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Chapter

Enhancing Students' Self-Efficacy: Implication for High School Guidance and Counselling Educators

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Abstract

As students enter high school, they face a myriad risk of adverse outcomes such as pressure to perform or drop out; peer influence to conform or be an outcast; drug and substance abuse; delinquency, poverty and possibly abuse and neglect. It is also at this stage where most teenage students experience identity crisis. As a result, students' self-efficacy is then impaired, and their resilience diminished with every stress and trauma they experience. Thus far, there has been scanty research in utilising classroom guidance in understanding what factors impact or not, and how school counsellors choose to engage in classroom guidance. While much guidance and counselling in schools has focused on career choices, sexual and physical harassment, and perhaps, bereavement, abuse and neglect, very little is known on how detrimental lack of self-efficacy and resilience is to the high school student. Even though educators aim to cover the academic syllabus, it is also essential that operative guidance and counselling should also pay equal attention to the social syllabus. This chapter aims to explore the factors that are detrimental to students' self-efficacy, resilience and coping mechanism; how classroom guidance and counselling can reduce the risk of the adverse outcomes in the society.

Keywords: counselling, resilience, self-concept, self-esteem, withdrawn behaviour

1. Introduction

'What people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave' [1].

High school students encounter a myriad of learning hindrances that may negatively affect their education by distracting them from studying or may enhance performance by inspiring students to resolve the challenges as they arise. Intellectual deficiencies, difficulties understanding the taught concepts, poverty, abuse and neglect are some of the hindrances that may negatively affect students' ability to execute their studies to expected levels. The works of Solberg et al. [2] and McKechnie [3] found that numerous stressors such as higher crime rates, unemployment strain of parents, financial privation, teen pregnancy, violence, and drug and alcohol abuse cause personal psychological distress to students affecting

all areas of their life. Usually, when students find themselves in difficult situations, they tend to be engrossed in their personal insufficiencies and on the obstacles, they encounter instead of concentrating on their learning so that they successfully perform. Some of them easily give up when they face challenges and may not recuperate their sense of efficacy following failure. They quickly lose faith in their competences and succumb to stress, depression and dropout [4]. In this chapter, types of abuse and neglect, intellectual deficiencies and poverty are explored showing how they affect students' self-efficacy causing their learning hindrances. Furthermore, the chapter endeavours to outline the stratagems for developing or promoting self-efficacy that defies the power of these hindrances in future. The association between school counsellors' self-efficacy beliefs concerning performance or skills related to giving classroom guidance and the agreed outcome about the frequency school counsellors implement classroom guidance is explored. It is therefore imperative that the concept of self-efficacy is clarified, and the role that school counsellors play is explained.

2. The concept of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a concept that is more like academic confidence and is entrenched in Badura's social cognitive theory which he describes as the degree to which a student feels proficient to effectively achieve in school-related tasks [1]. Reiterating on his earlier sentiments, Bandura [5] explains self-efficacy as the belief in one's ability to influence events that effect one's life and control over the way these events are experienced. In his later edition, Bandura [6] defines self-efficacy as 'beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments'. Similarly, Nasiriyan et al. [7] refer to self-efficacy as student's beliefs in their capability to learn new skills and tasks, frequently in a precise academic area. Consequently, apparent self-efficacy is a concept in which people believe that they can produce given attainments [8]. Explaining self-efficacy in the theoretical framework of social cognitive theory by [1, 9, 10] detailed that people's achievement hinges on the interactions between an individual's behaviours, personal issues and ecological circumstances. Self-efficacy can be perceived as negatively or positively influencing students' achievement. Therefore, self-efficacy is the judgement one places on their capability, and not their anticipated performance or achievement.

Self-efficacy is comparable to terms such as self-concept, self-esteem and self-appraisal. Self-concept is the cognitive or intellectual facet of self usually referring to the entirety of a complex, organised, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person embraces as the truth about his or her personal existence [11]. Just as self-efficacy, the concept of self-concept is believing in one's ability to achieve in set assignments. Self-esteem is the affective emotional aspect of self and mostly referring to how one feels about or how one values themselves. It is how one views their self-worth. A student may feel they are worthy of performing or may feel they are not capable of achievement. Self-appraisal is self-assessment that is a descriptive and evaluative decision that the student makes concerning his or her own work and academic aptitudes.

Academic self-efficacy is the self-assurance revealed by the persons in their expertise to complete academic tasks at the desired outcome [12]. The scholars above advocate that when students have higher academic self-efficacy, their effort shows greater determination in doing academic tasks. Intrinsic motivation also drives them to overcome any challenging situations during learning sessions. An individual's self-efficacy influences on how they reason, feel and perform. The works of Bandura [9, 13] have shown that when a person possesses a strong sense

of self-efficacy, they usually set higher goals for themselves, are highly motivated, and have the desired resiliency to complete their set goals. While self-efficacy does not straight forwardly measure the skilfulness of an individual, it influences how they decide on engaging on the task, the amount of effort they will put forth, their performance and how they deal with failure [9]. To them, Bandura [6] assert that their beliefs about their skill level is more important and is the driving force to their achievement. For this reason, Van Dinther et al. [14] encourage educational psychologists to investigate the role of self-efficacy in learning. The focus of psychologists should be on adolescents because they are vulnerable to unstable emotions and augmented risk-taking tendencies. For this reason, Kia-Keating et al. [15] postulate that during adolescence, the instructional role is essential in developing effective habits and competencies that impact on young people's well-being and resilience throughout their lives.

Extensive studies reveal that students who believe they can accomplish an academic task are far more likely to persevere and overcome obstacles to successfully achieve the assignment. Conversely, in the absence of self-confidence to perform a task or overcome a challenge, students are more likely to surrender and may even accept defeat by circumventing the assignment [6, 16]. Self-efficacy effectively predicts the imminent academic performance of students, and comparable research confirms that this hypothesis has sturdier predictive influence than other non-cognitive skills [17]. However, students may have high self-efficacy but due to challenges such as poverty, financial deprivation and teen pregnancy, they may postpone their studies to a later stage. On the other hand, these adversities may also motivate the student to work extra hard to liberate themselves from these hardships. Authors in Ref. [18] are of the opinion that the success of the students, predominantly depends on their responsiveness regarding their capabilities and the motivation to apply learning strategies.

3. Factors that promote self-efficacy among high school students

In his works, Bandura [6, 19] proposes breaking down the concept self-efficacy into four empirical sources which have evolved over the years, but finally documented as (1) master/performance accomplishments, (2) modelling/vicarious experiences, (3) social/verbal persuasion and (4) affective/emotional arousal [19]. Furthermore, Bandura [1, 6] advocates that mastery/performance achievements have a greater impact on self-efficacy because the student is directly involved in completing specified tasks. In any given task, success enhances self-efficacy while failing to accomplish the work reduces self-efficacy. More scholars have concurred with Bandura's [6] social cognitive theory proposing that self-efficacy is a domain-precise confidence in an individual's capacity to fruitfully achieve in a given task, which positively impacts on action and success in completing the task [20–22].

Clearly, success or mastery is a factor that promotes self-efficacy and once it is firmly established in an individual, any other sporadic failures have little impact on self-efficacy [1, 6]. When someone is successful, self-efficacy increases; but, failure to complete the job lowers self-efficacy. Nevertheless, after self-efficacy is established through direct success in a specific field, intermittent failure has a limited effect. In addition, mastery in one area usually increases self-efficacy in the other area since the student generalises his or her self-efficacy to other areas.

Modelling/vicarious experiences is the second source of self-efficacy where an individual sees the other person achieving in a specific task and envisages how he or she might perform in the equivalent or comparable situation [1, 22]. Observation is another factor that inspires self-efficacy especially when one

watches a classmate perform excellently in a task. Students usually admire highfliers in class and desire to associate with them; hence, they equally work harder to earn friendship. Observing peers succeed in given tasks elevates the observers' beliefs that they too can equally succeed in similar activities. Modelling influences provide a social standard against which the observer judges their own abilities. The observer gains skills and strategies to manage performance tasks by emulating people who possess the competencies to which they aspire. Although vicarious experiences impact self-efficacy, Bandura [1] asserts that they are not as influential as effectively participating in the activity itself.

Social/verbal persuasion is the third source of self-efficacy in which individuals permit themselves to be convinced that they too can successfully deal with a difficult situation that they previously perceived to be beyond their capacities [1]. When one is verbally convinced that they can equally do the task, they are more likely to activate greater determination and succeed. On the other hand, harbouring self-doubts and dwelling on personal deficiencies when problems arise diminishes self-efficacy. Persuasion is putting pressure on someone leading them to give their best shot to succeed thereby promoting development of skills and boosting their self-efficacy. However, peer pressure in schools makes students conform to fit in the group. Affective/emotional arousal is proposed as the last source of self-efficacy [6]. The state of emotional stimulation of a person can influence their self-efficacy. Bandura [1] envisages that a high level of anxiety in a student due to a specific task or situation such as public speaking, may lower the sense of self-efficacy. However, continuous success in a task can lower the student's anxiety level thereby increasing their self-efficacy.

3.1 Appraisal of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is developed through the way a student interprets their performance. Brown [23] defines appraisal as self-assessment which is 'an evaluative and descriptive task done by the student regarding his or her own work and academic capabilities'. Correspondingly, Panadero et al. [24] describe it as a 'various techniques and mechanisms which enable students to describe (i.e. assess) and conceivably allocate merit or worth to (i.e. evaluate) the potentials of their own educational processes and achievements'. According to Corkett et al. [25], this self-assessment ensures students of a positive correlation between self-efficacy and achievement. In this vein, appraisal of self-efficacy is the way a student assesses their performance and achievement in the learning environment. Studies have found that there is a correlation between students' self-efficacy and their academic performance [26, 27].

Students appraise their self-efficacy from four primary sources outlined by Bandura [6] as: (a). Enactive mastery experiences that serve as indicators of competence. Success enhances self-efficacy while failures depress it; (b) vicarious experiences that alter beliefs through communication of proficiencies in comparison with others' achievements; (c) verbal encouragement by peers that they have certain abilities; and (d) physiological and affective states from which they conclude their ableness. Consequently, the most influential source of efficacy beliefs is enactive experiences because they prediction is based on personal experience outcomes, while vicarious influences depend on an observer's self-comparison with as well as outcomes attained by a model. Verbal persuasion has less impact on students' self-efficacy as the conclusions are described, not directly experienced, and thus depends on the integrity of the narrating person [28]. According to Corkett et al. [25], the four main constructs are not hierarchical and all of them can possibly influence a student's self-efficacy simultaneously.

4. Hindrances to student self-efficacy

Faulty self-appraisal severely handicaps students especially when they perceive incredulity in their efficacy. Students who continually underperform fear taking up new challenges because of their idealistically low self-efficacy while those with quixotically high self-efficacy perform on faulty efficacy decisions preventing them from proper learning. Hoy and Spero [29] ascertain that when self-efficacy is created, it can be resistant to change; hence, they urge educators to put emphasis on young students' self-efficacy. It becomes essential that students develop accurate self-appraisal and change all negatively inclined system of self-appraisal.

Besides faulty self-appraisal, Ünal [30] found that parent–child relationships in family environments can negatively affect children's mental health, personality development and self-efficacy. Even though the household environment is expected to be a safe haven for children, some children have experienced numerous adversities such as abuse and exploitation, thus negatively affecting their physical, mental and social development, with many parents intentionally or unintentionally hurting their offspring [31]. Child neglect is usually described as the failure of an individual to fulfil his/her responsibility of caring for a child physically or mentally, take no notice of the child's protection, nutrition, clothing, medical care, education and general well-being [3, 32].

Many studies reveal that exposure to a variety of life stressors, such as childhood abuse and neglect, can negatively affect social-psychological resources like self-efficacy [33] and increase vulnerability to risks health and life-threatening status. Prominently, an array of hardships and negative outcomes linked with stress affect self-efficacy which in turn influences the relationship between child abuse and negative outcomes [34, 35]. Contrasting neglect and abuse, Petersen et al. [36] assert that abuse is active while neglect is a passive occurrence. Self-efficacy is anchored on the attachment theory which underscores the prominence of a child's relationship with their primary caregiver [37] and that the quality of this attachment provides the 'secure-base' where the child benefits mastery experience [38–40]. Research indicates that violating the attachment theory through childhood abuse has a negative influence on the individual's self-cognitions [41]. Students who have secure attachments early in life can satisfy their needs through their own efforts while those with those with insecure attachments due to abuse and neglect tend to lack personal control affecting their self-efficacy. Abuse manifests in various forms such as emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological and social problems and neglect which collectively cause trauma and depression, substance dependency, problems in interpersonal relations leading to lowered self-esteem [42, 43].

5. The impact of self-efficacy on quality education in high schools

Self-efficacy has been meta-analysed for more than two decades revealing that efficacy beliefs contribute significantly to students' level of motivation and learning [6], socio-cognitive functioning, emotional well-being and performance accomplishments [26, 44]. Thus, these are considered critical for educating young people [28, 45]. Self-efficacy influences cognitive and meta-cognitive functioning concepts such as analytical strategy use, decision-making, self-evaluation, problem-solving, time management and self-regulating stratagems, all which impact on academic achievement [6, 45]. Efficacy beliefs play an indispensable role in all stages of self-regulation and achievement [44]. Efficacy makes students to be highly motivated and have a sense of agency in their learning by setting themselves high goal which they monitor and evaluate regularly. Through this strategy they are able to judge

their performance and setting more challenging goals for themselves and achieving them. This strategy contributes to quality education as students strive to produce good work [28].

6. The role of guidance and counselling in enhancing self-efficacy and resilience to high school students

Guidance and counselling programmes have been in existence in educational institutions over the years. However, the traditional approaches that have been used are no longer relevant to meet the needs of the students in the current environment. At present, learning effectiveness and efficiency are being stressed to realise the goal of educating responsible and productive citizens who have a global consciousness. In line with United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, where emphasis is on developing twenty-first century skills and competences among students, there is need for comprehensive guidance and counselling programmes which are critical to help prepare students to meet the challenges of the future [46, 47].

The terms guidance and counselling have engendered debate among scholars in the field concerning whether the two concepts reflect similar process activities or both terms should remain independent because there exist some differences between the two [48]. Scholars like Shertzer and Stone, cited in [48], maintain that differences between guidance and counselling often tend to be artificial, forced or contrived and theoretical rather than qualitative and practical in nature, hence, the terms should be used interchangeably. Yet, other authorities, such as Rao cited in [48], argue that even though the two terms are almost similar and appear to be two sides of the same coin, subtle differences exist between them. Hence, there is a need to clarify the two concepts, so that they are explicitly understood.

6.1 The concept of guidance

According to [49], guidance is a developmental process whereby an individual is helped to appreciate, accept and practise his/her abilities, skills and interests and attitudinal patterns relating to his/her aspirations. In educational settings, guidance comprises of those experiences that help each student to understand and accept him/herself, and effectually live in his/her society. This is over and above what the student experiences in the work places. In agreement, is the National Council of Educational Research and Training [50], which views guidance as what competent counsellors do to an individual or a group of students in the form of assistance that directs the progression in life, develop a point of view, decision-making and be better adjusted. Ideally, guidance is not giving directions, or imposing one's point of view on another person. The person offering guidance does not take the responsibility of making decisions on behalf of the client. In reality, guidance is not giving ready-made solutions, but rather assisting people to navigate through their problems to come up with solutions.

UNESCO Guidance [49] views guidance as a needs-based programme or services to students facing various challenges in education or life in general. Through guidance, a student is assisted in setting realistic goals for themselves, so that they can adapt to the environment and improve in their education. Guidance, therefore, contains a succession of actions that are progressive towards goal achievement. Thus, from the given definitions, the subsequent salient points emerge:

- Guidance is a purposeful helping relationship.

- It is a planned educational programme provided for students by guidance specialists and educators on continuous basis.

- Guidance is intended to assist the individual students to understand and accept themselves and the world around them, thereby becoming responsible and productive citizens.

Basically, four major guidance services can be singled out as educational, vocational, academic, personal and social guidance. These are discussed in the succeeding sections.

6.2 Educational guidance

Educational guidance can be differentiated from any other form of guidance as its focus is on assisting students make choices in and adjusting to the school curriculum, career pursuit and life in general. Educational guidance is an essential counselling service for students to pursue the right type of education while ensuring that they choose appropriate career meeting the national human resource needs. It is a process through which students take up suitable educational programmes such as choice of subjects, courses, type of schools or colleges and progress in them. For example, female students should be encouraged to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and need to be guided away from those educational myths which contribute to the reluctance of females to pursue male dominated careers [49].

Educational guidance is important in higher and tertiary institutions in the following ways:

- It assists students to pursue the right type of education which motivates them to effectively contribute to the society.

- It assists individuals to make informed decisions between subjects, curricula, schools or colleges for their education to be meaningful to society.

- It enables the smooth changeover for students from home to school, from elementary to high school, from high school to tertiary institutions and to the world of work or entrepreneurship, where the labour force is important and yet challenging for students.

- It enables students to handle examination anxiety, as most of them are afraid of failure, and the desire for the higher grades is the key source of pressure among students.

- It assists students to develop effective study habits, as that improves their capability in reading, note-taking and academic attainment.

- It affords students the chance to relate the curriculum to occupational groups, so that they gain meaningful educational experiences [49].

Examination preparation includes study skills, time-tabling, note-taking and sitting for examinations. These are explained below.

6.2.1 Study skills

Lack of effective study habits and skills leads to failure, hence students should be encouraged to spend a substantial amount of time on meaningful school activities and effectively studying to be productive and spend less time on leisure [49].

6.2.2 Time-tabling

Students need to be encouraged to develop a formal time schedule and a personal study time-table, regulate their movements and avoid the tendency of procrastination in their work causing them to work under pressure. Effectively, time-tabling enables students to prioritise study times as considerate obligations while respecting times for home chores and recreation as they are equally essential [49].

6.2.3 Note-taking

Students are expected to take notes during class sessions, yet most of them find the task difficult. Due to lack note-taking skills, some teachers resort to prepare notes and distribute them to their students or write notes on the chalkboard for students on copy. Even though this strategy might prepare students for their examinations, it also deprives them of a chance to learn how to select major points from a lesson or lecture. Students tend to be truant for lessons relying on handouts which does not adequately prepare them for examinations [48, 49].

6.2.4 Sitting for examinations

Examinations are valuable tools for assessing the effectiveness of educational programmes and appraising students' progress but they are often misused and abused, particularly when accepting or eliminating students from some programmes. All the same, students face numerous limitations of examinations in measuring other skills that students might possibly have assimilated during their course of the year. Dealing with examinations related anxiety and stress becomes essential for every student to learn though proper guidance [49].

7. Academic counselling

Academic counselling is a crucial facet of educational guidance which should be offered to students at various levels in their educational development. Students that are gifted and talented may require counselling that is different from the low achievers, the handicapped and delinquents, hence the need for an appraisal of the educational needs for every student [49]. This stance calls for professional guidance counselling to prepare a cumulative record so as to adequately assist all types of students in their dilemmas [48]. The school guidance counsellor must give students information such as:

- How to effectively use of the library;
- What to study;
- Where to study;
- When to study; and
- How to study.

7.1 Vocational guidance

Choosing and preparing for a career can be a daunting experience for students in which vocational guidance becomes a necessary process for assisting students choose an occupation, be adequately prepared for it, be engage in it and advance themselves in it. Fundamentally, a student's interests, aptitudes, personality and suitability for the type of work should be considered when giving vocational guidance [49].

7.2 Individual and societal guidance

Individual and societal guidance is a process that assists an individual or groups of people to relate considerably towards other people. Mostly, individual and societal guidance is beneficial for students with self-awareness, learn interpersonal skills, learn demeanours and etiquette, wisely pursue leisure time activities, develop family relationships and understand their roles and responsibilities in the society [49].

8. The concept of counselling

Counselling can be defined as a learning-oriented process, that develops an interactive relationship, whose main objective is to develop self-awareness so that one becomes more relevant as an effective member of society. Counselling is described as a process undertaken by a helper who expresses care and concern towards an individual with a problem in order to enable that individual's personal growth which brings about transformation through self-awareness [14]. Concurring National Council of Educational Research and Training [50] refers to counselling as a therapeutic and interactive learning process through which the counsellor assists the counselee to identify the origin(s) of problems and guides them in categorising issues and making wise decisions. Although counselling is all-inclusive, addressing cultural, economic, emotional and social issues, it can be required at any time in life as people need change or face a crisis. Below are the aims of counselling as outlined by Van Dinther et al. [14]:

1. To assist students in understanding the origins and development of emotional hitches so that they develop the capacity to rationally control their feelings and actions.

2. To modify maladjusted conduct.

3. To help students to realise their potential and amalgamate conflicting elements within themselves.

4. To afford students with self-awareness skills and knowledge that enables them to confront social inadequacy.

9. How guidance and counselling can enhance self-efficacy among high school students

Self-esteem or self-efficacy is an important aspect in the growth and development of students. It results from viewing oneself positively within the context of one's surroundings. How well one gets along with peers and how they judge themselves in comparison with others, shapes their self-efficacy. Literature has identified self-efficacy as the area of interpersonal relationships. However, with

proper guidance and counselling support, individuals with experiencing difficulties in learning can build the self-esteem they need to succeed in their life [51]. Owuor et al. [51] further explain that the main goal of guidance and counselling in the mainstream schools is to enhance the self-esteem or self-efficacy of students with emotional and behavioural problems. Guidance and counselling assist students in fulfilling their basic psychological needs, understanding themselves and acceptance of others, developing associations with peers, balancing between permissiveness and controls in the educational setting, realising successful achievement and providing opportunities to gain independence.

Florida Department of Education Division of Workforce Development [47] propounds that the student's needs which manifest as the gap between the expected progress and the actual progress in the student's personal, social, academic and career development are addressed in guidance and counselling programmes. The student's learning and achievement are facilitated through competency in these developmental areas. A firm base of motivation, aspirations, positive attitudes, self-acceptance and knowledge of alternatives are essential elements for growth and development which should be acquired by students at an early age. It is, therefore, crucial for students to continuously build on these lifelong elements. The major competencies which should form the content of the student development programmes include decision-making, study skills, communication skills, test-taking skills, educational and career planning skills, conflict resolution, career awareness and exploration, problem-solving skills, community involvement, self-esteem and interpersonal and social skills among others. The stated competencies empower the student to be an active participant in using the available school and community learning opportunities. As such, all programmes' learning achievements, long-term outcomes and accomplishment of the school mission goals are facilitated by these competencies. Accordingly, schools which expose their students to guidance and counselling programmes promote self-efficacy in their students. Thus, students are prepared for the future as well as acquiring suitable attitudes and values which empower them to productively and actively participate in the communities, they live in.

Of paramount importance is that, through guidance and counselling programmes, students are assisted in establishing a set of beliefs and a value system that will direct their behaviour and actions which results in developing a positive self-image and a sense of identity. These programmes should involve students in activities and dialogues that allow them to realise their rights and responsibilities within the family, school and other societal institutions. Such activities expose students to discover reality through participation in various fora as they share power with adults in decision-making [49].

Additionally, guidance and counselling programmes promote students' self-efficacy since the programmes emphasise on providing students with a chance to learn more about themselves and others before they encounter glitches resulting from self-concept matters. The programmes concentrate on academic accomplishment, prevention and intervention activities, advocacy and social/personal/emotional and career development. Students acquire interpersonal skills before they experience interpersonal crisis. When faced with crisis, students can solve the problem by using the learnt skills. To achieve optimum benefits from the educational programmes, every student needs sound emotional and social skills. The four key areas of the programmes, which are academic, personal/social, career and community involvement, are fundamental to the individual uniqueness and maximum development of the student [47].

According to Nkechi et al. [52], some of the contributions of school guidance and counselling programmes in promoting students' self-efficacy involve:

- Encouraging facilitative, co-operative peer interactions;
- Preparing students through academic, career, and personal/social development for the twenty-first century challenges;
- Assuring equitable access to educational opportunities;
- Broadening knowledge of the changing world;
- Enhancing personal development;
- Assisting in developing effective interpersonal relationship skills;
- Providing advocacy for students;
- Fostering resiliency factors for students;
- Relating educational programmes to future success;
- Facilitating career exploration and development;
- Assisting in acquiring knowledge of self and others; and
- Developing decision-making and problem-solving skills.

Likewise, most secondary school students are in the adolescent stage when they experience alienation, which is a syndrome comprising of distrust, anxiety, pessimism, egocentrism, meaninglessness, normlessness and powerlessness. At this stage, guidance and counselling programmes are, therefore, desirable to assist students understand their developmental stage and adjust to school life accordingly. Guidance and counselling programmes also help students choose and pursue achievable and sustainable careers. The complexity and dynamic nature of the world makes it difficult for students to decide on career choices. The changes in time, people and technological advancements challenge individuals to transform to new ways of living and working. Therefore, guidance and counselling programmes are necessary to enlighten students about several existing job opportunities required the qualifications, responsibilities involved and the nature of work so that they can make informed decisions and have clear occupational goals [52].

Furthermore, UNESCO Guidance [49] identifies the following functions of vocational guidance which can enhance self-efficacy among students if effectively implemented:

- Assists students to realise their talents and make appropriate career choices;
- Encourages students to maximise use of all educational opportunities, which will benefit them in life. Through vocational guidance, students recognise the relationship that exists between curricular and extracurricular activities;
- Informs students about job prospects and the actual procedures required for getting employment and succeeding in it;
- Encourages students to make informed decisions on the type of life they would like to lead depending on their interests, values, abilities, skills and motivation to learn; and

- Helps students to adapt to change as they tackle various problems which emanate from the ever-changing society. For instance, currently in the world of work, the focus is on self-employment and entrepreneurship than in the past years.

More so, Nkechi et al. [52] are of the view that guidance has a responsibility for developing and maintaining a co-operative relationship between students and the school. Teachers and counsellors should be mindful of students' needs, whereas students are expected to adjust to the school environment. The students' main obligation to the school is to use the school's resources appropriately and work towards attainment of set standards. The provision of suggestions to improve the programmes through carrying out educational research, conducting counselling sessions to assist students, and encouraging positive school-home environment facilitates the mutual adjustment of students and the school. As a result, such mutual cooperation between the students and the school builds self-efficacy in students. The main focal point of guidance and counselling programmes will be to develop a balanced individual intellectually, spiritually, morally and socially. Thus, guidance and counselling programmes assist students to harmonise their abilities, interests and values, thereby enabling them to develop their potential fully. Such exposure to guidance and counselling programmes helps students to formulate realistic life goals and plans. Despite the valuable contribution of guidance and counselling programmes in promoting self-efficacy among students in high schools, a study conducted in Ghana by Owusu et al. [53] revealed that the staff acknowledged that guidance services are available in the schools while students who are the main beneficiaries of guidance and counselling programmes disputed the claim by the staff. The students indicated that they did not have any access to guidance services in the schools.

In Kenya, Ruttoh [54] conducted a study which revealed that 57.2% of the students had not attended counselling sessions with the counsellors. The reasons for non-attendance were that:

i. The school did not have the counselling programme.

ii. The students therefore felt that they were not welcome. Some teacher counsellors did not adhere to counselling ethics. For example, some counsellors showed rudeness, lack of confidentiality, and negative attitude towards the students. Hence, the students felt that the atmosphere was not welcoming and there was poor quality of counselling services.

iii. Some students favoured to be counselled by parents, whilst others preferred peer counselling instead of teacher counselling.

iv. Since the counselling service was seldom offered, some students lacked the opportunity to attend even if they wished to do so.

v. Other students indicated that they preferred doing activities like games which were offered simultaneously with counselling session; hence, they did not have time to attend counselling session.

vi. Due to lack of a counselling office and in cases where it was available, some students were shy and feared going for counselling because they were worried about lack of privacy in such offices. The location of guidance and counselling offices within the administration block and near the school heads' and deputy heads' offices hindered students from attending counselling sessions as they felt intimidated.

10. The role of school counsellor in enhancing self-efficacy among high school students

School counsellors serve a vital role in enhancing students' self-efficacy and maximising student achievement. As professionals, school counsellors implement a comprehensive school counselling programme that promotes and enhances student achievement. By incorporating leadership, advocacy and collaboration, professional school counsellors promote equity and access to opportunities and rigorous educational experiences for all students [55].

Accordingly, guidance counsellors need to be equipped with skills required to design comprehensive guidance programmes, provide counselling service, and use assessment procedures with a gender perspective [49]. On the same note, Yusof et al. [56] add that in developing students' character, the school counsellors' personal attributes and professional competencies are necessary characteristics. To make sure that services rendered by school counsellors meet the goal of assisting students develop and grow, the counsellors are expected to have a high level of confidence and professional competencies. Examples of personal attributes include compassionate, empathetic, patience, research-oriented, good listener, and self-awareness, discrete, authentic and non-judgmental are fundamental in executing their role as counsellors. While, the professional competencies are critical in the provision of effective counselling services entail knowledge, abilities, skills and attitude related to school counselling programme as well as the foundations, management, delivery and counsellors' accountability.

It is important that the stated qualities be combined with precise skills demanded by the profession. These skills involve listening, analytical and good observation. Apart from being professionally qualified, it is essential for the counsellors to have temperament as well as empathy towards students because the counsellors deal with students who encounter diverse problems in their lives. Hence, the counsellor should possess the skill of working with individuals as well as groups. Nonetheless, for counsellors to be recognised as professional counsellors, they should undergo special training to acquire the necessary skills in addition to qualities they possess [50].

In promoting self-efficacy among students, Nkechi et al. [52] affirm that the school counsellor is seen as a role model and highly respected by students. Through training, counsellors can create a friendly atmosphere with students by listening to the students' complaints, short comings and offering relevant guidance in a quest of moulding the student in the right pursuit of life. The same authors further express that counsellors can provide data that serves as a basis for curriculum development and can help curriculum developers shape courses of study that more accurately reflect the needs of students. However, it has been observed that counsellors are not included in curriculum development efforts.

In order to effectively assist students in developing self-efficacy, the school counsellors should develop self-efficacy in executing their work. The concept of self-efficacy is based upon the assumption that awareness of self-efficacy will be a connection between a person's knowledge about a task and the reality of doing the task. Devoted counselling efficacy will result in a continuous therapeutic and effective counselling process due to the positive influence of a confident counsellor on a client/student. This further proves that competent self-efficacy is important in managing the behaviour of students and improving the school climate [56]. However, Woods [57] argues that society's diverse perspectives of the role and identity of the school counsellor would naturally lead the counsellor to question his/her role and weaken self-efficacy beliefs. In this respect, self-efficacy is an important component in the explanation of the school counsellors' performance and effectiveness.

It is imperative for the counsellors to consider ethics as they execute their duties. Thus, effective counselling deals with ethical understanding, legal responsibilities and moral realities. UNESCO Counselling [58] expounds that counselling does not take place in a fantasy world, but in a world of reality where people are required to make ethical choices and decisions. Adherence to professional ethical standards protects both the public and the counsellor. Concurring National Council of Educational Research and Training [50] complements that counselling is a process involving responsibility and confidentiality; hence, guidance and counselling experts should follow certain ethical principles. These encompass consideration of students' diverse individual and cultural differences, desisting from taking steps which are harmful to the student, practising within the scope of their competence and referring students to experts if they are unable to deal with the cases.

In spite of the above, UNESCO Counselling [58] warns of unethical practices by some counsellors. These ill practices involve incompetence, which is a result of lack of prerequisite knowledge and skills essential for professional behaviour, lack of integrity and moral commitment, violation of confidences, imposing values on students and creating dependence on the part of the student to meet the counsellor's own needs, for example, sexual relations and social interactions [59–64].

11. Solutions and recommendations

1. There is need for schools to avail guidance and counselling services to all students who need such services in order to promote self-efficacy in students.

2. Schools should employ professionally qualified counsellors who will be in a position to assist students accordingly.

3. Well-equipped guidance and counselling facilities should be provided by schools so that counselling ethics are observed.

4. Schools should initiate guidance and counselling staff development programmes for teachers to acquaint them with knowledge and skills on how to assist students who need guidance and counselling services.

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Terminology

Counselling is the process in which one person gives advice to the other to help them navigate through a challenging situation. There is however, a difference between one giving advice as a friend and one doing it professional because they are trained to deal with different situations.

Classroom guidance is when school counsellors move into the role of a teacher to engage students in a classroom setting for the purpose of providing training or information.

Classroom guidance curriculum is the structured developmental lessons designed to assist students in achieving the competencies and is presented systematically through classroom and group activities.

Coping is a way of adopting stratagems that individuals use when faced with stress or trauma as a way of managing the painful or difficult situations. Coping mechanisms can assist students to regulate to stressful trials while serving them sustain their emotive well-being

Denial is a defence mechanism that one adopts in an attempt to reject a situation that is too painful for one to consider.

Distraction is something that prevents one from achieving or attaining what they desire to do.

Distancing can be emotional, physical, cognitive or social. It is when one withdraws or separates themselves from involvement with other people or from any situation.

Resilience is the ability an individual has that makes them to cope, manage and recover from a stressful or traumatic situation.

Relaxation is a process that reduces the impact of stress on your mind and body. Relaxation techniques can help people cope with everyday stress related to various health, social and intellectual problems.

Self-efficacy is the belief that one has about their own ability to do something and succeed in it. It is intertwined with motivation although they are different; however, someone with high self-efficacy is highly motivated in what they do.

Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect related to one's self-image and generally refers to 'the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence' [11].

Self-esteem is the affective on emotional aspect of self and generally refers to how we feel about or how we value ourselves (one's self-worth). Self-concept can also refer to the general idea we have of ourselves, and self-esteem can refer to specific measures about components of self-concept. Some authors even use the two terms interchangeably.

Withdrawn behaviour is evading or lack of desire for social contact. Students who withdraw may vigorously avoid spending time with other people. They may at all cost circumvent social interactions. Some withdrawn people may be in the company of other people but do not feel particularly determined to reach out others. While some may want to socialise but have difficulty connecting to people and others actively hate being with others.

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