

**ROLE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR EMPOWERMENT IN CURRENT  
CONTEXT OF ESWATINI**

**By**

**1. DR. WEBSTER CHIHAMBAKWE**

**SENIOR LECTURER**

**FACULTY OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**ESWATINI MEDICAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

**[Chihambakwebster71@gmail.com](mailto:Chihambakwebster71@gmail.com) or [websterchihambakwe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:websterchihambakwe@yahoo.co.uk)**

**2. MS. PAMELA GAMBE**

**TEACHER, FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS**

**USUTU FOREST SCHOOL, P.O. BOX A624, MHLAMBANYATSI, KINGDOM OF  
ESWATINI.**

**EMAIL ADDRESS: [pam.gambe@gmail.com](mailto:pam.gambe@gmail.com)**

**ABSTRACT**

There has been varied understanding on what guidance and counselling is all about in Africa. Guidance and counselling has been an important subject within the Higher Education Sector (HES) of Eswatini that has been used to address varied issues from students, lecturers and administrators. It has been observed that good lecturers have been interested in providing assistance to students to help them overcome their academic challenges, substance abuse, drug abuse, stress, depression and anxiety. These challenges emanated from the different styles of learning and adjustment at university so as to ensure optimum achievement and profitable placement in their careers. This study focused on the role of guidance and counselling for empowerment in the current context of Eswatini. Within this context matters on mental health services provision and the impact of guidance and counselling within the HES were unpacked in great depth. The representative sample consisted of eight lecturers, ten students and four administrators and this sample was drawn from four universities. Sampling technique used was purposive. The Homogenous Sampling Method was further used as it focused more on participants who shared similar traits or specific characteristics, for example, ages, cultures, jobs or life experiences. In data analysis, the thematic analysis was employed in analyzing the data that had been generated. Qualitative research approach and case study design were employed to guide the methodology. Data research instruments used were interviews, focused group discussions and document analysis.

**Key words:** Counselling, Guidance, Mental Health, and Mental Health.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally and in the higher education sector, guidance and counselling mantra has remained a cog when it comes to nurturing students in their careers. Furthermore, guidance and counseling has been an essential element in discipline management of people in all societies globally. The significance of guidance and counselling has also become of paramount importance in the mental health sphere as it provides that much needed relief to issues of substance abuse, drug abuse, stress, depression and anxiety just to mention a few. Historically, even the most primitive societies grew out of the necessity of guiding individual's behaviour patterns in the interest of children. Society itself could not function without the exercise of discipline. Hendrikz (1986) stresses that teachers and school administration have the responsibility of ensuring that students matures steadily along his own personal line. Students are priceless assets and most essential element in education. Meyer (1991) states that discipline problems in schools and institutions of higher learning are perhaps the single greatest cause of concern for educators globally. Discipline is consistently identified as serious school problem in public opinion polls Meyer (1991) and some authors believe that school discipline in the United States has not change greatly since (Rue & Byarr, 1992).

Guidance and counselling is an important higher educational tool in shaping the orientation in a child from negative ideas that is planted in the child by his/her peers when they enroll in colleges and universities. Hence the need for guidance and counsellor to assist the child in molding their future through counselling therapy in the context of mental health challenges. The higher education guidance and counsellor is seen as a role model and highly respected by students. The guidance counsellors by their training are expected to be friends with the students, listen to the student's complains, short comings and proffer guidance to the student in a quest of molding the student in the right part to take in their life pursuit of their educational achievement. According to Egbo (2013), he posited that "the total development of a child can only take place in an environment conducive for teaching and learning". It is in realization of the above that all educational services which can promote teaching and learning in schools are given prominent attention by educational planners.

Guidance and Counselling services are among the school educational services. It is believed that guidance and counselling services in schools shall develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the competence of the teacher and reduce cost for the children. The school children are undergoing some of the most difficult periods of life. The transition from childhood to adulthood is a difficult one, even for the most balanced child. Apart from the influence of the family, the other major influence on the young person's life is the school and the school environment. The most that other influences can attempt to do is to help each young person to cope with the changes and wrought associate with adolescence, to develop a sense of responsibility, to make definite and considerable personal decisions. In short, families and schools have a duty to assist young people in their self-growth towards becoming a self-fulfilled and well-adjusted adult. Counselling and guidance can provide a good basis for a broader education for life. While being non-medical and non-psychiatric, it can be used as therapy for individuals with specific personal problems, or it can be the foundation of a more general "life

## **2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study was focused on the role of guidance and counselling for empowerment in the current context of Eswatini.

## **3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

To establish the role of guidance and counselling for empowerment in the current context of Eswatini.

## **4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

What is the role of guidance and counselling for empowerment in the current context of Eswatini?

## **5 RESEARCH METHOD**

In this study, qualitative methodology/approach was used in which a variety of qualitative multi-methods were used to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to attitudes, perceptions and behaviour. Qualitative research approach and case study design was employed to guide the research methodology. Data research instruments used were interviews, focused group discussions and document analysis. For data analysis, the thematic analysis was used. The targeted participants were lecturers, students and administrators drawn from four universities. Qualitative approach was judged by the researchers to be the best in eliciting the participant's perceptions, feelings, attitudes, opinions, interactions, behaviours, actions regarding the issue of guidance and counselling in higher education institutions. The study also involved the examination of local guidance and counselling policies, regional and international instruments on guidance and counselling as well as the writings of various authors on the subject of guidance and counselling in context of Eswatini.

## **6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Varied findings were revealed with regards to guidance and counselling for empowerment in current context of Eswatini. Within the field of guidance and counseling, one of the researcher's findings was to do with definitions of these terms. These two terms (guidance and counselling) carried distinct connotations, that is, "Guidance" typically refers to the holistic development of students, whereas "Counseling" is often focused on resolving specific problems. In other words, guidance aims to be proactive and supportive of growth, while counseling is typically reactive and remedial. Secondly, it was noted from the study was that there was a general consensus amongst the participants on the significance of guidance and counselling services in the HES especially in universities. It was like the participants were very cognizant to mental health issues that were destroying families, communities and the nation at large that needed guidance and counsellors to address. Substance and drug abuse, alcohol abuse, stress, and depression reverberated much from participants. Students learning in both secondary and universities was now on the low ebb due the above stated issues, Thirdly, the researcher also noted from the analysis of documents that the global trend in the context of guidance and counselling services has shifted from a casework and problem-solving approach to a preventative and developmental approach to providing guidance and counselling services. This finding from this resonated with the findings of Lai-Yeung (2014). Akinade (2012) defines guidance and counselling as a process that helps individuals gain a complete understanding of themselves, including how they respond to environmental influences. This process further aids individuals in identifying personal significance in their

behaviour and in creating and organizing a set of objectives and principles for future behaviour.

Counselling is a process that involves various techniques aimed at assisting individuals in finding solutions to their problems. It is a personalized learning experience that is emotionally involved, focusing on the affective realm of an individual's emotions, feelings, values, and attitudes. The counselling process involves an interactive relationship between two or more individuals, with the client and counsellor building a relationship of trust. These concepts have been discussed by various authors, including Adebowale (2012), and Oviogbodu (2015). From the study findings, it was conceived that the approaches put in place were not effective in enhancing guidance and counseling for empowerment in the context of Eswatini. As a result, there is need for guidance and counselling teachers and university lectures to use small-group counselling approach and understand and respect the society created by students within their own context. Online systems should also be used to provide individual and group counselling. Additionally, student-focused interventions should be implemented in order to enhance guidance and counselling. There is also need to embrace dialogue in resolution of conflict. This can be enhanced through building a strong relationship between the students, guidance counsellors, teachers, lecturers and administrators to an extent that they are free to speak out issueless the affect both parties.

Study findings also showed that unfriendliness and cheating in examination was prevalent among the students. Hence, as a result there is need for guidance and counselling measures to focus on correcting insecurity and poor socialization among the students so that they are friendly to each other. Further, students should be guided on how to take care of their environment and also the need of taking care of learning materials. It was also inferred from the findings that there is lack of required facilities to nurture students to become functioning members of the ever changing society. There is therefore need for secondary schools and universities to provide facilities like counselling offices, magazines, audio and video tapes among others. Also, the guidance and counselling department should create a well-structured program that will enable it to address issues of discipline among students. Study findings have also shown that guidance and counseling is crucial in enhancing discipline among the students. It is therefore necessary for the Ministry of Education and Training to organize in-service training for administrators, teachers and guidance and counselling teachers on how guidance and counselling should be used to manage students discipline in school.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, guidance and counselling services are essential in helping students make informed decisions about their lives and future ambitions. The role of a guidance counsellor in building the confidence of a student cannot be overstated, as it allows for a healthy relationship that promotes trust and the sharing of vital information. Furthermore, counselling is not only necessary for students in university confines but also for adults who may be facing difficult situations in their personal or professional lives. It is important to understand that seeking guidance and counselling is a sign of strength, and not a weakness. With the right guidance, individuals can overcome challenges and achieve their desired goals. Additionally, guidance and counselling play a crucial role in promoting the mental and emotional well-being of children/students in schools. Counsellors can help students identify and manage their emotions, cope with stress and anxiety, and build healthy relationships with their peers,

teachers and family members. By providing a safe and non-judgmental space for students to express themselves, counsellors can empower them to navigate the challenges of life and develop the resilience and coping skills necessary for a successful and fulfilling future. Overall, guidance and counselling are valuable tools in promoting the holistic development of students at school, family level and empowering them to become confident, responsible, and well-adjusted members of society.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Government through the Ministry of Education and Training to put in place functional and effective guidance and counselling human capital in all primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

## **9 REFERENCES**

- Akinade, E. A. (2012). *Modern Behaviour modification, principles and practices*. Ibadan: *Bright Way Publishers*.
- Bennars, G. A., Otiende J. E., & Boisvert, R. (1994). *Theory and practice of education*. Nairobi: *East African Education Publishers Ltd*.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2006). *Developing and managing your school guidance program*. Washington, DC: *American Counselling Association*.
- Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (1994). *Developing and managing your school guidance program*. Alexandria, V. A.: *American Counselling Association*.
- Heyden, S. M. (2011). *Counselling children and adolescents*. Belmont, CA: Brooks / Cole.
- Kothari. (2005). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. Inyata: *KWTS Publishers*.
- Lai-Yeung, S. W. C. (2014). The need for guidance and counselling training for teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 113, 36–43. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.008.