

The Role of School Administration in Enhancing Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling Services in Cameroon Secondary Schools

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Abstract.

This study sets out to examine the role of school administration in enhancing the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. The effectiveness of guidance and counseling services cannot be underestimated as it significantly contributes to the overall internal effectiveness of the school system as a whole. This means that the school administrator has a lot to contribute in ensuring the effectiveness of this service. This study adopted the research survey design and the main instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The study used a simple random sampling technique to select 223 secondary schools from the centre regions of Cameroon. The data was analyzed using the Kendall tau formula and the following results were obtained per hypothesis. In the first hypothesis, we found that School administrators' leadership style significantly affects the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 36.4% (p.value 0.00 < 0.05; r=0.364) in the first hypothesis. In the second hypothesis, the Allocation of Resources significantly influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 35.5% (p.value 0.00 < 0.05; r=0.355); while in the third hypothesis, Principal's communication influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 32.3% (p.value 0.00 < 0.05; r=0.323). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the role of school administration is significant in enhancing the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. Recommendations were made to stakeholders concerned.

Keywords: School Administration; Effectiveness; Guidance; Counseling Services and Secondary Schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of guidance and counseling services in schools cannot be overstated as these services play a key role in shaping students' academic, personal, and career development, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and success (Corey, 2017). Effective guidance and counseling services can help students overcome the challenges of adolescence, build resilience, and make informed decisions about their future (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). In Cameroon secondary schools, however, the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services is still a significant concern (Tantoh, 2020). Many schools still face obstacles in providing adequate support to students, including inadequate resources, insufficient training for counselors, and lack of support from school administrators (Fondong, 2018). School administration plays a vital role in shaping the school environment and culture, which can either support or hinder the delivery of guidance and counseling services (Sergiovanni, 2009). Effective school administrators can foster a positive school climate, prioritize guidance and counseling services, and provide necessary resources and support for counselors (Fullan, 2007). Despite the importance of guidance and counseling services, there is a dearth of research on the relationship between school administration and the effectiveness of these services in Cameroon secondary schools. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the relationship between school administration and the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

1.1. Problem statement

Guidance and counseling services are essential for students' academic, personal, and career development (Watkins & Mortimer, 2016). These services can help students build self-awareness, develop coping skills, and make informed decisions about their future (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). In Cameroon, the Ministry of Secondary Education has emphasized the importance of guidance and counseling services in schools (MINEDUB, 2016). However, many schools in Cameroon face challenges in providing adequate guidance and counseling services. These challenges include inadequate resources, insufficient training for counselors, and lack of support from school administrators (Fondong, 2018).

1.2. Research questions

Question 1: To what extent does school administrators' leadership style influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

Question 2: In what ways does the allocation of resources by school administrators' impact on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

Question 3: How does school administrators' communication affect the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

1.3. Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between school administrators' leadership style and the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2: The allocation of resources by school administrators has a significant positive impact on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant positive relationship between school administrators' communication and the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

1.4. Research objectives

Objective 1: To examine the extent to which school administrators' leadership style influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

Objective 2: to study how the resources allocation by school administrators' impact the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

Objective 3: to investigate the link between school administrators' communication and the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study on "The Role of School Administration in Enhancing Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling Services in Cameroon Secondary Schools" has several significances, including:

Theoretical Significance: The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the role of school administration in enhancing the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. It provides insights into the relationship between school administrators' leadership style, allocation of resources, and communication on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services.

Practical Significance: The study's findings can inform policy and practice in Cameroonian secondary schools. By identifying the key factors that influence the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, school administrators can develop targeted strategies to improve service delivery.

Policy Significance: The study's findings can inform policy decisions at the national and local levels. Policy makers can use the study's results to develop policies and guidelines that support the delivery of effective guidance and counseling services in secondary schools.

Empirical Significance: The study provides empirical evidence on the role of school administration in enhancing the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. The study's findings can be used to develop evidence-based interventions to improve student outcomes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of guidance and counseling services in schools has been well-documented in the literature (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012; Watkins & Mortimer, 2016). These services play a critical role in shaping students' academic, personal, and career development, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and success (Corey, 2017). Effective guidance and counseling services can help students build self-awareness, develop coping skills, and make informed decisions about their future (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).

2.1. School Administration and Guidance and Counseling Services

Research has shown that school administration plays a vital role in shaping the school environment and culture, which can either support or hinder the delivery of guidance and counseling services (Sergiovanni, 2009). Effective school administrators can foster a positive school climate, prioritize guidance

and counseling services, and provide necessary resources and support for counselors (Fullan, 2007). A study by Fondong (2018) found that school administrators' leadership style and communication were significant predictors of the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

2.2. Leadership Style and Guidance and Counseling Services

Leadership style is a critical factor in determining the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services (Sergiovanni, 2009). A study by Tantoh Mengwi Claudine (2020) found that transformational leadership style was positively correlated with the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. Similarly, a study by Bush (2015) found that instructional leadership style was associated with improved student outcomes in schools.

2.3. Resource Allocation and Guidance and Counseling Services

Resource allocation is another critical factor in determining the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). A critical analysis of the role of resource allocation in guidance and counseling services reveals that inadequate resources can limit the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, leading to poor outcomes for clients (Fondong, 2018); Resource allocation requires prioritization, with resources being allocated to areas of greatest need (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012); and that sustainable resource allocation is critical to ensuring the long-term effectiveness of guidance and counseling services (Dollar & Brooks, 2017). A study by Amoako (2019) found that schools with adequate resources and support for guidance and counseling services had better student outcomes compared to schools with limited resources. In Cameroon, a study by Fondong (2018) found that inadequate resources and insufficient training for counselors were significant challenges facing guidance and counseling services in secondary schools.

2.4. Communication and Guidance and Counseling Services

Effective communication is essential for the delivery of guidance and counseling services (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). It involves the clear and respectful exchange of information between the counselor and the client, creating a safe and supportive environment that fosters trust, understanding, and growth (Corey, 2017). Research has shown that effective communication is critical in building trust and rapport between the counselor and client (Bordin, 1979). When clients feel heard and understood, they are more likely to open up and share their concerns, leading to more effective counseling outcomes (Tantoh, 2020).

A study by Mfortaw Mbappe (2020) found that communication was a significant predictor of the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. Similarly, a study by Kok (2017) found that effective communication was associated with improved student outcomes in schools. The following are key aspects of communication in counseling:

- **Active Listening:** Counselors must listen attentively to clients, understanding their concerns, feelings, and needs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).
- **Empathy:** Counselors should demonstrate empathy, acknowledging and validating clients' emotions and experiences (Rogers, 1951).
- **Clear and Concise Language:** Counselors should communicate clearly and concisely, avoiding jargon and technical terms that may confuse clients (Ivey & Ivey, 2007).

In conclusion, the literature suggests that school administration plays a critical role in shaping the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. Effective leadership style, resource allocation, and communication are essential for the delivery of guidance and counseling services. Further research is needed to explore the relationship between school administration and the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in different contexts.

III. METHODS

The population of interest was made up of school counselors, teachers and students. The quantitative approach in data collection and analysis was adopted in this study. The study used a simple random sampling technique to select 6 secondary schools from the centre regions of Cameroon. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 223 counselors and teachers for the study. A questionnaire was used to collect

quantitative data. The quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical packages, including descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics on School administrators' leadership style

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
My school administrator provides clear goals and expectations for guidance and counseling services.	224	1.00	4.00	2.0714	1.21437
My school administrator is supportive of guidance and counseling services.	224	1.00	4.00	1.4464	1.24446
My school administrator encourages counselors to take initiative and make decisions	224	1.00	4.00	3.0313	.94888
My school administrator provides regular feedback and evaluation of guidance and counseling services.	224	1.00	4.00	3.3839	1.15790
My school administrator prioritizes the well-being and development of students.	224	1.00	4.00	2.1786	1.00861
Valid N (listwise)	224				

In the first hypothesis, most of the respondents agreed (mean=2.0714) that school administrator provides clear goals and expectations for guidance and counseling services. Subsequently, respondents agreed (mean=1.4464) that school administrator is supportive of guidance and counseling services. However, respondents disagreed (mean=3.0313) that school administrator encourages counselors to take initiative and make decisions. In the four item most respondents disagreed (mean=3.3839) that school administrator provides regular feedback and evaluation of guidance and counseling services. Most respondents indicated that school administrator prioritizes the well-being and development of students.

Descriptive Statistics on Allocation of Resources

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Our school allocates sufficient financial resources for guidance and counseling services.	223	1.00	4.00	3.8879	1.30522
Our school provides adequate human resources (e.g., counselors, support staff) for guidance and counseling services.	223	1.00	4.00	2.7354	1.23279
Our school provides sufficient materials and equipment (e.g., counseling rooms, testing materials) for guidance and counseling services.	223	1.00	4.00	2.7982	1.10266
Our school administrators prioritize the allocation of resources for guidance and counseling services.	223	1.00	4.00	2.6143	1.06296
Our school's budget for guidance and counseling services is adequate to meet the needs of students.	223	1.00	4.00	2.5067	1.14242
Valid N (listwise)	223				

In the first item, respondents disagreed (mean=3.8879) that school administrators allocates sufficient financial resources for guidance and counseling services and equally disagreed (mean2.7354) that school principals provide adequate human resources (e.g., counselors, support staff) for guidance and counseling services. In the third item, they disagreed (mean=2.7982) that school administrators provides sufficient materials and equipment (e.g., counseling rooms, testing materials) for guidance and counseling services. Respondents continue to disagree (mean=2.6143) that school administrators prioritize the allocation of resources for guidance and counseling services.

Descriptive Statistics on Principal's communication

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Our school administrators clearly communicate their expectations for guidance and counseling services.	223	1.00	4.00	1.5202	1.17339
Our school administrators are approachable and open to feedback from counselors and students.	223	1.00	4.00	2.0065	1.09248
Our school administrators regularly communicate with counselors to discuss student needs and progress.	223	1.00	4.00	1.8520	1.27364

Our school administrators effectively communicate the importance of guidance and counseling services to students, parents, and teachers.	223	1.00	4.00	1.5740	1.24214
Our school administrators are responsive to counselors' and students' concerns and questions.	223	1.00	4.00	1.7758	1.07131
Valid N (listwise)	223				

Concerning principals communication, majority of the respondents agreed (mean 1.5202) that school administrators clearly communicate their expectations for guidance and counseling services. Subsequently all of the means fall in the agreement area and implies that most of the respondents agreed that school administrators are approachable and open to feedback from counselors and students; that school administrators regularly communicate with counselors to discuss student needs and progress; that school administrators effectively communicate the importance of guidance and counseling services to students, parents, and teachers and that school administrators are responsive to counselors' and students' concerns and questions

Descriptive Statistics on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
The guidance and counseling services in our school are effective in addressing students' academic needs.	223	1.00	4.00	3.1211	.99488
The guidance and counseling services in our school are effective in addressing students' personal and social needs	223	1.00	4.00	2.7489	1.26622
The guidance and counseling services in our school are effective in helping students achieve their goals.	223	1.00	4.00	2.5561	1.26464
The guidance and counseling services in our school have a positive impact on students' academic performance	223	1.00	4.00	3.0135	1.00216
Valid N (listwise)	223				

In the first item, most of the respondents disagreed (mean=3.1211) that the guidance and counseling services in our school are effective in addressing students' academic needs. As such, guidance and counseling services in our school are not effective in addressing students' personal and social needs as indicated in the second item with mean of 2.7489. also respondents disagreed (mean=3.0135) that the guidance and counseling services in our school have a positive impact on students' academic performance.

Results

Correlations

		School_administrators_leadership_style	Allocation_of_Resources	Principal's communication	Effectiveness_of_guidance_and_counseling_services
Kendall's tau_b	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.578**	.461**	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	224	223	223	223
	Correlation Coefficient	.578**	1.000	.473**	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	223	223	223	223
	Correlation Coefficient	.461**	.473**	1.000	.323**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	223	223	223	223
	Correlation Coefficient	.364**	.355**	.323**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	223	223	223	223

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings

From the table above it can be observed that School administrators' leadership style significantly affects the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 36.4% (p.value 0.00 <0.05; r=0.364) in the

first hypothesis. In the second hypothesis, the Allocation of Resources significantly influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 35.5% (p.value $0.00 < 0.05$; $r=0.355$); while in the third hypothesis Principal's communication influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services by 32.3% (p.value $0.00 < 0.05$; $r=0.323$). Based on these findings it can be concluded that the role of school administration is significant in enhancing effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools.

Discussion of findings

The study's findings indicate that school administrators' leadership style has a significant impact on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, accounting for 36.4% of the variation in effectiveness. This result is consistent with the transformational leadership theory, which posits that leaders who inspire and empower their followers can significantly influence their performance and effectiveness (Bass, 1985). In the context of school administration, transformational leaders can foster a supportive environment that enables counselors to deliver effective guidance and counseling services. The finding also supports the notion that leadership style is a critical factor in determining the success of educational institutions (Hallinger, 2003). School administrators who exhibit a more participatory and supportive leadership style are more likely to promote a positive school climate, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. Furthermore, the result is in line with the social learning theory, which suggests that leaders' behavior and attitudes can influence the behavior and attitudes of their followers (Bandura, 1977). In this case, school administrators' leadership style can shape the attitudes and behavior of counselors, which can ultimately impact the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. The study's findings highlight the importance of school administrators' leadership style in promoting effective guidance and counseling services. School administrators should be trained and supported to develop leadership styles that foster a positive school climate and promote the well-being and success of students.

In the second hypothesis, the findings of the study indicate that the allocation of resources has a significant influence on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, accounting for 35.5% of the variation in effectiveness. This result is consistent with the Resource Dependence Theory (RDT), which posits that organizations are dependent on external resources to achieve their goals (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). In the context of schools, the allocation of resources by administrators can significantly impact the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. The finding also supports the notion that resources are essential for effective service delivery (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Guidance and counseling services require adequate resources, including trained personnel, materials, and equipment, to deliver high-quality services. The allocation of resources by school administrators can enable or constrain the ability of counselors to provide effective services. Furthermore, the result is in line with the Systems Theory, which suggests that all components of an organization are interconnected and interdependent (Katz & Kahn, 1978). The allocation of resources is a critical component of the school system, and its impact can be felt throughout the organization. Effective allocation of resources can lead to improved outcomes for students, while inadequate resources can hinder the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. The study's findings highlight the importance of school administrators allocating sufficient resources to support guidance and counseling services.

This can include providing adequate funding, personnel, and materials to enable counselors to deliver high-quality services. In the last hypothesis, findings indicate that principals' communication significantly influences the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, accounting for 32.3% of the variation in effectiveness. This result is consistent with the Communication Theory, which posits that effective communication is essential for organizational success (Berlo, 1960). In the context of schools, principals' communication with counselors, teachers, and students can significantly impact the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. The finding also supports the notion that effective communication is critical for building trust, collaboration, and a positive school climate (Sergiovanni, 2000). Principals who communicate effectively with counselors and other stakeholders can foster a supportive environment that enables counselors to deliver high-quality services. This is in line with the Relational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the importance of building relationships and communicating effectively to achieve

organizational goals (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The result is consistent with the study by Harris (2002), which found that effective communication is a key characteristic of successful school leaders. Principals who communicate effectively can facilitate collaboration, build trust, and promote a positive school culture, all of which are essential for effective guidance and counseling services. The study's findings highlight the importance of principals developing effective communication skills to support guidance and counseling services. This can include regular meetings with counselors, clear communication of expectations, and an open-door policy to facilitate feedback and concerns.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study investigated the role of school administration in enhancing effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in Cameroon secondary schools. Specifically, the study was focused on studying the relationship between school administrators' leadership style, allocation of resources, and principals' communication on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools. The findings revealed that school administrators' leadership style, allocation of resources, and principals' communication significantly influence the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services, accounting for 36.4%, 35.5%, and 32.3% of the variation in effectiveness, respectively. These findings suggest that school administrators could play a critical role in promoting effective guidance and counseling services by adopting supportive leadership styles, allocating sufficient resources, and communicating effectively with counselors and other stakeholders.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- School administrators should adopt supportive leadership styles: School administrators should prioritize building relationships with counselors and other stakeholders, provide regular feedback and support, and empower counselors to make decisions.
- Adequate resources should be allocated to guidance and counseling services: School administrators should prioritize the allocation of sufficient resources, including funding, personnel, and materials, to support guidance and counseling services.
- Effective communication is essential: School administrators should develop effective communication skills to facilitate collaboration, build trust, and promote a positive school culture.
- Regular training and support: School administrators and counselors should receive regular training and support to enhance their skills and knowledge in areas such as leadership, communication, and counseling.
- Policy makers should prioritize guidance and counseling services: Policy makers should prioritize guidance and counseling services by providing adequate funding and resources to support the delivery of high-quality services.

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