



## Review on Examining Gender Sensitivity of Guidance and Counselling Services Addressing Personal Problems and Reducing Delinquent Behavior in Zambia

Loveness Rudo Ngulube\*

\*Dean of Education, CHRESO University, Zambia, Africa  
Email – rlngulube@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The role of guidance and counselling appear inherent in human culture. Scholars have noted various channels including the use of the family, and religion by societies from time immemorial in the quest to practice and adhere to this form of helping individuals to solve personal problems and acquire life skills. Guidance and Counselling as a concept is old, its commencement dates way back in 1908. It emerged in an effort to resolve conditions and demands made by different people in working institutions in the United States of America. Guidance and Counselling in African schools, dates back history from the village set up. Tradition African societies had people, who were conducting the counselling for instance: Uncles, chiefs and kings. However, despite guidance and counselling having been part of the African society, its integration into the education system on began in the late fifties. Working in a gender sensitive way means putting in place measures which take into account the different roles, needs and interests of women and men. Gender sensitivity builds on the understanding of gender differences and refers to taking an approach that is responsive to gender differences and relations between genders.*

*Preschool period is considered to be crucial in setting a foundation for preventing the development of disruptive behaviors and child delinquency. Delinquent behaviors pupils may have include carelessness and neglect of one's personal hygiene, high irritability, and hostility to close friends, dirty and tattered clothes and normally being in one clothe for many days. To reduce delinquent behavior among pupils: educational guidance, vocational guidance, personal or social guidance and health guidance services should be put in place. However, one of the key obstacle which affect the development of guidance and counseling service programs in African countries is the imposition of Western Models of counselling which do not reflect the African Culture. Other challenges being poor infrastructure of guidance offices unqualified or semi-qualified teachers.*

**Key Words:** *Gender Sensitivity, Guidance and Counseling, Personal problems of Pupils and Delinquent Behavior.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION :

Akinade (2012), defines guidance as a process of helping individuals become fully aware of themselves and assist them find ways to adjust to the influence of the environment around. The role of guidance and counselling appear inherent in human culture. Some scholars have cited various channels like family and religion by societies from time in immemorial to have played a key role in the quest to practice and adhere to this form of helping individuals in solving personal problems and acquiring life skills (Loeber et al, 2003), hypothesized that Guidance and Counselling as a concept is old, its commencement dates way back in 1908. It was coined in an effort to tackle conditions and demands made by different people in working institutions in the United States of America (Kabamba et al (2020), equally assert that guidance and counselling emerged from the awareness of social problems plaguing America and practical attempts to solve them. Thus, it developed as an American product.

Counselling is described by Egbo (2013), as a learning process in which a counselor assist an individual to acquire knowledge, understand themselves and their environment in order to be in a position to choose the right type of behavior to enable them grow academically or vocationally. Thus, counseling is a transformative process of helping individuals to learn everything to be learnt both in and outside the school. Counseling therefore, is a person to person process in which one person is helped by another to develop and enhance an understanding in solving his/her problems (Dhal, 2020). According to Makumba (2013), in Africa society, there are various ways of providing counselling to the young



people. Counselling in Africa has been there since time immemorial. Guidance and counselling in African schools draws back history from the village set up. Traditional African societies had people, who were doing the counselling like uncles, aunties, grandparents, chiefs and kings. Despite guidance and counselling being part of the African society, its integration into the education system only began in the late fifties. Makumba (2013), points out that African ministers of education have long been aware of the growing number of social problems affecting children.

Zambia is a democratic country. The success of democracy depends heavily on educated and enlightened persons who shoulder the responsibilities of running the administration of the country. A great counselor inspires learners by his conscious power to unite with the real source. According to Dhal (2020), education encompasses three elements which are: God (the source of wisdom), learners (who seeks to learn) and teacher (an agent learning). Dhal, further argued that guidance and counseling is a very cardinal therapy to school going children. Which can be applied to all aspects of human life; that is physical, parental, emotional, spiritual and human development from infancy to old age. Therefore, the main role of guidance and counselling is assisting a child, youth or adult, in understanding his or her needs and environment. To enable him or her adjust to the present situation and plan for the future in line with interests, abilities and social needs. Thus, guidance and counselling attempt to lead to an individual's self-actualization. And attaining self-actualization may be difficult if a pupil is unaware of his or her potential (Tuchili & Ndhlovu (2017).

## **2. Gender Sensitivity :**

According to Cotier (2014), working in a gender sensitive way means putting in place measures which take into account the different roles, needs and interests of women and men. Furthermore, gender sensitivity builds on an understanding of gender differences and refers to taking an approach that is responsive to gender differences and relations between genders. It is cardinal thus, to generate an awareness that gender identity is woven together with other diversity threads, which include: age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, social and economic differences. For instance, in some communities, especially in more wealthy families, many young women are traditionally restricted from leaving home and getting a job before having a child. In addition, many women are not permitted to participate in household-level decision making relating to buying and selling of land or building a house.

Cotier further posited that during a Safer world implementation community safety project in Dhanusha, women of all age groups would not sit on the same bench as the Madheshi men. They chose to sit on the floor and kept their faces covered with a veil when male members of the community were present and they would only give their opinions to the project facilitators after the men had left. To allow women to speak freely, Safer world and IHRICON decided to have separate meetings for women and men in the early stages of the project. Gradually, through trust-building activities and gender training, the men began to see the role women played in local community safety. Ensuring active participation of all community members enabled a common understanding of safety issues and allowed both women and men to behave in a more open and comfortable manner. In Zambia, the guidance and counselling teachers are gender sensitive and inclusiveness awake. This is partly because they understand the notion of equality and equity in the delivery of their services.

## **3. Guidance and Counselling :**

According to Tuchili & Ndhlovu (2017), respect for all should be at the center for all guidance works. Guidance services are meant for all pupils at all stages. The main purpose of guidance is to assist children make wide choices through counseling. Kochhar (2010) on the other hand, stated that the main objective of guidance is to help job seeking youths form realistic career notions, so that they have better chances of realizing their dreams and not end up as failures. Mwaliwa (2016), equally affirms that guidance and counselling services seek to help pupils become familiar with a wide range of information about themselves. It is also important to note that a number of social and psychological challenges begin to arise when pupils enter the adolescent stage. Adolescence, is a transition period when pupils try to sort out all the conflicting demands and expectations of their family, community, friends and school. Individuals mostly enter secondary education at this stage and begin to search for identity.

In a study conducted by Kabamba et al (2020), the findings revealed that guidance and counselling in schools lacked financial support to facilitate the day-to-day running of the services that guidance department needs. This was because the department needs to be funded accordingly so that they can arrange for instance career trips and inviting different professionals to address the pupils. It is against this background that, all these programs can only be carried out if there is a proper financial support. They further discovered that materials for effective execution of Guidance and Counselling



services to the pupils in schools were not there. The implementation of Guidance and Counselling services in the five secondary schools further lacked parental participation. Maliwa (2016) further stated that one of the key challenges that affect the development of guidance and counseling services programs in Eastern and Southern African countries is the imposition of Western Models of counselling which do not reflect the African Culture. According to Kabamba et al (2020), to be fully effective, guidance and counselling, should involve teachers, parents and the community. Group counselling with the school counsellors, private counselling with their peers, social counselling and Career counselling, are some of measures that can be applied to improve pupil guidance and counselling.

#### **4. Personal Problems of Pupils :**

Maliwa (2016), postulated that the home environment can sometimes contribute to pupils' emotional stress. Individuals who come to school from the background that have parents or guardians with inconsistent or unpredictable behaviours like rejection and over protectiveness, are often emotionally stressed. Thus, such pupils need help and understanding because they carry a heavy load of emotional problems, not of their own making but which negatively affect their school attendance and performance. According to Ngwokabuenui (2015), the most common cases of indiscipline relating to the collective misbehavior of students like breaking of school properties and mass protest. While the common cases of indiscipline relating to poor habits of students are: chewing gum in class, fighting, wearing dirty and wrong clothing contrary to the official school uniforms and examination malpractice. If the excess energy accumulated by children is kept passive and inactive for a long period, it tends to make them inattentive in class and restless.

In a study conducted by Kabamba et al (2020), pupils reported the following problems they were facing in their schools: Limited period for guidance and counselling services, guidance and counselling teachers were not consistent in meeting their schedules and had an overload causing them not to meet pupils regularly, guidance and counselling teachers did not help in finding more realistic solutions to problems pupils were facing, no time table for guidance and counselling. And most pupils felt shy to seek help because guidance and counselling offices were filled with other teachers due to lack of specified offices for guidance. Nevertheless, pupils in Zambia face various challenges in trying to access guidance and counselling services which includes; sex of the counsellor, poor confidentiality, fear of being labeled badly by peers, fear of other pupils knowing their problems, poor counselling environment, unappealing appearance of the counsellor, disapproval from peers, disapproval from parents and lack of personal interest. In addition, availability of guidance and counselling materials seem to be an issue in most schools.

#### **5. Delinquent Behavior :**

Gottfredson (2001) revealed the delinquent behaviors in need of guidance and counselling being: carelessness and neglect of one's personal hygiene, general irresponsibility, high irritability, and hostility to close friends, dirty and tattered clothes and normally being in one clothe for many days. According to Loeber et al (2003), preschool period is crucial in setting a foundation for preventing the development of disruptive behaviors and child delinquency. They posited that there are four primary reasons why the preschool period may have important implications for understanding and preventing very young offending: Disruptive problem behavior, including serious aggression and chronic violation of the rights and property of others. Predictive relationship between problem behaviors in preschool and later conduct disorder and child delinquency. Many important developmental skills (such as language development) begin during this period and difficulties in developing these skills may weaken the foundation of learning and contribute to later disruptive behaviors and child delinquency. Understanding the early emergence of problem behaviors further, may help in the creation of earlier, effective interventions for the prevention of child delinquency

Loeber et al (2003) stated that, studies reviewed by the Study Group found a significant relationship between an early onset of delinquency and later crime and delinquency. Child delinquents, compared with juveniles with a later onset of delinquency, are at greater risk of becoming serious, violent, and chronic offenders and have longer delinquency careers. However, it is important to note that, not all disruptive children will become child delinquents, and not all child delinquents will become serious, chronic juvenile offenders. But, the majority of violent, and chronic juvenile offenders have a history of problem behaviors that goes back to their childhood. Research shows that the antisocial careers of male juvenile offenders start on average at age 7, much earlier than the average age of first court contact for Crime Index offenses, which is age 14.5 (see table 1). Because it is not yet possible to accurately predict which children will progress from serious problem behaviors to delinquency, it is better to tackle problem behaviors before they become more serious.

**Table 1: Average Age of Onset of Problem Behaviors and Delinquency in Male Juveniles**

	Minor Problem Serious Behavior	Moderately Serous Problem Behavior	Serious Delinquency	First Court Contact For Index Offenses
Age	7.0	9.5	11.9	14.5

Source: Loeber et al (2003).

Note: The table shows the average age of onset of problem behaviors and delinquency for males who had their first contact with the juvenile court for an Index offense. Data is based on the statements of the oldest sample in the Pittsburgh Youth Study and on statements made by their mothers.

\*Index offenses include murder, robbery, rape, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft and arson.

In his study on guidance and counselling services available in schools in Zambia, Maliwa (2016) found that most services offered to pupils in an attempt to reduce delinquent behavior were educational guidance, vocational guidance, personal or social guidance and health guidance services. In addition, some teachers offered spiritual and HIV/AIDS counselling to pupils in need of the services. Stakeholder participation further, plays a pivotal role in the development of guidance and counselling services. The stakeholders who plays a vital role in reducing delinquent behavior among pupils in schools and society at large are: Teachers, Head Teachers, Guidance and Counselling Personnel and Parents.

## 6. CONCLUSION :

Guidance and counselling services in schools should not be something pupils should pay for to have access, because they help in reducing child delinquency in society. Teachers and other school counsellors therefore, should readily make such services available to pupils. Working in a gender sensitive simply means putting in place measures that take into account the different roles, needs and interests of women and men. Gender sensitivity further, builds on an understanding of gender differences and refers to taking an approach that is responsive to gender differences and relations between genders. Guidance and Counselling plays a critical role on children as it help to shape their career path or the kind of individuals they will grow up to become. Guidance and Counselling is therefore, a critical component especially in a democratic environment as individuals help in running the administration.

## REFERENCES:

- Coetier, L, N. (2014). *A gender sensitivity resource pack: Community safety training outreach and advocacy in Nepal safety training*. Nepal: Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal International Alert.
- Dhal, P, K. (2020). *Guidance and counselling in teacher education*. New Delhi: Magadh University.
- Egbo, A, C. (2013). *Development of guidance and counselling*. Enugu: Joe Best Publisher.
- Gottfredson, D. (2001). *Schools and delinquency*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Kabamba, C. Mundende, K. & Simui, F. (2020). *Exploring the status of guidance and counselling services in selected public secondary schools in Chilanga district, Zambia*. International Journal of Social Sciences and Education (1) HSSE, Vol7, no.6.2020.57-66.doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0706007.
- Kochhar, K. S. (2010). *Education and Vocational Guidance in Secondary Schools*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, Private Ltd.
- Loeber, R. Farrington, D, P & Petochuk, D. (2003). *Child delinquency: Early intervention and prevention*. US: Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.
- Maliwa. M. N (2016) *Assessment of Provision of Guidance and Counselling Services in Secondary Schools*. Lusaka: The University of Zambia.
- Makumba, C.E. (2013). *The Status of Guidance and Counselling Provision in selected Basic Schools in Mumbwa District, Unpublished M.A. Dissertation*. Lusaka: University of Zambia.
- Ngwokabwenui, Y, P. (2015). *Students' indiscipline: Types, causes and possible solutions, case of secondary schools in Cameroon*. The Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation Cameroon. Journal of Education and Practice ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online) Vol.6, No.22, 2015.
- Tuchili, A & Ndhlovu, D. (2017). *Shaping behavior among students in Zambia's public universities: can guidance and counselling be useful? International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE) Volume 4, Issue 1, January 2017, PP 48-54 ISSN 2349-0373 (Print) & ISSN 2349-0381 (Online) http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0401006 www.arcjournals.org*.
- UNESCO. (2013). *Strategy for all global monitoring: The challenge of recruitment and training quality teachers*. Paris: UNESCO Institute of Statistics.