

Student Peer Counselling Behaviour Management Interventions and Discipline among Public Secondary School Students in Kiambu County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Indiscipline is a major challenge facing schools in Kenya. As a result, the government recommends robust interventions at the school level to rein in on indiscipline. Nevertheless, students continue to exhibit immense behavioural problems. This calls to question the efficacy of the numerous behaviour change interventions put in place. This study assessed the influence of student peer counseling interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was founded on the Ecological Systems Theory (EST). Based on the correlational research design, the study targeted the 227 principals 3,479 guidance and counseling teachers and the 89,065 students in Kiambu County. From these, the study sampled 23 principals, 97 teachers and 398 students using the simple random sampling technique. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides, and observation schedules. Piloting was conducted to assist in determining the accuracy, clarity, and suitability of the research instruments. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, frequency and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and multivariate regression analysis at a significance level of 0.05). Data from interviews and secondary data sources were subjected to content analysis procedures. The findings show that there was positive and significant correlation between students discipline and student peer counseling ($r=0.476$, $p<0.05$). Based on these findings, it is evident that student peer counseling interventions indeed influence students' discipline in the study area. Interventions around these areas should thus be strengthened to holistically enhance students discipline in the schools studied. The study recommends peer counselors should be frequently recruited and trained by schools to reach more students.

Keywords: *Student Peer Counselling; Behaviour Management Interventions; Discipline; Public Secondary School Students; Kiambu County, Kenya*

I. INTRODUCTION

The school environment, hereinafter also referred to as ecology, could have lasting effects on students' behaviours. Since students spend a considerable amount of time in school, they are likely to be influenced by the interactions they experience there. Indeed, studies have shown that teachers (Cortina & Fazel, 2015) and peers (Welsh & Little (2018) have immense effects on the immediate as well as eventual behaviours of students. The school ecology could thus play a central role in reining in on indiscipline among students. It is with this realization that school-based behaviour change interventions such as peer counseling are put in place. This current study set out to examine the effect of student peer counselling behaviour management interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Peer counseling plays a pivotal role in students' behaviours (Goodman-Scott et al., 2018; Pei-Boon et al., 2020; Welsh & Little, 2018; Williams et al., 2020; Arudo & Okeyo, 2008; Ambayo & Ngumi, 2016; Warui, 2018). Arudo and Okeyo (2008) in "Peer counseling experience among selected Kenyan Secondary Schools" found out that peer counseling approaches to handle indiscipline issues in the schools studied contribute to enhanced discipline. Also, Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) elicit that although peer counseling had positive influences on students' academic performance, it did not seem to have direct influences on their social and emotional behaviour. This shows that peer counseling had a bidirectional effect on students' discipline in various parts of Kenya. It is thus pertinent to investigate the influence of peer counseling on students' discipline in Kiambu County; which was not the focus of the former studies. While Arudo and Okeyo (2008) looked at students' behaviour in Kenyan secondary schools generally, Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) focused on Nakuru Municipality respectively. The two studies differ in scope in addition to the fact that the study by Arudo and Okeyo (2008) is quite dated and may not cast light on the immediate effects of

peer counseling on students' behaviour. This underlines the importance of studies aimed at bridging these knowledge gaps.

From the preceding discourse, it is evident that peer counseling influence indiscipline among students. These interventions are either reinforced or challenged by support from school administration. However, most documented studies have not attempted to assess the relationship between these interventions and students' discipline in Kiambu County. This means that it remains a tall order understanding the single or combined influences of these factors in the county. This underlines the importance of this current study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Indiscipline is a major challenge facing learning processes in Kiambu County. In response to runaway indiscipline cases, the government had recommended robust interventions to enhance the discipline of students in secondary schools (Kindiki, 2009). Nevertheless, students in Kiambu County continue to exhibit immense behavioural problems (Ndaita, 2016). The average indiscipline score of 22% in the county was above the national average of 18% as recorded by Kabiru, Elung'ata, and Mojola (2018). This calls to question the efficacy of the numerous behaviour change interventions put in place in the County. For example, the relative contribution of the peer counselling interventions to students' disciplines in Kiambu County is scantily studied, creating an empirical literature gap.

Additionally, making empirically informed recommendation on how to deal with high levels of indiscipline in the county may also remain an elusive goal. This underlines the importance of this study which sets out to examine the influence of peer counselling behaviour change interventions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in the county.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

To examine the influence of student peer counseling behaviour management interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.4 Hypotheses

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between student peer counseling behaviour management interventions and discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon, and Peg (2018) carried out a study on Aligning comprehensive school counseling programs and positive behavioral interventions and supports to maximize school counselors' efforts. The study established that when implemented, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) that had had peer counseling components created a positive school climate and militated against indiscipline among students. This current study investigates the level to which the adoption of peer counseling interventions in Kenyan schools militates against indiscipline cases.

Pei-Boon, Marzuki, Jaafar, Chin-Siang, and Nee-Nee (2020) carried out a study on Psychometric properties of the sources of counseling self-efficacy in a sample of Malaysian secondary school counselors. 541 school counselors, including peer counseling, were studied. The study established that the application of divergent counseling practices had a multifactorial influence on students' discipline as well as other outputs such as the efficacy of Guidance and Counselling (G&C) interventions in schools. This current study investigates the veracity of these findings in Kenya.

Welsh and Little (2018) carried out a study on, "the school discipline dilemma." This was based on a comprehensive review of disparities and alternative approaches aimed at enhancing such discipline. The study established that indiscipline was attributable to different causes. There was thus a need for various approaches aimed at curbing indiscipline. These include the right policies and practices such as teacher and peer counseling interventions. Though the former study was not focused on the relative contribution of all the interventions deployed, it relates to this current study that sets out to investigate the direct contribution of peer counseling on students' discipline.

Williams, Lewis, Glass, Butler, and Lim (2020) carried out a study titled, "The discipline gatekeeper: assistant principals' experiences with managing school discipline in urban middle schools". The study sought to establish the various interventions put in place by assistant principals to deal with indiscipline cases in schools. Based on the critical race theoretical framework, the study shows that various school discipline interventions for African American students such as peer counseling and assorted G&C interventions were employed. These played pivotal roles in

checking indiscipline among the students studied. This current study assesses the level to which these findings apply in Kenya.

Arudo and Okeyo (2008) studied peer counseling experience among selected Kenyan Secondary Schools. The findings point out that schools were faced with numerous challenges such as large numbers of students and few trained teacher counselors. This put pressure on G&C programs; making it untenable for schools to rein in on indiscipline cases. In this context, schools often deployed peer counseling approaches to handles some of these indiscipline issues in the schools studied. This current investigates the level to which application of peer counseling programs by secondary schools in Kiambu County contribute to enhanced discipline

Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) carried out a study on the influence of peer counseling on students' behaviour change in secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality. Based on the ex-post facto research design, data were collected from a sample of 14 teacher counselors, 31 peer counselors, and 131 students from 12 schools. The inclusion criterion for students was the consultation of peer counselors. The sample was obtained using stratified, purposive, and simple random sampling techniques. The findings show that though peer counseling had positive influences on students' academic performance, it did not seem to have direct influences on their social and emotional behaviour. This was attributable to the lack of enough financial resources aimed at strengthening it. In this context, this current study set out to find out the level to which strengthening peer counseling programs could enhance discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County.

A study by Warui (2018) investigated the status and challenges of guidance and counseling programme in discipline management in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by the social exchange theory and adopted a descriptive research design. Data was collected from a simple random sample of 240 students. The study found out that there was a need to enhance peer counseling practices among other measures. This current study set out to find out the impact of peer counseling interventions on the behavioural outcomes of students.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the Ecological Systems Theory (EST) as advanced by Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1993) to explain how the environment of a person influences their behavioural outcomes. Bronfenbrenner adapted ecological systems theory from the physical sciences to human behaviour. Bronfenbrenner discussed the different system levels as Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1993) shows five systems that influence the development of a person. These include the microsystem whereby the person is exposed to a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations in one-on-one setting such as home, school, peers, neighbourhood etc. The second system is the meso-system which incorporates linkages occurring between numerous settings where the developing person is located such as home and school.

The third system is the exo-system which includes one or more social settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant. In these settings, events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in the set containing the developing person. These could be the parental workplace whereby an individual can be affected by the context in which the parent works through acquired values among others. The last system is the macro-system. This includes influences from culture, subculture, and other extended social structures (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). The last system is chrono-system. In this one, the development of a person is affected by affected over time by numerous influences that occur at school, home, or in the country at large.

The critiques of this theory posit that the person has to remain in the ecology continuously to be influenced by all the systems effectively. If the person relocates to a faraway place or another country, the systems change; leading to different development patterns (Feldman, 2003). In this current study, EST is relevant since the ecology in which an adolescent grows will affect his/her behaviour. In this regard, school-based behaviour change interventions will determine the discipline of students. Measures such as G&C, peer counseling, mentoring and parental involvement within disciplinary processes in secondary schools would create an ecology in which indiscipline among students can be checked.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study was based on the correlational research design. This design aims at describing the relationship between variables and also helps in the testing of hypotheses (Best & Kahn, 2006). In this design, the researcher does not manipulate the variables nor decide who receives a treatment for events to happen (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The correlational design is considered a paramount in observational research as no variables are manipulated by the researcher. The correlational research design is important in explaining interrelations between study variables. The

design was recognized as one of the appropriate designs for analyzing the nexus between peer counselling behaviour management interventions and students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study focused on public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The county is one of the five counties of the former central province of Kenya. It is one of the most populous sub-counties in Kenya. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, it had a population of 2.418 million in the 2019 National Census (KNBS, 2019). The county is comprised 13 sub-counties namely: Kiambaa, Kikuyu, Gatundu North, Thika East, Gatundu South, Limuru, Githunguri, Juja, Kabete, Kiambu, Thika West, Lari and, Ruiru. With a total area of Kiambu County is 2,449 km², the main economic activities in the county are agricultural and commercial activities. The main crops grown are coffee, tea and dairy farming. Small scale farming is also common. Kiambu is also a largely commercial county with numerous small and medium enterprises. The county was chosen due to the fact that it is characterized by high levels of indiscipline as shown by Kabiru et al. (2018) who argues that 22% of children in the county had behavioural problems, which is above the national average of 18%. Also, literature on the relationship between school-based behaviour change interventions and discipline in the area is scanty. This meant that making empirically informed recommendations on ways of dealing with indiscipline in the County remained an elusive goal.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) define the population for any study as all objects in the research site which are affected by the stated research problem. It is the portion of the study from which the researcher can practically reach to select a representative sample. This current study targeted 227 public secondary schools in Kiambu County with 227 principals, 3,479 teachers and the 89,065 students in the county (Kiambu County Government, February 2021

Table 1

Target Population

Category	Target Population
Principals	227
Teachers	3,479
Students	89,065

Source: Kiambu County Government, 2021

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Orodho (2005) define sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population in such a way that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. This study used the simple random sampling technique for each of the three categories namely: students, principals and teachers. To calculate the sample of teachers and students, the study used the simplified formula for calculating sample size as put forward by Yamane (1967).

The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

Where:

n=the sample size

N= the population size

e= sampling error (assumed at 0.1 for teachers & 0.05 for students)

For principals, a sample of 10% was obtained. This is informed by considerations for making it possible to reach them adequately interviews. Furthermore, 10% is considered enough for a representative sample in descriptive studies (Kasomo, 2007). In this regard, the study sampled 23 principals, 97 teachers and 398 students. The sample size was presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample	Sampling Procedure
Principals	227	23	$n_1=N*10\%$
Teachers	3,479	97	$n_2=N/1+N*(0.1)^2$
Students	89,065	398	$n_3=N/1+N*(0.05)^2$

3.5 Research Instrument

Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides, and observation schedules.

3.6 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

Pre-testing was conducted to assist in determining the accuracy, clarity, and suitability of the research instrument. 10% of the sample per category took place in the pilot study as follows: 10 teachers, 7 principals and 10 students in Kiambu County. The sample of pilot study was informed by Kothari (2004) who posits that 10% to 30% of the study sample is adequate for pilot studies. The participants of the pilot study were not included in the final study.

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability measures the consistency of results from a study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). It aimed at finding out if a test yields the same score in the first, second, or subsequent administrations. The data obtained from the pilot study was used to ascertain the appropriateness and relevancy of the questionnaire to the study. Cronbach's alpha (α), a reliability coefficient which varies from 0 to 1 whereby a value of 0.7 or less indicates unsatisfactory internal consistency reliability (Malhotra, 2004), was used to test the reliability of items in the questionnaires. The Cronbach alpha values obtained ranged between 0.71 and 0.83 for teachers' questionnaire and 0.74 to 0.89 for students' questionnaire. Reliability of the interviews was ensured through triangulation in which data from questionnaires and observation schedules was compared to assess the consistency of the findings obtained.

3.6.2 Validity of Instruments

Validity is the degree to which instruments reflect adequacy or appropriateness (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). In this accord, research instruments are said to be valid when they actually measure the intended parameters. Validity was enhanced through the pilot study since the researcher was able to identify ambiguous questions. Content validity was ensured by the researcher by including as many questions as possible for each variable under investigation. Furthermore, the ease with which the respondents answer the research questions was also assessed. Any ambiguous questions were promptly corrected. The input of the university supervisors was also sought and incorporated for all instruments.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought research approval from the University and researcher permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) before data collection. The researcher then visited the study area and made appointments with the various targeted study participants for data collection. The first research instruments to be administered were the questionnaires. As such, the researcher visited the schools sampled and distributed the questionnaires to the teachers through the principals. The researcher also made appointments with the study participants for interviews. This was done concurrently with the distribution of the questionnaires. At the appointed time, the researcher visited each respondent and conducted the interviews. Due to limitations related to the COVID 19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted in a spacious room. The respondents were issued with masks, kept social distance and observed social distance. The whole exercise took four weeks.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The raw data collected was sorted, coded, and analyzed. Analysis was done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics were used as measures central tendency (mean), frequency and percentages. Data was also analyzed inferentially by use of Pearson correlation to establish the linear relationship between the independent variable (peer counseling interventions) and the dependent study variable (students' discipline).

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 Demographics of the Participants

This section presents the response rate of the study participants as well as their social demographic characteristics. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviewing various respondents. Four hundred and ninety nine (499) of the 518 respondents (96.3%) sampled participated in the study. From these, 18 out of 23 principals (78.3%) were interviewed. At the same time, 83 out of 97 Teachers (85.6%) and 398 out of 398 students (100.0%) responded to the questionnaires. The response rate is shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Response Rate

Category	Sample	Responded	Response Rate
Principals	23	18	78.3
Teachers	97	83	85.6
Students	398	398	100.0
Average	518	499	96.3

The study went on to determine general information about the students and teachers. This was pivotal in gaining a comprehensive knowledge of the respondents that may have influenced the study’s findings. Firstly, the respondents were asked to indicate their age. Figure 2 shows that 45.7 % male students and 54.3 % female students took part in the study. The findings show that most of the respondents were female. This could be due to the fact that women are more likely to participate in survey than men as posited by Curtin et al (2016). However, both genders were well represented in the study which could avert gender bias. Most of the students were in Form 3 and were male and were aged 16-17 years (61.4%). These were followed by females in Form 4 who were also aged 16-17 years (51.4%). The next important groups were males who were aged 14-15 years in Form 2 (46.9%). Knäuper et al. (2016) suggest that questionnaire characteristics and the cognitive processes involved in answering questions have varied effects on older and younger responders. The participation of respondents of various age groups could check age bias. These findings also show that most of the students had been in school long enough to understand the subject under investigation.

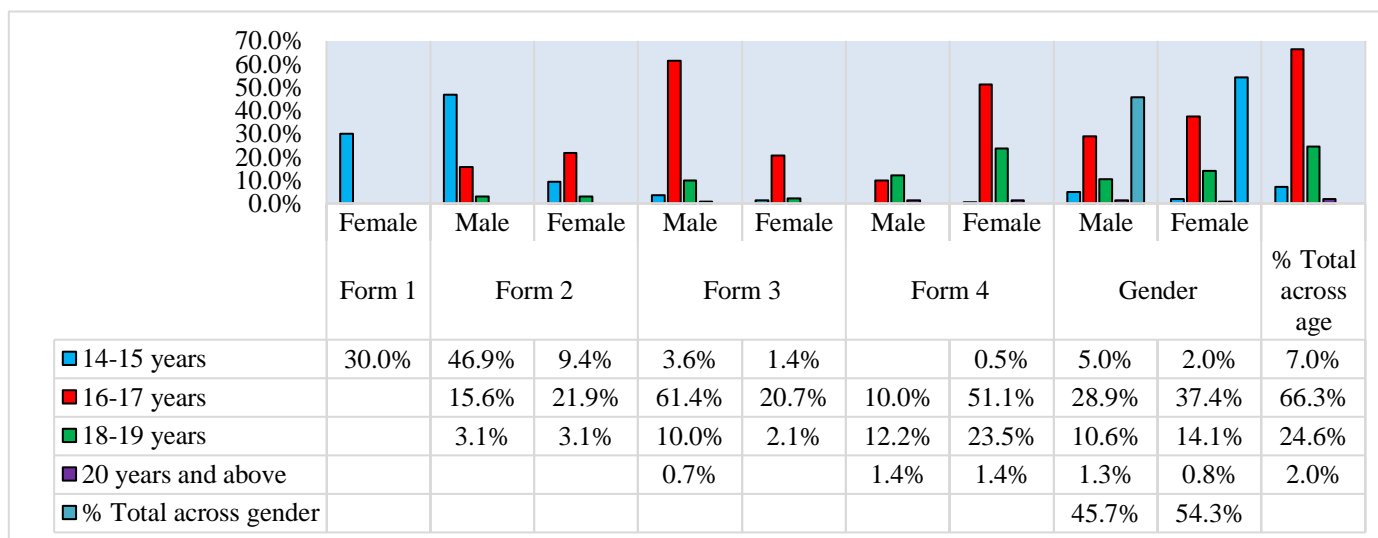


Figure 2
Students’ Gender, Age and Class

The study wanted on to establish the type of school from which students came from. The findings show that most students were either male or female and from day schools at 20.6% and 20.4%. These were followed by boys from boarding schools at 18.3% and girls from boarding schools at 10.1%. Males from mixed day and boarding as well as those from mixed boarding followed at 7.5% and 5% respectively. These findings are presented in Figure 3.

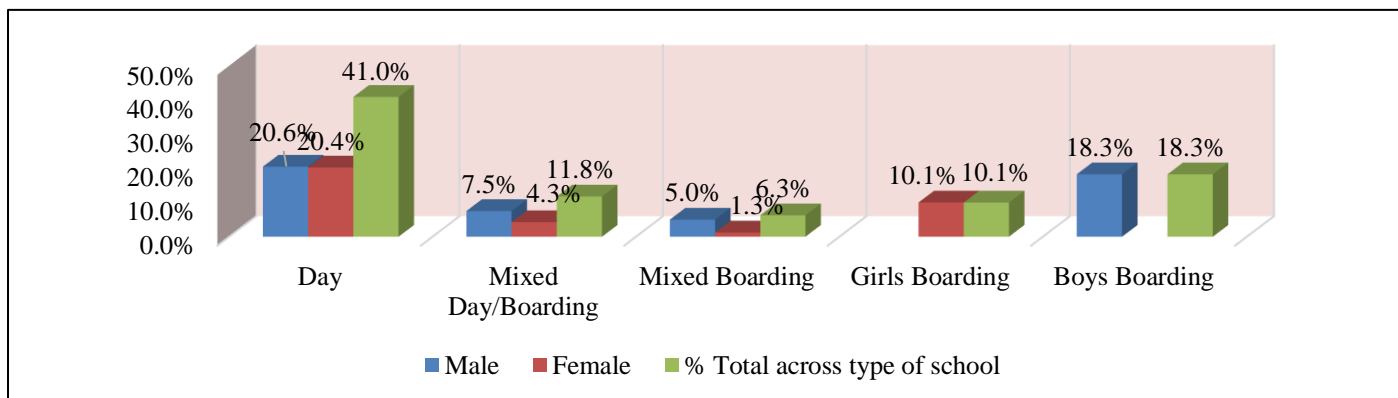


Figure 3
Students' Gender and Type of School

The study sought to establish the gender, academic qualification and working experience of teachers. The findings show that 41% male teachers and 59% female teachers participated. Seeing that most of the respondents were females, these findings agree with Curtin et al (2016) who posits that females are more likely to participate in a study. Both genders were however well-represented in the study which could avert gender bias. The findings show that most of the teachers were female, had bachelor's degrees and had worked for 11-20 years at (46.7%). These were followed by both males and females who had bachelor's degrees and had worked for 2-5 years each at 37.5%. All in all, the majority (49.4%) of the teachers had a Bachelor's degree. About 28.9 % had attained master's degree; 12% diploma; 6% PhD and 3.6 % had postgraduate diploma. This is indicative of the fact that the teachers had sufficient qualifications and could make significant contributions to the subject under investigation. In general, more educated people are more likely to participate in surveys than less educated people (Goyder, Warriner, & Miller, 2002). Most of the respondents had also worked long enough in public secondary schools and could make significant contributions on the subject under investigation. This is in line with Mathers, Fox, and Hunn (2000) who posit that duration of work could influence the ability of respondents to have a strong grasp of the subject under investigation.

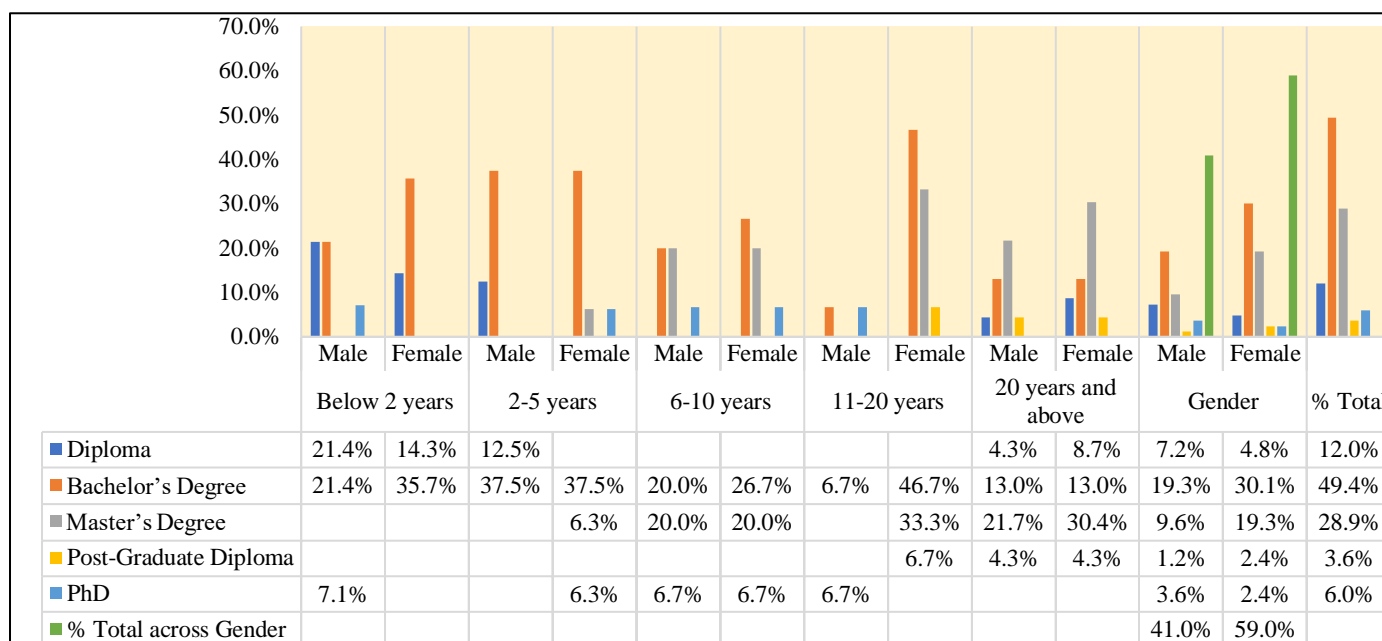


Figure 4
Teachers Gender, Academic qualifications and working experience

The teachers were asked to point out the schools from which they came from. The findings show that most of the respondents were females and taught in day schools (33.7%). These were followed by males from day schools at 20.5%. Males and females from girls' boarding schools followed distantly each at 10.8%. The next important groups

were females from mixed day/boarding schools at 9.6%. The rest came from mixed day/boarding and boys boarding schools. These findings show that teachers came from all the various types of schools. As such, opinions regarding the various types of schools could be captured. These findings are presented in Figure 5.

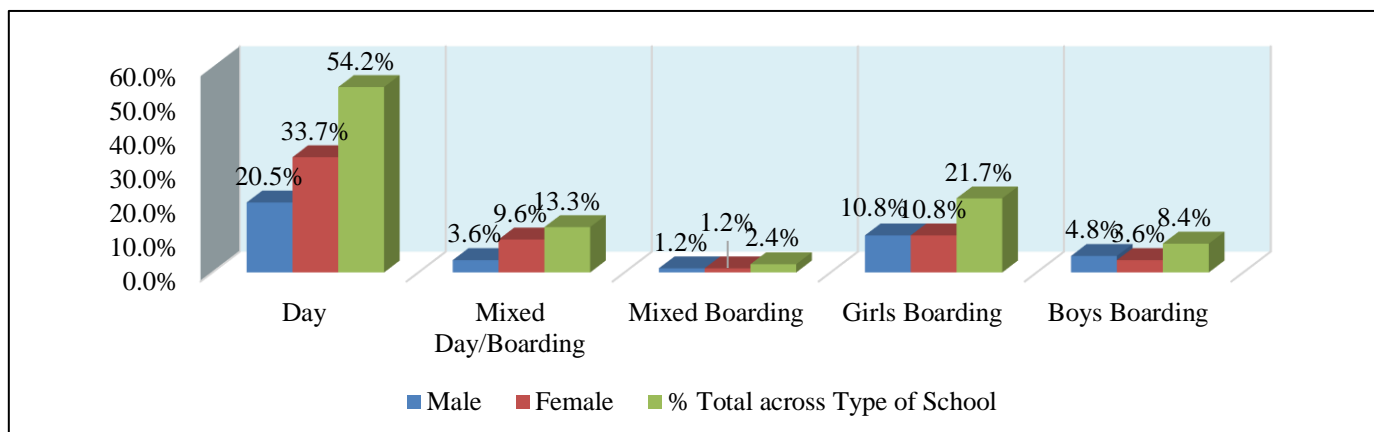


Figure 5
Teachers' Gender and Type of School

4.2 Peer Counseling Interventions and Students' Discipline

Study sought to examine the influence of student peer counseling interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya. This section presents the findings from likert-scale statements, open-ended questions and interviews. First and foremost, the students and teachers agreed (M=4) that peer counseling components create a positive school climate and reduces indiscipline among students. The findings were presented in Table 4. This aligns with Goodman-Scott et al. (2018) who argues that peer counseling components created a positive school climate. The fact that peer counseling components create a positive school climate and militate against indiscipline among students also agrees with Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) who elicit that peer counseling also had positive influences on students' academic performance.

Table 4
Peer Counseling Component, Positive School Climate and Indiscipline among Students

Descriptive Statistics					
Peer counseling component creates a positive school climate and reduces indiscipline among students.					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.19
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	3.46

The students and teachers agreed (M=4) that peer counseling interventions have direct influences on students' discipline. These findings also support the study by Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) who posits that strengthening peer counseling programs could enhance discipline among public secondary school students. Peer counseling interventions should thus be enhanced in schools to enhance discipline among students.

Table 5
Peer Counseling Interventions and Students' Discipline

Descriptive Statistics					
Peer counseling interventions have direct influences on students' discipline					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.23
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.86

The teachers further reiterated ($M=4$) that integrating peer counselors had exponential as well as direct influences on students' discipline as shown in Table 6. These findings further corroborate the study by Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) who underlines the importance of peer counselors in influencing students' behavioural choices and their discipline by extension. These findings show that schools ought to enhance discipline in schools through enhanced integration of peer counselors.

Table 6*Integrating Peer Counselors and Students' Discipline*

Descriptive Statistics					
Integrating peer counselors has an exponential influence on students' discipline					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	4.54

The students and teachers went on to agree to a high extent ($M=4$) that expanding training facilities for offering peer counseling services in school could enhance the efficacy of peer counselling services. These findings are a pointer to the fact that the peer counselling indeed plays an important role as an intervention tool to stem student's indiscipline cases. These findings are supported by Arudo and Okeyo (2008) who suggest that it is a common practice for schools to use peer counseling especially where teacher counselors are inadequate.

Table 7*Expanding Training Facilities for Offering Peer Counseling Services*

Descriptive Statistics					
Expanding training facilities for offering peer counseling services in school could enhance the efficacy of peer counselling services					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.11
Teachers	83	2.00	5.00	4	0.84

The students and teachers reiterated the need for strengthening peer counseling services in schools had positive influences on the discipline of students ($M=4$) as shown in Table 8. This corroborates the study by Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) who posits that strengthening peer counseling programs could enhance discipline among public secondary school students. It is thus important to strengthen peer counseling interventions in schools.

Table 8*Strengthening Peer Counseling Services and Discipline of Students*

Descriptive Statistics					
Strengthening peer counseling services in schools has positive influences on the discipline of students.					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.03
Teachers	83	2.00	5.00	4	0.82

As shown in Table 9, the teachers and students agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that strong peer counseling interventions enhanced students to focus on academic performance. These findings show that the teachers appreciate the role peer counselling plays in addressing student's indiscipline cases. Agi (2013) in a study focused on 14 schools in Port Harcourt, Nigeria established that policies on G&C practices enhance discipline and academic performance. These findings show that counselling intervention such as peer counselling among others should also be reinforced in Kenya schools.

Table 9*Strong Peer Counseling and Academic Performance*

Descriptive Statistics					
Strong peer counseling interventions enhance students to focus on academic performance					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.14
Teachers	83	2.00	5.00	4	0.86

The findings also show that schools are faced with numerous challenges such as large numbers of students and few trained teacher counselors. This put pressure on G&C programs; making it untenable for schools to rein in on indiscipline cases. It is thus evident that schools were often faced with lack of adequate trained counselors, a situation which was also identified by Arudo and Okeyo (2008). In this context, schools often deploy peer counseling approaches to handles some of these indiscipline issues in the schools.

The students stated that peer counseling interventions had a positive effect on students' discipline. They said that peer counselling helps students to attain both short and long-term goals. One of the respondents affirmed this by saying:

It has helped in changing student's behavior by helping students to make self-discovery and align their behavior with society expectations (Respondent 4, Kiambu County, May 2022). Peer counselling was also lauded because students tend to relate well with fellow students than teachers which makes it easier to be helped. This means that more emphasize should be given to peer counselling as pointed out by one of the respondents:

In schools where there is counselling teacher shortage, more students need to be trained to be peer counsellors (Respondent 5, Kiambu County, May 2022).

When asked in that "in which other ways do peer counseling interventions contribute to students' discipline in your school?" the teachers noted that peer counselors are frequently more perceptive and compassionate than teacher counselors because they are the first to notice when a fellow student is anxious or sad and because they frequently confide in one another about their current concerns, anxieties, and troubling circumstances. Another important role of the peer counselors, is promotion of discipline by encouraging good academic participation and achievement among the fellow students. Chireshe (2013) concurs with this finding stating that peer counselors help other students in problem solving and problems of study and listening skills.

The aforesaid findings contributed to the recognition given to peer counselling in addressing student's discipline issues as supported by the teachers. The respondent noted that teachers are required to train more students to take up peer counselling responsibility. As a result, teachers are often obligated to conduct regular meetings during life skill lessons so as to meet these demands. This has been very instrumental in helping students realize that they don't come from the same background and therefore, a conducive environment characterized by high discipline need to be created for all to enable learning which is in line with the Ecological Systems Theory (EST) as advanced by Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1993) that shows that the environment of a person influences their behavioural outcomes.

Peer counseling motivates students and urges them to work hard. It also helps them manage personal problems by providing them with a shoulder to lean on. This plays pivotal roles in boosting the self-esteem of students as well as to deal with behavioural problems.

These findings were supported by one of the respondents who said:

Peer counseling plays an important role in the lives of students. It helps t helps them deal with personal problems. For those with behavioural problems, peers can also help them have a positive outlook to life (Respondent 6, Kiambu County, May 2022).

4.3 Students' Discipline

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements regarding students' discipline. The findings were presented in the following sections. First and foremost, the students agreed to a high extent (M=4) that school-based behaviour change interventions have enhanced participation in school programs as presented in Table 10. This could contribute to enhanced discipline as shown by GOK (2016) report.

Table 10

School-Based Behaviour Change Interventions and Participation in School Programs

Descriptive Statistics					
School-based behaviour change interventions have enhanced participation in school programs					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.37
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.99

As presented in Table 11, the students and teachers also agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that there was a reduction in absenteeism due to school-based behaviour change interventions. This was an indicator of enhanced discipline among students in line with the study by Nyongesa et al. (2016) that shows that absenteeism was a measure of indiscipline

Table 11

Reduction in Absenteeism Due to School-Based Behaviour Change Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in absenteeism due to school-based behaviour change interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.18
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	1.11

The teachers and students also agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that there is a reduction in drug and substance abuse in our schools due to school-based preventive interventions. These findings were presented in Table 12. The high standard deviation in teachers' responses (4.52) shows that their opinions were very diverse. Another study in by Magai and Malik (2018) on "Emotional and Behavioral Problems in Children and Adolescents in Central Kenya in Kiambu County" shows that substance use was a challenge facing students in the county. The findings of this current study are significant since they show the contribution of guidance and counseling towards enhancing students discipline in the county.

Table 12

Reduction in Drug and Substance Abuse Due to School-Based Behaviour Change Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in drug and substance abuse in our schools due to school-based preventive interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.32
Teachers	83	1.00	4.00	4	4.52

The teachers and students agreed that behavioural interventions had led to a reduction in unsafe sexual behaviours and abortions in our schools ($M=4$) as shown in Table 13. Kiambu County is faced with high incidences of indiscipline cases and risk-taking behaviour such as drug and substance abuse, truancy, gang behaviour, and early sexual debut (Magai & Malik, 2018). Reduction in these vices was thus a pointer of enhanced behavioural outcomes.

Table 13

Reduction in Drug and Substance Abuse in Schools Due to School-Based Preventive Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
Behavioural interventions have led to a reduction in unsafe sexual behaviours and abortions in our schools					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.36
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.89

The students and teachers went on to state that there is a reduction in fighting in schools due to the disciplinary interventions (M=4). Magai and Malik (2018) showed the immense discipline challenges facing students in Kiambu County. Reduction in fighting incidences could show the success of school-based preventive interventions.

Table 14

Reduction in Reduction in Fighting in Schools Due to School-Based Preventive

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in fighting in our schools due to the disciplinary interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.28
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.88

The students and teachers agreed to a high extent (M=4) that there is a reduction of bullying of others among students due to the school based-preventive measures. These findings were presented in Table 15. The gravity of indiscipline cases in Kiambu County were identified by Ndaita (2016) who shows high levels of drug use, sneaking out of school, bullying and rudeness among others despite the fact that the schools deployed various discipline management interventions. The reduction in bullying incidences was thus a gain in checking indiscipline in the county through behaviour change interventions.

Table 15

Reduction in Reduction in Bullying in Schools Due to School-Based Preventive Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction of bullying of others among students due to the school based-preventive measures					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.17
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.82

Furthermore, to a high extent (M=4), the students and teachers observed that behaviour change strategies had led reduction of destruction of school property as shown in Table 16. Strikes and destruction of school property were identified by Nyongesa et al. (2016) as major indiscipline challenges facing school. The findings of this study are a pointer to the fact that school-based preventive interventions were bearing the expected fruits.

Table 16

Behaviour Change Strategies Have Led Reduction of Destruction of School Property

Descriptive Statistics					
Behaviour change strategies have led reduction of destruction of school property					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.26
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.90

The findings from interviews show that the various school based measures put in place to check indiscipline had resulted in positive discipline outcomes among the students studied. These findings agree with the study by Williams et al. (2019) who posits that there was “a positive link between disciplinary actions and behavioural outcomes among students.” Students responded positively to interventions put in place to check their discipline and this had created a conducive leaning environment in the schools. In support of this, one of the respondents said: There were improvements in students discipline among students. Some of our colleagues who were previously faced with discipline challenges were now well behaved and were performing well in school due to the interventions put in place by schools to enhance discipline (Respondent 17, Kiambu County, May 2022).

The findings further show that the students discipline was changing positively due to the discipline interventions put in place in the schools, further supporting the findings by Williams et al. (2019). As such, it was

pertinent to reinforce disciplinary actions in the schools since this had positive implications on the discipline of the students. In support of this, one of the respondents said:

Our students were recording good disciplinary outcomes due to the various measures put in place in our schools to check disciplinary challenges. Students who had improvements in discipline started performing well in examinations. In a nutshell, it can be concluded that interventions to enhance discipline among students (Respondent 8, Kiambu County, May 2022).

4.4 Pearson Correlation

The research hypothesis which was tested in this study was as follows:

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between student peer counseling interventions and discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Table 17

Correlation between Student Peer Counseling Interventions and Discipline

		Students Discipline Scores
Peer Counselling Scores	Pearson Correlation	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	R ²	0.227
	N	481
** <i>. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>		

The findings show that there was positive and significant correlation between student peer counselling and discipline ($r=0.476$, $p<0.05$). The null hypothesis was thus rejected. These findings corroborate those by Arudo and Okeyo (2008) who suggest that it is a common practice for schools to use peer counseling especially where teacher counselors are inadequate.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of peer counselling behaviour change interventions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in the Kiambu County. The findings show that there was positive and significant correlation between students discipline and teacher counseling interventions; student peer counseling; mentorship interventions and; school discipline actions. All the variables with or without the moderating influence of other factors could also statistically and significantly predict students' discipline in public secondary school in Kiambu County.

Based on these findings, it is evident that school discipline actions, mentorship interventions, student peer counseling, teacher counseling interventions indeed influence students' discipline in the study area. Although indiscipline among students could emanate from influences in the school environment as envisaged by problem behavior theory, interventions in the same environment reined in on such indiscipline. This is in line with the ecological systems theory that postulates that the environment of a person influences their behavioural outcomes. As posited by the personal construct theory, constant exposure to G&C in schools thorough peer and G&C teachers, mentorship as well as school disciplinary actions could influence the behavioural choices of students as well as indiscipline levels due to changes in the value systems of students. Interventions around these school-based behaviour change interventions should thus be strengthened to holistically enhance students discipline in the schools studied.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that peer counselors should be frequently recruited and trained by schools to reach more students. Peer counselors should also be rewarded by school policy when need be to motivate more students to participate in peer counselling programs

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