Discussions for peer mentors, questionnaires for students and teachers, and Key Informant Interviews for the Heads of Department Guidance and Counselling. The schools Heads of Department and Guidance and Counselling teachers were requested to identify the mentorship policy gaps on disruptive behaviours in their schools.

3.2 Government policy document on mentorship available

From the findings it was established that government policy document on mentorship was not available in most of the schools as shown in Table 1. The findings indicated that majority of the schools 13 (81.3%) had no government policy document on mentorship, while only 18.8% of them had the government policy document on mentorship.

Table 1: Government policy document on mentorship available

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not available	13	81.3	81.3
Available	3	18.8	100.0
Total	16	100.0	

The reasons given by the Heads of Departments and Guidance and Counselling teachers on the usefulness of government policy document in implementing peer mentorship were increasing self-esteem and confidence of the students. The teachers were able to use the document to aid and give pieces of advice to the students on specific areas of discussion. They used the policy document to bargain for the school to allocate time for the peer mentorship programmes.

The Ministry of Education has a Mentorship Policy document which has a clear implementation framework and structure; however, most teachers who were interviewed for this study had no idea of the existence of a policy document. This was a big gap given that the Ministry of Education expects that mentorship programmes are being rolled out in schools. The use of peer mentorship in schools is part of the strategy that the Ministry of Education came up with to address disruptive behaviours and also for behaviour modification in the basic education institutions. According to the Teachers Service Commission of Kenya (2020), the availability of the mentorship policy document in schools, it is expected that this will make rolling out of any mentorship programmes in schools easy. This is because the policy already has an implementation framework which the teachers can use to guide the students and roll out effective mentorship programmes. Nevertheless, the situation was different since most schools did not even know that a mentorship policy is in existence.

However, the reason for the unavailability of government policy document was attributed to failure of the government to avail the documents in schools. This meant that the schools relied on mentorship programmes and guidelines from NGOs and other religious organisations. Peer mentors attended mentorship training organised by these stakeholders outside school, during holidays. This created variation on the implementation process of peer mentorship and a lack of ownership by the learning institutions. Consequently, it followed that there was a lack of a practical plan to develop and implement peer mentorship programmes, a lack of adequate preparation of teachers to support the mentors and mentees, and a lack of financial resources to popularise mentorship and equip schools with relevant materials. Many times, mentors have to use their own resources to support mentees. The proposed that the education stakeholders (Ministry of Education) be committed to have the mentorship policy implemented in learning institutions as a strategy to address disruptive behaviours in schools. Programmes should be tailored at national, local and individual school level, to include children with special needs such as visual, hearing, speaking and physical impairments) who largely lack mentorship (Wambu & Fisher, 2015; Wambua, 2017; Wamocho, 2003).

The findings of this study suggest that most schools lack a government policy document on mentorship, which is crucial for effective implementation of peer mentorship programmes. This is consistent with previous studies that have highlighted the importance of having a clear policy framework for mentorship programmes in schools (Wambu & Fisher, 2015; Wambua, 2017; Wamocho, 2003). The study also found that the Ministry of Education has a mentorship policy document with a clear implementation framework and structure, but most teachers were not aware of its existence. This is similar to previous research that has shown a lack of awareness among teachers about policies and guidelines related to mentorship (Ibrahim, 2018).

Moreover, the study indicates that schools relied on mentorship programmes and guidelines from NGOs and other religious organisations. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have highlighted the role of external stakeholders in providing mentorship training and support to schools

((Ibrahim, 2018; Wambua, 2017). However, this creates variation in the implementation process of peer mentorship and a lack of ownership by the learning institutions.

In conclusion, this study highlights the need for the government to avail policy documents on mentorship in schools, and for teachers to be trained on the policy framework and implementation guidelines. Additionally, there is a need for adequate preparation of teachers to support the mentors and mentees, and the provision of financial resources to popularise mentorship and equip schools with relevant materials. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have called for the development and implementation of mentorship policies and guidelines in schools (Wambu & Fisher, 2015; Wambua, 2017; Wamocho, 2003).

3.3 What peer mentorship training opportunities are available for the peer mentors?

The schools Heads of Departments and Guidance and Counselling teachers identified peer mentorship training opportunities offered on Drug & Substance abuse, Reproductive Health Education, training from the schools Guidance & Counselling department and training from NGOs and CBOs such as World Concern. Training offered depended on volunteers from non-governmental organization. The peer education, include life skills and public speaking skills. Exposure to other schools which share similar programmes would be important. Results from the study also indicated that successful peer mentorship programmes led to mentees graduating to become peer mentors.

3.4 Those engaged for effective peer mentorship programmes

The schools Heads of Department, and Guidance and Counselling teachers were requested to identify stakeholders who needed to be engaged for effective peer mentorship programmes and the role each of the persons play in contributing to the peer mentorship programmes to be implemented in secondary schools. The findings are summarized in table 2.

Table 2: Stakeholders engaged and their roles in effective implementation of peer mentorship programmes

Stakeholder engaged for effective peer mentorship programmes	Role played in contributing to the peer mentorship programmes
Guidance and Counselling department	Giving of ideas and follow-up of the programmes Providing basic counselling skills to peer mentors
Guidance & Counselling teachers	To be aware of what needs to be implemented as per the programmes (policy). Mobile students to be trained Use the knowledge to motivate & mentor other students
Professional counsellor	Train students to assist others
Curriculum implementers	The curriculum implementers would help to implement the schedule for the programmes.
Ministry of Education	Provide professional counsellors
Teachers	Teachers would guide the peer-to-peer mentors Teachers to facilitate the programmes Enforce mentorship
Class teachers	The class teachers will identify the responsibilities of the students

Students	Students to be engaged fully in these programmes
School prefects body	Prefects would reach out to the other students because they trust them
Community Based Organizations	To provide facilitations and motivation to students
School administration	The school administration supports peers mentoring students The administration would ensure that peer mentorship is taken seriously
Civil Society	Civil society can help in offering additional trainings
Peer mentorship trainees	Peer mentoring their fellow students offering Guidance and Counselling to their students on areas they can't talk to their teachers

To address distractive behaviours among the learners requires concerted efforts from all key stakeholders. This aligns well with the Basic Education Mentorship policy in Kenya. The Ministry of Education, in the policy framework, has outlined the duties of the different stakeholders for effective implementation of mentorship in schools. For instance, the Ministry of Education is expected to vet all persons invited to give mentorship to learners. This is to help protect the mentees from fake mentors and wrong content that is likely to cause harm and even undo the positive results realised. The civil society organisations are invited to support in offering relevant support such as training peer mentors. However, the study findings revealed that the mentorship process in most schools is run by the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the school lacked ownership. The peer mentorship training modules need to be aligned with the guidelines in the mentorship policy document. A close monitoring by both the Ministry of Education and the school administration is required and participation in the content development. This would give the school ownership of the mentorship process and hence, they can adequately give relevant support to the mentors and the mentees.

3.5 What incentives have been put in place for the peer mentors?

The Heads of Department Guidance and Counselling together with the teachers, who were interviewed, indicated that there were no incentives currently given to the peer mentors. The mentors supported the mentees on volunteer basis, which then meant that they were not mandated to work with the mentees. The teachers stated that they experienced cases where the mentors dropped off and hence, the mentees were left unattended. This presented a risk in that some of those mentees retrogressed and hence, bringing to naught all the achievements already accrued in terms of behaviour change. According to the respondents, the mentees who slipped back to the bad habits, tended to become worse than they previously were and they no longer trust the mentorship process. The teachers had suggestions on how to curb the problem of mentors dropping out which included issuance of certificates, badges and small tokens as an appreciation of the mentors and mentees. In one of the schools, the teachers pointed out that appreciating the contribution of the peer mentors during school assemblies, prize giving days or during parents meetings would motivate both the mentors and the mentees besides giving publicity to mentorship as an effective strategy for behaviour change.

The student respondents in the focus group discussions, in at least four schools, stated that mentorship is not given as much emphasis as drama, debating, science congress, music and sports.

Some of the respondents felt that mentorship would have greater impact among the learners in the respective schools, if they are given publicity by the administration and school. This aligns well with the theory of Self-Determination which underpins this study that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are a major drive for positive change to happen. Some of the peer mentors who participated in the focus group discussions proposed that the schools could buy them snacks whenever they have key planning meetings, as a motivation. Whereas the students concurred with the teachers regarding the issuance of certificates, they went further to recommend that certificates be issued to those students who had gone through mentorship and exhibited positive change. Such mentees could then be promoted to become mentors while being guided by the mentors they had been attached to. This brings out the three key aspects in the Self-Determination theory, that is, autonomy, connection and competence.

For the aspect of autonomy, the mentees are now able to make informed decisions and choices which would improve their wellbeing and that of their fellow learners. As for connection, with proper mentorship, the mentees are able to relate with their peers in a constructive way and offer any needed support for good coexistence one with another. They are no longer a source of fear and threat as when they engaged in disruptive behaviours. Their colleagues are able to trust them. The respondents were able to give examples of some of the students they had mentored and had been given responsibilities in school such as being class prefects, and officials in some clubs. In the schools where this has happened, they stated that both the teachers and the learners have now built a sense of trust for these learners who have shown positive change. The third aspect of the theory is that of competence and both the mentors and mentees develop social and interpersonal skills and as a result, they are able to maximize on the available resources in their schools for their personal good.

The student respondents, in the focus group discussions, presented the notion of exchange visits to schools as an incentive for the peer mentors. This will allow them to interact with other peers and exchange best practices on peer mentorship. This idea of exchange visits can be best employed if the schools use the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education in the mentorship policy document.

3.6 Policy priorities needed for peer mentorship programmes to be effective in schools

Based on the responses of the heads of department and Guidance and Counselling teachers, it is clear that peer mentorship can be an effective strategy for addressing disruptive behaviours in schools. The Ministry of Education should take steps to ensure that all secondary schools have access to the policy document on peer mentorship and should provide relevant training to teachers to enable them to support the peer mentors effectively.

It is also important for the Ministry of Education to recognize and appreciate the efforts of teachers who are supporting the peer mentors. This can be done through incentives such as reduced teaching workload, certificates, and even sponsoring exemplary teachers and mentors to visit other countries to learn from best practices in peer mentorship.

In addition, a monitoring and evaluation system should be put in place to track the progress of the mentors and mentees, especially for those from informal school setups. Making peer mentorship mandatory and allocating formal time for it will also help to promote its adoption and effectiveness in schools.

To ensure the successful implementation of peer mentorship, it is necessary to have staffs within the Ministry of Education who are responsible for overseeing the process and addressing any challenges

that may arise. With a strong and robust mentorship system in place, the potential for positive outcomes for both mentors and mentees is high.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is clear that there is a need for the Ministry of Education to take action in order to improve the implementation of peer mentorship programmes in schools. Some of the recommended actions include:

1. Providing government policy documents on mentorship in all secondary schools: This will help to ensure that all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents, are aware of the government's position on peer mentorship and can implement it effectively.
2. Providing training for teachers on how to implement the mentorship policy: This will help to ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to effectively mentor students and support their growth and development.
3. Committing to mentorship programmes in schools: The Ministry of Education should demonstrate a strong commitment to mentorship programmes by providing resources and support to schools to implement them effectively.
4. Conducting evaluations of mentorship programmes: Evaluations can help to identify gaps and areas for improvement in mentorship programmes, and can inform future policy development and implementation.
5. Adequately financing mentorship systems in schools: Adequate financing is essential to ensure that schools have the resources they need to implement effective mentorship programmes and support the growth and development of their students.

In addition to these actions, it is also important to ensure that any involvement of non-governmental organizations or community-based organizations in mentorship programmes is guided by policy, registration, and effective oversight to avoid negative influences on student behaviour. Overall, by taking these steps, the Ministry of Education can help to ensure that peer mentorship programmes are effective in promoting positive behaviour change and supporting the growth and development of students in schools.

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