Assessing the Practices and Challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services in Secondary Schools of Gondar City Administration

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study is to assess the practices and challenges of guidance and counselling services of secondary schools in Gondar town. The study used mixed research approaches based on which a descriptive design was followed. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary sources of data to the study were the research participants (students, principals, counsellors and a supervisor). The secondary sources of data were collected from different literatures related to the problem. In this study, only government secondary schools were included using purposive sampling technique based on the researcher’s own determination. The study focused on full cycle secondary schools that provided education from grade 9 - 12 and they were selected using purposive sampling technique. There were six government full cycle secondary schools of which the study took 3 (50%) using purposive sampling technique with the number of students they served as the major criteria of selection. The total population of the study encompassed grade 9 – 12 students, counsellors, principals and supervisor. For this study 369 samples were selected of which 362 were students; 3 were principals; 3 were counsellors and 1 was a supervisor. Data were gathered using questionnaires and focus group discussion from students and interviews from principals, counsellors and a supervisor. The collected quantitative data were first edited, organized in tables and analyzed using frequency count (numbers), percentage, mean score and standard deviation. The qualitative data were thematically analysed in accordance with the quantitative results of the study. Based on analysis of the results, it is concluded that guidance and counselling services were not promising and adequately provided in the schools although counsellors were assigned. Counsellors’ roles were insufficient to serve the students as a result of which students’ perception towards the services was negatively expressed. Generally, guidance and counselling services in the schools were problem plagued which traced to factors like shortage of sufficient resources and budget constraints as well as lack of consideration. Taking this into account, there is a need to make a difference in the field with the collective efforts of specially counsellors and schools’ administrators.

Keywords: Practices of Guidance and Counseling Services, Counselors’ Roles, Students’ Perception, Challenges

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1. Introduction

In order to clearly grasp the ideas of guidance and counselling, Martin and Shaffer cited in Gibers and Henderson (2015) primarily noted on the importance of understanding about the concept of student personnel services. In many parts of the world, student personnel services are significantly considered as the main functions of universities, colleges, schools and even training institutions in order to successfully produce students that can attain maximum academic excellence. Student personnel services are activities of schools as integral parts of the teaching-learning processes provided to students in the out of classroom instruction Gibers and Henderson (2012).

The concept of student personnel services in some literatures are interchangeably used with student affairs Baker (2012) or student services Mhlanga (2011) which however are similarly put in practice. These services may be given by including several and different kinds which however vary according to the schools’ types and levels Gibers and Henderson (2015). Generally, student personnel services can include such services as registration, orientation, guidance and counselling, co-curricular activities, first aid medical services and placement service to the next higher level of education in primary and secondary schools. The services can further include health, housing and food services as well as placement service to the world of jobs in tertiary levels of education such as colleges and universities as well as some other training institutions Baker (2012) and Mhlanga (2011).

Guidance and counselling services are, therefore part of the schools’ student personnel services. In almost all the current education sectors of countries in the world, the provision of professional guidance and counselling services to students is an integral part of the education process of a school system Mhlanga (2011). In most developed countries, a meaningful school system cannot be imagined without professional guidance and counselling just as it cannot be imagined without curricula, teaching staff, and school administration CSCA (2012). Hence, guidance and counselling services along with other student personnel services are schools’ helping provisions that play significant roles in keeping students healthy and consistently stay on learning.

Through guidance and counselling service provisions, several students’ personal, emotional, psychological and academic problems can adequately be solved and enable them successfully finish a certain level of education. In view of the long evolutionary history of modern education, however, this phenomenon is a fairly recent development. Most available literatures in education showed that school guidance and counselling (SGC) system in the developed countries, for instance, in the United States were put in place only at the beginning of the twentieth century and gradually get matured and developed Mason (2014).

In developing parts of the world, professional GC is still not well developed Law, Kuok and Lee (2013). In Africa in particular, guidance and counselling is still at an early stage of development Mhlanga (2011). Moreover, implementations and practices of school guidance and counselling in the continent face many problems such as lack of proper understanding of its role and shortage of trained counsellors Yifrashewa (2014). Until recently, the situation regarding school guidance and counselling in Ethiopia is also not that much different from the general picture of the continent.

Literatures in this regard showed guidance and counselling as an element of the school system in Ethiopia has been recognized as of the early 1960s Yusuf (1998) cited in Yifrashewa (2014). However, up until the end of the twentieth century, very little progress has been made in establishing it in the system. According to a study by an Ethiopian scholar Yusuf (1998) cited in Yifrashewa (2014) there had been lack of professionally trained counsellors who
understood their roles and contributions in the school system.

As it was also considered in the study of Yirgalem (2013) it had taken a long time when professional guidance and counselling was established in the country after modern education was introduced in 1908 with the opening of Menelik II School in Addis Ababa. However, some recommendations had been made in 1998 by Yusuf cited in Yifrashewa (2014) regarding what might be done in the meantime to fill in the gap of which one of the recommendations was fulfilling professional counsellors in schools. It has now been over two decades since those recommendations had been made. Over these years measures were of course taken. Those universities and colleges available in the country have been recruiting an increasing number of counsellors who have been charged with the responsibilities of providing guidance and counselling services for students.

Apart from the higher education institutions, moreover, BA graduates (mostly psychology graduates) have also been assigned by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education and Regions’ Bureau of Education in secondary schools of the country to work as school counsellors. In relation to these counsellors in schools below the level of higher education, one of the recommendations of Yusuf cited in Yifrashewa (2014) suggested that school counsellors while they provide guidance and counselling services, they should link up it with what Yusuf cited in Yifrashewa (2014) called significant others that included homeroom teachers, classroom teachers, directors, students, parents and community leaders to put guidance and counselling successfully functioning in schools’ system.

Currently in the country, all government-running high schools have guidance and counselling officers and therefore provide guidance and counselling services. This is not a different picture for secondary schools found in the Amhara National Regional State. In these schools particularly counsellors have been assigned since 2005 a time when all the schools have started implementation of school improvement plans in order to ensure quality education MOE (2008). This is generally similar to all secondary schools in Gondar town administration too.

But there has been no recent research account that exactly show what has been carried out in the schools to give information on the kinds of guidance and counselling services being provided, what roles are executed by counsellors, the extent to which students are benefited from services, and regarding what perceptions the students have towards how successful the services are meeting the objectives for which they are designed.

2. Statement of the Problem

A number of studies regarding guidance and counselling in Ethiopia have mainly focused on the efforts being made by government bodies to put it in place and reduce the difficulties it faced Yirgalem (2013) and Yifrashewa (2014). According to Yirgalem (2013) and Yifrashewa (2014) most of those studies made to focus on the problem from the point of view of difficulties the government faced mainly with highlighting such problems as critical shortage of professional counsellors, lack of adequate finance and material resources to support implementation of guidance and counselling in schools.

The most common assumption behind these studies has been that proper guidance and counselling services in schools can fruitfully be maintained through training of sufficient professional counsellors and provision of adequate material resources necessary for their work. Such an assumption had however been focused on the government’s efforts and tended to underscore the roles and improvements out of decentralizing the responsibility of guidance and counselling down to the school system, empowerment of school communities and allocations of sufficient budgetary resources to
support activities of guidance and counselling services at the grassroots Yirgalem (2013).

With very few exceptions, according to Yirgalem (2013), there have almost been no studies to show the kinds of arrangements and services of guidance and counselling that actually exist down on the ground at schools; the roles being considered by counsellors which dictate the specific forms they take regarding planning and implementing the services which account their success or failure in meeting the purposes for which they were set up.

To the best knowledge of this researcher, more importantly, there has been no research information that showed him the current state of guidance and counselling in secondary schools in view of the students as to how they have been served, benefited and what perception they have towards the services in their respective schools in the study area. In such kinds of situations, it can be difficult to determine on the extent to which guidance and counselling services are meeting the needs and demands of students. This is what the gap the study mainly focuses on. Doing this can pedagogically and professionally be important and useful to fill the gap through examining the problem in view of the students.

As a result of what has been stated above and in view of the fact that professional or scientific guidance and counselling is still at its infancy in the country in general and the study area in particular, this study will assess the practices and challenges of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools of Gondar town.

Taking what has been stated above into account, the study gives due concern on what guidance and counselling services are being provided, the roles of counsellors, the benefits students obtain, and students’ perception towards the services as it will be informed and judged by students being they are the main clients of the services. Hence, the study tries to answer the following research questions.

3. Research Questions

1. What guidance and counselling services are provided in secondary schools of Gondar town?
2. What roles do counsellors play to render guidance and counselling services?
3. What perception do students have on the benefits they obtain from guidance and counselling services of their schools?
4. What are the challenges of guidance and counselling in the schools?

4. Objectives of the Study

4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the practices and challenges of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools of Gondar town.

4.2. Specific Objectives

The study has the following specific objectives.

1. To find out what guidance and counselling services are provided in the schools.
2. To indicate the roles counsellors play in providing guidance and counselling services in the schools.
3. To identify students’ perception on the benefits they obtain from guidance and counselling services in the schools.
4. To investigate the challenges of guidance and counselling in secondary schools of Gondar town.

5. Significance of the Study

First, the results of the study helps to identify the practices of guidance and counselling in the context of secondary schools of Gondar town and point out issues and areas that need to be looked at by the schools’ decision makers and the counsellors for improvement and change in the future. Secondly, it helps to identify roles of counsellors which the school should take account of. So, it is hoped that the study draws useful lessons on the delivery of guidance and counselling services in view of roles of
counsellors, its successes and limitations which counsellors specifically use in their future attempts to realize supporting guidance and counselling.

Finally, the results of the study can laid down initial benchmarks for research studies that may be made in the field in the future. Therefore, it can help to initiate counsellors and teachers in the schools and in different secondary schools of the town as well as other interested researchers to conduct further studies more in wider scale through the consideration of other dimensions of guidance and counselling too.

6. Delimitation of the Study
The study focused on the assessment of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools of Gondar town. In Gondar town, there were a total of fifteen (ten government and five privately owned) secondary schools. However, the study was made to focus only on government owned secondary schools. The reason behind this decision was that government secondary schools at least had one counsellor assigned by the education sector charged with the responsibility of delivering the services. So that the study was conducted in schools where there were actual and regular counsellors.

Additionally, out of the ten government secondary schools, three contain only 1st cycle (which provide education for grade 9 and 10); six contain both 1st and 2nd cycle (which provide education for grade 9 to 12); and one contains only 2nd cycle (which provides education for grade 11 and 12). However, the study targeted those secondary schools that contained both cycles for the reason that the researcher wanted to evidently look into what and how actual guidance and counselling services were provided in preparing students psychologically and academically to the next higher levels of education (both to preparatory and higher education levels. Moreover, the study was conceptually delimited and it was made to focus on such issues as practices of guidance and counselling services being provided; the roles being played by counsellors to adequately provide the services, perception of students towards the benefits they obtained from guidance and counselling services, and the challenges of guidance and counselling in secondary schools of Gondar town. Because the study focused only on what happens in these specific schools, it was not concerned into detailed discussion of matters related to policy formulation and the role of government bodies in charge of educational administration concerning guidance and counselling services away from students, counsellors, and principals in the targeted schools.

7. Research Methods and Materials
7.1. Research Design and Approach
It was also believed that a descriptive research design was most appropriate to deal with the problem with the views of the research participants in which case were the students, principals, counsellors and a supervisor into account. The rationale behind the selection of this design was that it could help to portray the problem accurately in light of characteristics it has on the ground. The researcher assumed that all participants in the study had relevant information or experiences which they could provide the study since they were all along the main continuum of the education.

The research was a cross sectional type regarding time orientation. With this into account, therefore, mixed research approach (both quantitative and qualitative research approaches) were used to deal the problem with data from students, principals, counsellors and supervisors’ view. Since the study aimed to examine practices and challenges of guidance and counseling services, it was believed that mixed research approach could help to collect and obtain data for more complete understanding of the problem based on responses from vast participant to achieve the research objective.

7.2. Location of the Study
The study was conducted in secondary schools of Gondar Administration Town. Gondar Administration town is found in Central Gondar Administration Zone according to the recent and newly restructured organization. It was part of the former North Gondar Administrative Zone which has been found in the Amhara National Regional State. Hence, this study was conducted in the education sector of Gondar Administration with particular reference to secondary schools in the town.

The education sector is one of the oldest government organizations in the country in general and in this specific area of the study in particular. Targets of this study were the principals, the counsellors and the students in secondary schools that were found in the historical town of Gondar. Gondar town is capital city of Central Gondar Administrative Zone. Central Gondar Administration is generally found in the northern part of the country. One can find Gondar town when he/she drives 750 km north from Addis Ababa (capital city of the country) and also 185 km from Bahir Dar (capital city of the Amhara National Regional state). Gondar is an ancient town founded by King Fasiledes and it served a central seat of government in the 16th to the 17 the centuries. From the very nature of the history of Gondar town, it has long been settled by a relatively high numbers of peoples being an urban area and consequently has got an increased status. This means that the student population which is currently found in the town is the reflection of the population trend in the town. The student population in the town hence is characterized by diversity in terms of needs and demands as they are characterized by cultural, religious, economic and social difference in beliefs as well as in their academic backgrounds. This is what significantly necessitates the conduct of this study as long as guidance and counselling services are reconciliatory on such differences among the students.

7.3. Target of the Study

In Gondar town, there are currently a total of fifteen government and private secondary schools. Since the study aimed at assessing practices and challenges of guidance and counselling services only in government secondary schools of Gondar town, target population of the study were therefore students who learn from grade nine to grade twelve, principals, counsellors and supervisors.

7.4. Sources of Data

Data collection is a key activity in the process of a research. It must be carefully planned to provide information to the research. In order to get the required and relevant information to the successful accomplishment of the study, both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized and used to answer the research questions.

The purposes of the primary data are to improve the understanding and perform a direct assessment of the research topic by obtaining first-hand information. In this research, therefore, the primary data were collected from the research participants that were selected and included in the study sample as respondents of the study. In this study, the primary data were collected from students, principals, counsellors and a supervisor.

Secondary data are the information gathered from the various sources already existed and can show organizations status regarding the issue under study. Hence, secondary data in this study were collected from different literatures and organizational documents of the schools specific to guidance and counselling and other relevant materials. After collecting such information, the framework of the study was established by which the problem was understood in depth.

7.5. Sampling Techniques and Samples

There are a total of fifteen government and non-government secondary schools in Gondar town. In this study, however, only government secondary schools were included using purposive sampling technique based on the
researcher’s own determination. The reason behind this decision was that the government secondary schools at least had one counsellor assigned by the education sector charged with the responsibility of delivering the services. So that the study was conducted in schools where there were actual and regular counsellors. According to the information obtained from the education department of Gondar Administration town regarding these government secondary schools, three schools provide education for grade 9 and 10; six provide education for grade 9 to 12; and one provides education for grade 11 and 12.

However, the study was made to focus only on those full cycle secondary schools that provide education from grade 9 - 12 using a similar purposive sampling technique. The rationale behind doing this was based on the researcher’s intention of searching how students of different age and grade levels were treated with guidance and counselling services in order to help them to successfully transfer to the next higher levels. Consequently, out of the six government full cycle secondary schools that provide education for grade 9 - 12, the study took 3 (50%) of them using purposive sampling technique with the number of grade levels and number of students they served as the major criteria of selection. Accordingly, those three secondary schools with four grade levels and highest numbers of students were selected and included in the study. Their selection was made based on the researcher’s determination that the results that could be obtained based on data collected from these three schools could be replicable to the rest of the schools with same status.

With the points given above into consideration, hence, Azezo General and Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School, Angereb General and Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School, and Hidar-11 General and Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School that accounted for 3 were included in the study according to the highest numbers of students they totally served respectively.

The ever increasing demand for research has created a need for an efficient method of determining the sample size needed to be representative of a given population. In this study data were collected from three groups of which the 1st was a group of students. The total student population of the study accounted for 6041 grade 9 - 12 students in the selected three schools of which 2915 were males and 3126 were females.

Before sample students from the target schools were selected, hence, sample size regarding the students was determined using a formula given by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) cited in Kothari (2014) to determine small sampling technique and sample size. The following is the formula with its description.

\[ S = X^2 N P (1 - P) / d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 P (1 - P) \]

Where:

- **S** = required sample size.
- **X2** = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).
- **N** = the population size.
- **P** = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).
- **d** = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Hence, to know the sample size required to be representative of the total population of 6041 students, the above formula has given a sample size of 362 students who were proportionally selected and included in the study with the number of students in each school into consideration and each of the four grade levels in each sampled government secondary school into account.

Having determined sample size of the study as indicated above-368, share of each school was proportionally calculated as shown above in Table-2. After the sample size of each of the sampled school was determined, the share of
each grade level in each school was also proportionally determined. Finally, systematic random sampling technique was used to select the research participants from each of the grade 9 - 12 classes in the schools as long as it was so simple to get the list of students from schools’ students’ record offices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>Calculated</th>
<th>Sample students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Azezo</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1466</td>
<td>1619</td>
<td>3085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Angereb</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>1343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>HIDAR-11</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>1613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hence, the study focused on the current academic year to gather data from the schools with grade 9 - 12 students into account. In this study, the students participated by providing data through filling questionnaires and through taking part in focus group discussions. Accordingly, 12 focus group discussions were arranged of which 4 were in Azezo, 4 in Angereb and 4 in Hidar-11 secondary schools with each group contained 8 participants that in all accounted for 96.

Hence, 32 students per each sampled school participated in the focus group discussions. These participants were selected from each grade level in the schools so that the entire grade levels (9, 10, 11 and 12) were represented by 8 participants. The rest 266 sample students were decided to fill the questionnaires by all (100.0%) filled and returned the questionnaires back to the researcher.

As far as the principals, the counsellors and a supervisor was concerned, all were included in the study sample and participated in the interview using comprehensive sampling technique since their number was reasonably small. In all, sample size of the study accounted for 369 of which 362 were students, 3 were principals, 3 were counsellors and the rest 1 was a supervisor.

7.6. Data Gathering Instruments
Since the study attempted to collect data from different participants (the students, principals and the supervisor), three types of data gathering instruments were developed and used. The instruments were self-administered questionnaires, semi-structured interview and focus group discussions each of which elaborated below.

**Questionnaire**
In this study, the first data gathering instrument was questionnaire. Hence, self-administered questionnaires were prepared and distributed among 266 students all of whom filled and returned the questionnaires back to the researcher. The questionnaires contained two major parts. The first part was demographic data of the students. The second part was about guidance and counselling services which
was further delineated into four sub-parts: practices of guidance and counselling services (15 items), roles of counsellors (10 items), students' perception of benefits they obtained from guidance and counselling (10 items) and challenges of guidance and counselling services (10 items). All sections in the second part contained closed and open ended items. All the closed items were stated in positive statements. The interpretations of the scores for practices were: 5-Strongly agree, 4-Agree, 3-Sometime, 2-Disagree; and 5-Strongly Disagree. The interpretations of the score for roles were: 1-Yes; 2-No; and 3-I don't know. The interpretations of the score for perception were: 1-Yes and 2-No. The interpretations of the score for challenges were: 5-Strongly agree, 4-Agree, 3-Sometime, 2-Disagree; and 5-Strongly Disagree. The open-ended items were given in accordance with each study's variable at the end of closed ended items.

**Interview**

The second instrument was an interview with the intention of collecting data from principals and supervisors and counsellors. To achieve this, a semi-structured interview was prepared and used. Interviews are the most crucial data collection tool for this study. Punch (2009) describes interviews as the most prominent data collection tool and says it is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. Hence, using an interview in this study gave sufficient room to flexibly hold discussions and allowed both principals and supervisors to forward all relevant experiences that have in relation to the problem. Using the interview, additionally, could help to fill information gaps that might be missed in the questionnaires.

**Focus Group Discussion**

The third data gathering instrument was a focus group discussion (FGD) which was also used to gather data from the students in accordance with each grade levels (grade nine, ten, eleven to twelve). Selection of focus group discussions for students was determined based on the belief that students are more willing to contribute to a group discussion. As discussed by Gibbs (2012) participants may 'gain strength from the energy of a group setting in order to voice their opinions.

### 7.7. Validity and Reliability

Different measures were taken to verify validity and reliability of the instruments. According to Kumar, 1996 cited in Borrego, Douglas and Amylin (2009) in terms of measurement procedures, validity is the ability of an instrument to measure what it is designed to measure. Validity determines whether the research truly measures which it intends to measure or it helps to verify how truthful the research results are. Different measures were taken to verify validity of the instruments. First, data gathering instruments were carefully prepared and repeatedly edited, given to some English teachers in the school who checked any grammatical and language construction gaps that could confuse respondents. It was then submitted to the advisor for more check and critical comments before they were made ready for distribution among participants of the pilot test. Moreover, the instruments were translated into Amharic to make items easily understandable. Finally, the questionnaires were distributed for pilot study.

The pilot test was conducted to verify the actual return rate of the papers for self-administered questionnaires and to check the extent to which items were correctly identified and understandable. The pilot was made among 66 students who were not included in the actual study sample. In times while filling the questionnaires, there were some respondents asking for meanings of some words, for instance, guidance and counseling. Such questions indicated further editing and helped to improve the questionnaires.

Reliability was also the other major criterion used in this study for evaluating the questionnaire. Reliability measures the internal consistency of the instrument. In this research,
results from the pilot were also used to test the reliability of the questionnaire. According to Borrego, Douglas and Amylin (2009) in general, reliabilities less than 0.60 are considered to be under privileged, those above 0.60 up to 0.80 are considered as conventional, and those Over 0.80 are considered as good. In other words, the closer the coefficient to 1 is the higher the internal consistency of reliability (Sekaran, 2000 in Abidin and Dawd, 2012). In order to conduct the pilot test, in this study the questionnaires were distributed and filled by 66 samples randomly selected away from included in the actual sample of the study by which reliability of the instrument was checked. To determine the reliability, the results were computed using Cronbach alpha coefficients as shown below in Table-4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roles</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-3 reported the reliability coefficient of the instrument pertained to practices, roles, perception and challenges. The reliability coefficient was used to make sure the test on the grouped items was regular and constant. Internal consistency of the data was verified using a coefficient value where the closer the coefficient to 1, the higher the internal consistency or reliability (Sekaran, 2000 in Abidin and Dawd, 2012). The reliability coefficients for this study were all above 0.83 and were considered to be reliable (Borrego, Douglas and Amylin, 2009)

**7.8. Data Analysis Techniques**

As long as the study used both quantitative and qualitative data, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques were applied. Hence, the quantitative data collected using questionnaires were first edited, and then organized in tables and analyzed using the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) with frequency count, percentage, and mean score as well as standard deviation into consideration. The qualitative data from interview and focus group discussions were thematically analysed in line with specific objectives of the study. Hence, having each of the study variables analyzed, the results of the study were computed; conclusions were drawn and recommendations were forwarded.

**8. Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations**

**Major Findings**

Based on the analysis and discussion, the following results were summarized.

- It is found that guidance and counselling services were not promising and they were not properly provided in secondary schools of Gondar city.
- Counsellors didn’t play the roles expected and required of their roles to serve the students.
- Students’ perception towards the guidance and counselling services and on the benefits they obtained from the services was negative.
- Guidance and counselling was problem plagued as it was challenged by different factors traced to the schools, the schools’ administrators, the education officials and the counsellors themselves.
Conclusion

- Generally it is concluded in the study that practices of guidance and counselling in secondary schools of Gondar city were not independently organized and were not well facilitated. Guidance and counselling in the schools have no budget to the specific requirements it needs to adequately put proper guidance and counselling services in place, and it has generally been at the neglect and lacked due attention. Although it is ideally said that school guidance and counselling focuses on preventive services and its importance is highly pronounced; it has currently no meaningful practice to serve students in the sampled secondary schools of Gondar city.

- Even if guidance and counselling services were designed to provide direction and advice for students, its current performance was not as it has been planned. There has been no proper practice although the purpose of guidance and counselling in the school was to help students and solve their problem. Additionally, there has been no coordinated and planned activity in the schools. It is of course, true that, guidance and counselling is a service needs sufficient professional knowledge and skills which however was not fulfilled in the schools. This is best explained by the negative perception of the students on the benefits they obtained from the services offered in the schools.

- Alongside with the low status of guidance and counselling service in the schools, it is also significantly important to give due attention to the roles of the counsellors. Counsellors are assigned to the schools to professionally assist students for which effect so they are expected to play various roles. In this regard, however, the roles of the counsellors were not promisingly found in supporting the students and the study concluded on the need to make significant changes.

- Finally, although the paramount importance of guidance and counselling was conceptually consented, its practical reality was frustrating. It is therefore concluded that the current state of guidance and counselling in secondary schools of Gondar town were adversely influenced by factors that were not beyond the human capacity existed in the schools and in the education sector at all. This can ultimately be implied that, the students were left devoid of the valuable opportunities from the services they had to earn to their learning and towards academic achievement.

Recommendations

Taking the results obtained from this study and the conclusions drawn into account, the following recommendations are forwarded so as to change the current picture of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools of Gondar town and make a significant difference in the field.

1. Administrators of the schools are suggested to critically analyse and review the existing status of guidance and counselling services within their own schools’ contexts in light of services it renders. Doing this, can enable them to take alternative and possible actions of improving the services through giving attention to the various challenges it faced.

2. Additionally, the schools are recommended to rearrange the activities for the counsellors through facilitating opportunities within the schools that enable them work effectively and also advised to allocate reasonably sufficient budget to the unit of guidance and counselling to properly operate and support students against the problems they may face while learning

3. Besides, the schools’ counsellors together with teachers in the schools and the rest of the schools’ communities
should give consideration to organize training at the schools’ level to maximize the level of the service by creating the right awareness among all the school’s communities. The counsellors have to try more to create awareness among the student population as to how they use the services.

4. The governing body in charge of administering the schools in which case the District education office and the Regional Education Bureau is recommended to assign trained and professional counsellors and reconsider the standards set for guidance and counselling service at the schools’ level to fill the gaps if they are discovered.

5. Furthermore, the District education office and if possible the education bureau has to allocate reasonably sufficient budgetary and material resources that can enable the unit of guidance and counselling in secondary schools to meaningfully provide the services to the students.

6. Finally, the education bureau also suggested to identify needs regarding guidance and counselling, planning, organizing and providing sufficient and relevant trainings to the counsellors in secondary schools by which they can enhance their knowledge in the field and can get necessary skills to adequately provide guidance and counselling services to students.

References

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