

# THE ROLE OF GUIDING AND COUNSELLING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

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## Abstract

*Since the 1990s, education system in Kenya has faced dynamic and rapid changes that have had overwhelming effects both on the child, teacher, school and society at large. Education policies have changed over the years including the recently introduced policy on caning which was scraped through children's Act of 2001 and replaced with guiding and counseling as a measure to prepare a child for the challenges they face both in school and outside school. As corporal punishment remains banned and children becoming more aware of their rights, guiding and counseling remains the most acceptable channel of reaching the children in schools; the children too being teenagers, they experience a time of storm and stress characterized by mixed reactions of being happy at one moment and extremely sad at another moment. The reactions to such situations are likely to be intense and volatile. With parents being too busy to give children quality time and attention, the responsibility has been left to rest squarely on the shoulder of the teachers to help students make decisions on aspects that affect their lives. This therefore necessitates the need to strengthen guiding and counseling in schools. This paper examines the role of guiding and counseling in secondary schools mainly in shaping the career life of the teenager and the challenges faced by schools in using it as a measure to replace caning in instilling discipline in the students. The research was based and build on scientific sources, analytical evaluative studies and scientific literature; content analysis of documents and reflection of experience to examine the role of guiding and counseling in secondary schools. From the findings, a conclusion was drawn that to streamline the role of guiding & counseling and overcome the challenges in shaping the students' integrated development, every party including the MOE, policy makers, schools, teachers and parents have a role to play in shaping the life of the child.*

**Key words:** education, guiding and counseling, discipline, character formation.

## Introduction

The origin of Guiding and counseling (G & C) can be traced in Europe and the USA as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century though it did not gain momentum until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when a guidance movement to provide occupational information was started. By 1912, G & C found its way in schools with a hope of helping the students to develop an integrated picture of themselves (Ndambuki, 1999). This was out of the realization that personalities in people is as a result of continues change and development. In the African society, guidance was a common phenomenon where the youth were given education on traditions and culture of the community. It was a social responsibility of the elders and thus, it

was passed on from generation to generation. The main purpose was to mould an individual so as to fit in the society as a responsible member. The task was mainly done by grandmothers for girls and grandfathers for boys through songs, dances and verbal instruction (Mutie, 1999).

In Kenya, like other African countries, the same practice was done, however the roots of G & C in learning institutions can be traced as far back as 1964 when the government saw it necessary to include it in schools as an effort of developing students into responsible adults. Faced with rapid economic, social and technological changes which affected the student, school and community at large, it was imperative to help children make informed decisions. This necessitated the introduction of G & C in secondary schools (Ndambuki, 1999). The fast expanding education system further complicated the situation requiring that trained counselors be posted to schools to handle and guide the students. Under the department of psychology, Kenyatta University has continued to train G & C teachers since 2003 as a measure to provide effective guiding and counseling to secondary school students. The university also offers a postgraduate diploma course in G & C and it is now a requirement for all those training as teachers to take a unit in G & C studies. Introduction of G & C heads of department in secondary schools has further strengthened its services to students in schools. A study carried out by one psychologist on Kenyan students attending provincial schools revealed that, the rise of unrest in schools indicates a students' need that is not being addressed in the school system (Muindi, 2008). This study further recommended intensified G & C in schools as a measure of identifying students' needs and offering possible solutions.

### **Methodology of Research**

Following the banning of caning in secondary schools to be replaced by G & C as a measure to instill discipline in the students; it became necessary to investigate the role of G & C in shaping teenager character towards meaningful development. This too was necessitated by the fact that in the year 2008 the country experienced widespread strikes in secondary schools; it therefore became imperative to examine to what extent G & C can be used to restore sanity in schools. For the purpose of this study, scientific methods were used to collect data on role of G & C in secondary schools; evaluative studies of scientific literature, content analysis of documents and reflection of experience was used to facilitate collection of information on the current status of G & C in secondary schools in Kenya.

### **Results of Research**

The findings have been discussed under the following headings; the role of guiding and counseling its challenges in secondary schools in Kenya. Conclusions and recommendations too have been given.

#### **The Role of Guiding and Counseling in Secondary Schools**

In any learning institution, counselors form an essential part of the organization since they serve as key persons to whom students can turn to for help on matters related to general challenges facing a teenager both in school and out of school. With the too academic oriented education system characterized with exam cheating and results irregularities, students are likely to find themselves faced with difficult decisions to make concerning career choices. Pressure from parents, lack of proper guidance and scarcity of jobs in preferred sectors can be quite overwhelming for a child unless guided appropriately. Apart from career choice, the students are also faced with other adolescent challenges such as relationships, rapid growth and physical changes, peer pressure, addiction to drugs and alcohol, and the need for identity or to "belong".

Across the nation, secondary schools have continued to embrace use of G & C in an attempt to make the student's growth and development as smooth as possible (Sandra, 1999). The school being a social place receives children both from developed and developing communities with varied characteristics and behavior. The G & C teachers have continued to play a crucial role in shaping the psychological, emotional, moral, and spiritual and education development of students. They

have looked after the welfare of the students by assisting them to make decisions from a wide range of choices available. The department has contributed positively to students' academic life by influencing them into making right decisions. Though schools may vary in terms of demography, location, social-economic status and demands, the need for G & C remains the same and counselors must strive to meet the varied needs of the student, teacher, and the school at large for the education system to realize realistic results. This can meaningfully be achieved through the following roles of G & C in secondary schools.

### 1) Integrated Development of the Student

Apart from intellectual development and academic excellence, there is need to ensure total development of the child enabling him/her to easily adapt to the ever changing environment within the school and outside school. Integrated development is essential as it prepares the student for sometimes tough choices they have to make ranging from, study skills, academic achievement, and relationship with peers, teachers and parents. The student being a social being interacts and shares facilities with others from different socio-economic backgrounds therefore requires proper guidance so as to develop qualities that facilitate harmonious interaction. Though G & C has done a commendable job, a lot of emphasis has been geared towards academic excellence. Schools therefore through proper G & C arrangements must ensure that, apart from academic achievement, all the following aspects are developed in a student to help them gain integrated development to cope with the situations they are likely to encounter.

- **Academic Excellence:** Education being the best leveliser by giving an opportunity to the poor and needy to rise in status, the school must guide the child towards academic excellence. With increased workload, change in technology, and change in lifestyle, proper guidance should be given to students to develop good study habits and gain enough confidence to prepare and sit for exams. In some cases the counselor has to give specialized attention to manage crisis such as lack of concentration, poor performance, difficulty in comprehending certain subjects or just lack of interest in schooling on the part of the student. The work of the counselor goes beyond excellence at the school level as proper guidance to the child would ensure they explore all avenues of academic excellence including preparation for careers, scholarships, interviews and the competitive job market. Students from financially low backgrounds are likely to be affected even further because of lack of fees therefore would need guidance concerning availability of bursaries and sponsorship which they can take advantage of to better their chances of upward mobility.
- **Career Choices:** Though academic excellence has been referred to part (a) of point one above, a student's professional world forms an essential part of his/her life. It is one thing to pass exams and another to have a career that allows one to meet the demands of the job market and the society at large. As noted by Phend (1999), counseling has become more focused on developing students' competency not only in academics but also in careers. To plan and build a career, a student must be helped to form an integrated picture of themselves and their role in the professional world. Investing in education becomes meaningful when the end product gives returns to the individual, government and the society (Ayot and Briggs, 1992). A student must therefore be helped to have a clear perspective of the changing society and realize their assets and limitations so that they set attainable goals and make their education meaningful to the individual and the society at large. This would go along way in curbing high levels of education inefficiency where graduates lack employable skills leading to educated unemployment that the current education system is experiencing. Kiumi and Chiuri (2005) notes that, efficiency in education is achieved if the education given yields desirable results to the society and its constituent individuals.
- **Social and Moral Life:** A school being a place where people from heterogeneous background meet for a common goal, it is essential for the counselor to make proper

arrangements to give adequate social adjustment to the students. The students must be well equipped to face and rise above the situations they encounter in relationship to peer pressure, social behavior, making new friends; being leaders among themselves e.t.c. that has characterized our schools today. A counselor must get time to guide the students against anti-social behavior which is bound to affect performance. Listening to the students gives the reassurance, self confidence and a strong self image (Muturi, 2008). As noted by secondary school heads during their 2008, KSSHA annual meeting in Mombasa, schools have of late been rocked by students' unrest that had led to destruction of property and sometimes life (Adan, 2008). They called for the establishment of a commission to look into rampant indiscipline in schools. In his article on parenting and family, Muturi (2008) further adds, attention is synonymous to love, the magnitude and depth of happiness is always determined by how successful one is in giving whole minded attention. The students therefore must be given attention and guidance to help develop a positive social and moral well being.

- **Health and Nutrition:** Through both formal and informal programmes on health education, nutrition and exercise, the G & C unit in secondary schools can help guide and instill hygienic practices, eating habits and sanitation in students to ensure improved health, nutritional status and body physique. Earlier researches have shown that, human development encompasses education and training, better *health and nutrition*, and reduction of fertility, each of which makes its own important contribution to human development. Together, these elements form "a seamless web" in which the links and relationships considerably enhance the productivity of investment in education (Woodhall and Psacharopoulos, 1985). G & C is to assist guide students towards proper sanitation of dormitories, dining hall and the surrounding environment as a measure of controlling diseases. Through the nurse, they can maintain proper health records and assist refer students with medical problems that require attention beyond what the school can offer. Physically disabled students and those with speech and hearing defects do require remedial measures to help them cope with the situation and enjoy their learning. This has been addressed through the establishment of G & C in schools.
- **Students' Personal Problems:** These may be as varied as the total number of students in the school. When students fail to live up to their expectations, they are likely to develop feelings of incompetence and insecurity that can easily disturb their mental equilibrium resulting into low achievement. The secretary-general of the association of Kenya parents further laments millions of youths currently in schools who are now running wild, burning schools, engaging in sex and sinking deep into drugs and alcohol abuse due to parents' failure in their responsibility to guide them (Ngare, 2008). The counselor must be prepared to deal with such problems and appropriately guide the student towards a meaningful development. The most common of these problems may include disappointing memories, strained relationships with teachers, parents or other students, inferiority complex, emotional conflicts and lack of sense of belonging.
- **Co-curricular Activities:** Students need proper guidance so that out of class time is well utilized and geared toward meaningful development of the child. Such activities can be well organized to provide an opportunity for the student to develop a positive inter-personal character. As documented by MOE (1985), only an estimated 20% of the students in schools take part in co-curricular activities while the rest are just on lookers. Lack of proper utilization of such "free" time can cause a student to deviate into anxiety and end up using their time on anti-social behavior to release stress and other emotion related problems. This is a common phenomenon in our schools as more and more parents seek to have their children exempted from curricular activities which they view as a waste of time.

## 2) To Help Shape the Students' Professional World

With the rapidly changing labour market trends, world of work, job requirements and altered market conditions, there is need to guide the students towards setting of meaningful occupational goals. The students should be given relevant information concerning career choices and labour market requirements. Through careful understanding of the student, G & C can help the student choose careers that are consistent with his/her ability. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) note that, students have to be helped in developing an integrated picture of themselves and of their role in the professional world. Left on their own, the students may not know much about the job prospects of what they study, majority of them still look forward for white collar jobs forgetting the ever changing world of technology which has turned many blues white. Education should be made more meaningful to the child then and thereafter and avoid accumulation of papers and certificates that may not help the child to fit in the labour market. A student should pursue education with a clear idea of what they will be to ensure efficient use of human resources. Currently schools are pre occupied with mean scores and attainment of grade 'A' without much thought on possible combination and career alternative for the child. A study carried out by World Bank (2001) reports that, a lot of talent in some of the students remains latent because of laying too much emphasis on academic performance.

## 3) To Curb Indiscipline in Schools

In the recent KSSHA held in Mombasa, the head teachers focused on a wide range of issues which requires that a principal must be adept so as to meet the high expectations of parents and the community at large. Among the key issues was the discipline of the students which must now be carried out within the human rights approach, the administration must make decisions with this in mind so as not to violate the rights of the child. The removal of the cane has made it even more challenging considering the new breed of young people in the society and in our schools. Onyando (2008) argues that, being a principal is a tough job these days, she further comments, on average, school students have access to more information, both good and bad, and they believe they know their rights therefore can challenge the authority. With a liberal society that prefers to give advice and not show the way and many parents wanting disciplined children and not willing to make tough choices, the youth find themselves faced with serious challenges concerning their discipline.

The guiding and counseling unit therefore has a task to help direct students and give them a sense of direction, purpose and self fulfillment geared towards all round excellence performance. Most of the secondary schools across the country are dotted with drug abuse, alcohol, peer influence, poverty, in disciplined children, orphaned children, lesbianism and worse of all HIV/AIDS which make it impossible for the child to cope resulting into academic, social and spiritual stress. Peer influence is quite rampant necessitating the need for counselors to provide useful information that can shape the character of the students.

## 4) Ensure Sound Social and Moral Development of the Students

In a school set up, we can not consider the student in isolation; they interact with others and face different situations in life which may be easy to tackle or sometime requiring tough choices to be made. If not well guided, this could easily lead to problems of adjustments which cause unrest in the child who may find it difficult to cope. The situation is made worse by the fact that parents no longer play their role, Onyando (2008) notes that, parents simply bundle their children off to school and pray that the principal's magic wand will do the trick. Many want the children disciplined but are never willing to make tough choices, the task is presumed to be the teachers'. The school must therefore look for ways of equipping the child with problem-solving skills without interfering with academic performance.

In the same set up, we have children from disadvantaged sections of the society with varied experiences that may make it difficult for them to cope with peers, teachers and the environment. This may range from poor communication, low class participation, withdrawal, depression and lack of interest in co-curricular activities. If not helped, such factors can affect a child's performance not

only academically, but the total wellbeing and development of the child. Guidance and counseling is needed for such students to enable them utilize the available opportunities and realize their full potential. Apart from facing difficult situations, the school is also likely to have children with special needs such as physically handicapped, slow learners, adapted, bereaved e.t.c., such children require support to enable them accept their state and realize their full potentials irrespective of their disability.

Well planned educational programmes can help ease tension, anxiety and depression which would otherwise affect a child's performance. Spiritual nourishment is likewise essential so as to keep the child morally upright. An extract from a report in the daily nation on *Head teachers raise the alarm as students riots become more violent*, Ngare (2008) quotes parents as having said, "We are raising the red flag. Things are not right in our schools. There is no point of producing a bright but morally corrupt and indisciplined youth" Added to that is rampant spread of devil worship in schools, students are bound to be gripped by fear for lack of understanding what it all involves. They have to be given correct information and a way out when handling such cases.

### **Challenges Facing the Role of Guiding and Counseling in Secondary Schools**

In the African traditional society, guidance was accepted as a way of molding an individual into a responsible member of the society. There was guiding and counseling with much emphasis laid on educating the youth on traditions and culture of the community. It was considered a normal way of life where knowledge was passed on from one generation to another without much questioning by those who received the education. Kenya as a country has continued to embrace the same with the MoE strengthening its use in schools by deploying G & C and career masters/mistresses as heads of departments. Some private schools even hire private counselors specifically to help students realize their talent aptitudes (Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999).

Though widely used in schools, it has not been without challenges; the government wants schools to contribute to national cohesion through education, parents want children to access facilities and services they are not prepared to pay for, politicians want to control the school, teachers may make impossible demands and students want easy exams, failure of which they burn the school (Onyando, 2008). The G & C unit in schools is therefore faced with a lot of challenges in an attempt to meet the requirements of the MOE, politicians, school, community, teachers and the students. Attitudinal, situational, institutional and cultural problems including; conflict of interest, human rights approach to issues, excess workload, rampant devil worship in schools, HIV/AIDS, widespread poverty, absent parents among others have continued to undermine the role of G & C in secondary schools.

#### **1) Institutional Challenges.**

These are barriers or challenges arising due to schedules in institutions of learning that make it impossible to fully utilize G & C services in schools.

- **Too wide Curriculum:** The 8.4.4 system of education has a fairly wide curriculum with many subjects which the students are expected to cover. This in itself puts strain, anxiety and stress on the mind of the student. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) notes that, anxiety and stress prevent concentration and effective work. Across the board, lessons start at 8.00 a.m and end at 4.00 p.m with the rest of the time before supper being taken up by co-curricular activities. With such a busy schedule, both the student and the counselor are left with very little time for any effective counseling to take place. While the teacher struggles with marking of books and preparation of lessons, the student has assignments and extra work to do therefore may keep off consultation even if they had a problem. The teacher also has lesson notes to make and record of work to keep, there is no time specifically allocated for G & C, overburdened and pushed to the wall, the teacher may find no time for the child and even when they find, it may not be sufficient to adequately pay attention to the students.
- **Lack of Personnel:** Some schools have G & C heads of department (H.O.D) appointed

by MOE through Teachers' service commission (T.S.C), whereas others are internally appointed. The H.O.D is expected to develop and coordinate counseling services in schools (KESI, 2001). The ever increasing number of secondary school students is almost becoming a barrier to effective counseling in schools. The problems remain as varied as the total number of students against the allowed head of department for different categories of schools. According to the time tabling, curriculum based establishment (CBE), district and 4-streamed provincial schools are entitled to 1 H.O.D and 2 H.O.Ds for national and senior provincial schools (Nyagosia, 2001). Though it is believed that all teachers are counselors, over enrolment in schools has made it impossible for teachers to give individual attention. The situation is even worse when the counselor is a teacher of English or mathematics requiring him/her to mark exercises on daily basis.

- **Lack of Skills for the G & C Teachers/ H.O.Ds:** Though all teachers by virtue of being teachers are supposed to be counselors, they are faced with a challenge of sometimes not having the right skills and approach in helping the clients. For those who go through the training, they cover only one unit of G & C and this is never adequate for the kind of challenges experienced in schools. Without any prior knowledge or mechanism to understand the student, the teacher too may fail to know who the learner is hence failing in assisting the child towards the right channel. Oborah (2008) observes that, parents and teachers fail to direct children to relevant careers because they have known the real ability in them.
- **Government's Policy on Caning/Children's Rights:** With the MOE insisting that discipline must be carried out within human rights approach and more children becoming aware of their rights, there are more cases of indiscipline in schools than there was before. This has increased the number of children requiring special attention in terms of G & C, therefore increased workload for the counselor. The situation has been made worse with the outlawed use of corporal punishment and caning in schools through the children's Act passed in 2001. As noted by Ng'ang'a (2008), most teachers cannot visualize discipline without spanking, they believe it is the only way of awakening some children from moral lethargy where all other methods have failed. He further argues that, many parents, instead of protesting the revival of the cane, encourage teachers to keep up their disciplinary efforts. The Christians among them even quote the bible, "withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beat him with the rod..." Wilkin (2007) in his article on teacher reforms notes that, without knowledge of good teaching practices, discipline without the cane may be asking for impossible from the teacher.
- **Peer Group Pressure:** At this stage the students form a close and strong bond characterized by mob-psychology and rebellion, they easily influence each other and may not take in the advice given. Peers are together most of the time, and free with each other, therefore easy flow of information amongst themselves, they hold unto little secrets that their teacher may never know. The number of students requiring counseling is bound to increase and more erratic behavior is likely to be displayed.

## 2) Situational Challenges

Family commitment, lack of family support, financial constraints and changing lifestyle and expectations of the society undermine the role of the counselor by increasing number of students requiring counseling in secondary schools.

- **"Absent Parents":** Ng'ang'a (2008), laments, unlike the ancient days when a child belonged to the society hence any adult could administer discipline, many modern parents often find themselves too busy to discipline their children and the burden rests wholly on poor teachers who find their hands tied by the law. Ndeta (2007) further adds, since behavior is learnt and environments nurture individuals, parents must strive to provide an atmosphere in which certain virtues can be inculcated in the youngsters. When parents fail to do so, the virtues instilled in the child are easily lost over the holidays and the

counselor has to start all over again when schools re-open. The same parents hardly find time to go to school to discuss their children's progress. If this is carried on for long, the child may feel neglected and will keep repeating the same mistake and if she wins attention, the vicious cycle continues making it difficult to break. In his article, parenting and family, Muturi (2008) says, attention is synonymous to love, and the magnitude and depth of happiness is always determined by how successful a person is in giving whole minded attention.

- Apart from being absent, parents too have become too liberal and prefer to pamper their children. Ngare and Muindi (2008), note that, the problem starts way back in primary school where children are taken to academies that pamper them a lot and when they get to high school they find it hard to follow rules and regulations and more often they rebel. There is always a mad rush to court by parents whenever things fall out of hand. The secretary-general of the association of Kenya parents notes that, parents will always prefer to put children in boarding schools the moment they notice signs of indiscipline.
- **The Mass Media/Pornography:** The media has been blamed for playing a role in corrupting students by failing to censor programmes on local television stations (Muindi, 2008). This has allowed the student a wide range of information both good and bad and in some cases more than what the teacher knows. Equipped with information on their rights, the children feel they have authority to challenge the teacher. What they watch and read as they call it leisure time, decays their morals because of the materials that they contain. Some cause curiosity in the child leading to unacceptable behavior such as lesbianism, homosexuality, and masturbation. To complicate matters even further, young people face serious challenges growing up in a liberal society that prefers to give advice, but not show the way. One that sends them mixed signals on just about everything and role models who preach water and drink wine (Onyando, 2008). With adults who sought out issues by demonstrating on streets, the children are bound to copy the same hence the strikes we see today.
- **HIV/Aids:** This has increased the number of orphans who, because of poor living conditions and no one to turn to, may fall easy prey to alcoholism, drugs, rampant sexual activity, pregnancy, school drop-out, early marriages e.t.c. Poverty pushes young girls into activities that expose them to sexual exploitation and survival sex for exchange of money and food (Akinyi and Otieno, 2008). A study done by the centre of the study of adolescents further revealed that more than 56% of the secondary school students engage in sex for money. In some cases, children have to stay away from school to take care of their sick parents and this result into poor performance that is quite depressing to a child hence requiring G & C services. According to studies carried out earlier, school attendance of infected and affected children was poor in some cases leading to dropping out of school (MOH, 2005). For the infected students, life may be unbearable especially when other students get wind of it.

### 3) Attitudinal/Cultural Challenges

Perceived differences, attitudes and cultural set up of different groups of people may sometimes lower the self-esteem of a counselor therefore challenging his/her efforts to reach the affected.

- **Gender:** This is common in schools where the counselor is of different sex from the clients. Students find it difficult to open up if a counselor is of opposite sex. In some cases even where students would be willing to open up, the female teachers may look at the male teacher with suspicion and even discourage female students from consulting.
- **The Students' Attitude:** Because of the society they have grown in, or through the mass media, children have witnessed horrific incidents of violence leaving indelible marks on their minds. Ngare (2008), in his article on post-poll chaos and drug abuse, quotes the Kenya secondary schools heads association chairman as having said, " We are dealing with students who have embraced the notion that violence can be a means of achieving

goals". The children are therefore bound to react negatively if they feel they are not being given a chance to participate in shaping their destiny. This becomes a challenge to G & C because the students may not readily accept the programmes that they put in place especially so if they feel the programmes are outdated. The affected child too, out of fear of being seen as having a problem keeps off the G & C offices and may not talk to anybody about what they are encountering. The teacher on the other hand, without any special mechanism to identify such, may fail to reach out for the child and assist her/him.

- **Complex Culture:** As the culture becomes more complex, it creates a disharmony with people attempting to cope with the changing situations. Otunga and Ochieng' (2007) in their paper on strengthening of G & C services in schools, document that, unlike the traditional society where children learnt desirable behaviors by watching their parents. The emphasis now has changed its focus on preparing an individual for the modern changes. This has come with its own wide range of influence on human behavior and attitude.

## Conclusion

In the first part, the paper examined the role of G & C in secondary schools and it was noted that, other than guiding and counseling students with deviant behavior, G & C is to reach out to all the students and ensure integrated development of all aspect of a child's life irrespective of their displayed character. In the second part, the paper looked at challenges facing the role of G & C in secondary schools; though the MOE has put emphasis on it as a means of strengthening discipline in schools, institutional, situational and attitudinal challenges have continued to undermine its role in shaping the character of the child. The big question still remains, who is to blame for unrest in schools? Has G & C failed? Is it the child for his/her riotous behavior? Is it the teacher for his/her laxity? Is it the governments' directives or the too liberal a society in which the child lives in?

## Recommendations

In an attempt to streamline the role of G & C and overcome the challenges in shaping the students' integrated development, the MOE, policy makers, schools, teachers and parents should do the following;

- (i.) With all children being different, the MoE should put in place measures to help the teacher define a possible career path for the child so that they are not overburdened with unmanageable workload that leads to academic stress and at times anti-social behavior. The MOE can adapt the DALC (Digital Advisory Learning Centre) approach of giving greater attention to the innate potentials of a student by assessing the needs of the child with bias to career formulation using gift and talent testing tools.
- (ii.) All teachers must be equipped with relevant G & C knowledge and should undergo frequent refresher courses and seminars so as to have appropriate skills to co-ordinate and be able to initiate relevant programmes to reach each child in the school set-up.
- (iii.) Having independent counseling departments in schools, the MOE through Teachers' service commission should consider posting to schools, counselors specifically to handle G & C cases in schools and not handle any other subjects so as to give them sufficient time to co-ordinate the activities.
- (iv.) G & C should not work in isolation but ensure integrated growth and development of the child through other arms such as boarding and careers departments so as to reach as many students as possible.
- (v.) Routine visits to the school by parents to discuss the child's progress should be mandatory so that the parents do not evade their responsibility of helping shape the child's character.
- (vi.) Through the media and organized seminars, the government can sensitize head teachers, teachers and parents to know that, being role models, inculcating of any good mannerism

- in a child starts with them as children seem to hold what they do as gospel truth.
- (vii.) Appointment of heads of institutions should be done by the teachers' service commission with the assistance of the board of governors governing the school instead of it being left to the politicians.
  - (viii.) Review children's Act so as to clearly define the child's rights, freedom, responsibility and accountability.
  - (ix.) There is need for the MoE to rethink form of evaluation so that it is not only based on final exam after the four-year course as this has resulted into a lot of exam cheating, irregularities and unrest in schools.

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