

Impact of Peer Counselling on the Learners' Self-Efficacy in Boarding Secondary Schools in Kericho County, Kenya

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Abstract: The increasing complexities of modern life, together with development of learners in adolescence stage, poses a challenge in their self-efficacy while in secondary schools. The study focused on establishing the impact of peer counselling on learners' self-efficacy in boarding secondary schools in Kericho County, Kenya. The study objective was to determine the impact of peer counselling on the learners' self-efficacy. Social Cognitive theory by Albert Bandura guided the study. The study-generated data from 12 schools, among 398 students and 48 student peer counsellors selected by simple random sampling. Additionally, 12 heads of guidance and counselling and 12 principals were included. The study adopted pragmatic paradigm. The study used convergent parallel mixed methods research design where data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussion. The data was analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the study revealed there was a positive impact of peer counselling ($\beta=0.591$) on learners' self-efficacy. The study concludes that peer counselling has a positive impact on learners' self-efficacy. The study therefore recommended that schools should use peer counselling. Sensitization of principals, teachers and heads of guidance and counselling on the benefits of Peer counselling on learners' self-efficacy is necessary.

Key words: Impact, Peer Counselling and Self-Efficacy, Boarding Schools

I. INTRODUCTION

Real accomplishment of students fuel their self-efficacy (Olivier, *et al*, 2018). As learners grow, many of them experience challenges concerning their self-efficacy while in boarding secondary schools. As the brain matures during adolescence, there is weighty effect on the adolescent capabilities and behaviour (Sackman, (2016). Learners in adolescence stage are characterised by having unrealistic views about themselves. They are risk takers, susceptible to social pressure and self-focused (Pfeifer & Berkman, 2018).

Similarly, adolescence years is characterised by rapid growth and change (Eliamani, *et al*, 2015). It is important to support adolescents who experience victimization to develop their self-efficacy because they lack the confidence despite their willingness (Wachs *et al*, 2020). Adolescent years is similarly characterised by peer pressure. A learner at this stage aim in life is to be accepted, respected and listened to by friends and it is normally very difficult for adults to understand

adolescents much as everyone have to pass through adolescence stage (National Academies of Sciences, EGINEERING, and medicine, 2019).

Objective and Hypothesis

The objective was to determine the impact of Peer Counselling on the Learners' Self-Efficacy in Boarding Secondary Schools. The study hypothesized that peer counselling has no statistically significant influence on learners' self-efficacy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Challenges learners face in secondary schools originate from their self-image and self-esteem which then impacts on their self-efficacy as evidence by their self-confidence, self-belief, decision making, time management and goal setting. As such, these factors were sought in order to understand the impact of peer counselling on learners efficacy.

Self-confidence

Self-confidence refers to being certain for a chosen course of action whether it is the best or not by having trust in ourselves. Confidence helps a person accept difficult challenges and to hold back to setbacks. A student can improve self-confidence by improving the competence (Tiwari, 2021). When a learner belief that he or she is good enough in class the learner works towards improving. Peer counsellors are very helpful in helping other learners build their self-confidence. The learner models the peer counsellor to achieve his or her goal confidently.

Chiefly, Bandura 2008 in Zamfir and Mocanu (2020) verified that self-efficacy values shaped and developed through four primary sources are mastery of experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal reasoning, and physiological and affective states. Mastery of experiences, builds strong beliefs in a person's efficacy and failure. Equally, Quek (2018) confirmed that when learners master what it takes to succeed, they persevere and emerge stronger in adversities. Successes strengthen perceived self-efficacy while failures weaken it.

For a learner to intensify and master his or her self-efficacy, the learner must allow himself or herself succeed in life by staying motivated, devoted and hopeful about following

through without untimely giving up on achieving sound goals and modifying their destiny. When a learner realised he or she has set unrealistic goals, the subconscious communicates that the goal is not realistic (Whitener, 2017). Peer counsellors assist their friends in setting realistic goals.

A learner may be developing the ability to calculate a sum using a given formulae with assistance or scaffolding, from a peer the learner will soon calculate the sums using the formulae independently without help. The scaffolding helped the learner to develop the skills necessary to calculate the sum independently without help (Udemy, 2020). Similarly, Bandura in Vijeila (2019) theorized that self-efficacy promotes an individual's energy use, ability to deal with fear, and level of participation in tasks in order to achieve their objectives.

Self-Belief

Undoubtedly, Bandura 1997 in Ozkal (2019) conveyed that self-efficacy is individual's beliefs about their capabilities to produce preferred success to manage situations affecting their lives. Ozkal further stated that individual's capability beliefs are producible and the behaviour planned successfully. Similarly, Bandura in Vijeila (2019) theorized that self-efficacy promotes an individual's energy use, ability to deal with fear, and level of participation in tasks in order to achieve their objectives.

In adolescents, peer groups differ in the degree in which they pressure members to become involved in academic activities (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). Furthermore, the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the greater challenges students set for themselves (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2006 in Fairness, 2019). When tutees hear positive responses from tutors, their self-efficacy improves. Learners however should try to avoid asking for feedback from peers they know are more likely to have a negative or critical view of their performance (Cherry, 2020).

When learners are inspired in learning, their self-efficacy develops, making them to have new perspective of matters in a way they have never dreamt of (Derounian, 2017). Peer interaction is the ability of learners to relate appropriately with one another as they spent time together (Little *et al* in Tentama & Nur, 2021). Self-efficacy beliefs affect learners thinking styles and emotional adjustment. Learners with high self-efficacy levels feel less worry and can be more fruitful. Learners showing certainty in their social skills expect success. Students with low self-efficacy levels distrust their social skills and anticipate rejection or ridicule even before forming social contacts (Unlu in Kundu & Ghose, 2016). Creating and strengthening self-beliefs of efficacy is through vicarious experiences of success stories. This according to Bandura is the second source of self-efficacy (Bandura 1994 in Kundu, 2020).

Decision Making

When learners are involved in decision-making ownership is realised by students regarding their school choices and

formulation of school rules and discipline issues. This makes them adjust in their academics, socially and emotionally (Mati *et al*, 2016). When there is teamwork and shared responsibilities among peers there is always good results achieved. When peer counsellors have a strong positive influence in a clique, the clique will have members who are competent in decision-making.

Wong *et al* (2016) suggests that peer counselling provide benefits to both peer counsellors and counsellee like patience, helping in decision-making, problem solving, development of self-esteem and self-efficacy. They are more effective in reaching adolescents because of having more credibility among adolescents than adults have. Furthermore, De Guzman in Mosha (2017) verified that peers who become friends typically have many interests. In addition, in decision-making, peers of common academic status and interests seem to gravitate toward each other.

Kamunyu *et al* (2019) found that students acknowledged that counselling help them make rational decisions and to conceptualize the root causes of their social problems and how to solve. Moreover, Polirstok (2017) verified that learners ought to develop a skill of seeking assistance from the environment to make them more resilient in decision-making. A study by Ogutu *et al* (2017) revealed that self-efficacy influence career decision making

Time Management

For today's students, time management is a crucial problem. Time management focuses on creating a schedule, setting goals, and prioritizing tasks for a well-organized rather than disorganized school day (Claessens *et al.*, 2007 in Kader & Eissa, 2015). Learners with better time management skills, abstain from acting on impulses Osgood *et al* 2017 in Kaminske (2020). Since students interact on day-to-day, those with poor time management skills should be encouraged to emulate peers who utilise their time well in their studies. According to Vygotsky, working together as a group is cooperative or collaborative experience where modelling takes place to develop skills (Hartman, 2020).

Further, Ho (2020) deduced that excellent time management allows a student to create a healthy balance in school workload and leisure time and poor time management causes stress. When a student learn how to manage their time efficiently, they will be able to accomplish more in shorter period with less effort. Likewise, Mackay (2019) verified time management for learners' centers around generating a list for things to accomplish. Equally, students should master their schedule. To maximize their time, they should be purposeful on how to start and end each day. It is about taking control of amount of time available, and enhancing it for efficiency and productivity.

Goal Setting

Bandura (1994 in Davids (2015) that self-assessment of capacities affects goal setting. The greater the objective

challenges people set for themselves and the more committed they are to them, the higher their perceived self-efficacy is. Further, Hastie, 2013 in Roueche (2018) deliberated that when learners set goals, their self-efficacy improves especially when working with short-term goals with clear criteria for success than when working with long-term goals.

Allowing students to set objectives and track their progress toward those goals builds self-confidence and inspires them to succeed, resulting in long-term self-efficacy (Smithson 2012 in Sides & Cuevas, 2020). Cherry (2017) verified that beliefs are determined by affective, cognitive and the behaviour. This affects how one sets goals, become interested and committed to activities in which they participate and how one approach challenges in life.

Smithson in Sides (2020) established that goal setting fosters motivation. It increases the amount of student-to-student encouragement leading to greater self-efficacy and higher goal setting. Equally, Bandura (2019) verified that peer counselling have helped learners develop high self-efficacy in goal setting. Someone with strong self-efficacy for a task would be resilient and resilient in the face of setbacks, whereas someone with low self-efficacy for same activity would disengage or flee the circumstance.

II. METHODOLOGY

Pragmatic paradigm was adopted. It constitutes the principles and abstract beliefs that form how a researcher understands the world and the researcher's interpretation the acts within that world (Zukaukas *et al*, 2018). Mixed methods research approach was used, where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to get a complete understanding of the phenomenon studied. Researchers using this approach collect, analyze and combine qualitative and quantitative data into a single study. The study adopted Convergent parallel mixed methods research design where both quantitative and qualitative data was collected, analyzed distinctly and the results were compared to check if the findings confirmed or contradicted each other (Pardede, 2018 & Haan, 20). The sample size comprised 398 students, 48 student peer counsellors, 12 heads of guidance and counselling and 12 principals. The study stratified the sampling to classify the research site into five regions according to the sub counties in Kericho County. The study allotted two schools to Buret, Londian and Kipkelion sub counties for they had to some extent fewer students while Ainamoi and Belgut sub counties were each allotted three schools since their population was a little higher. Simple random sampling was used to select 435 students. To select the 48 student peer counsellors, purposive sampling was done. The heads of guidance and counselling for each visited school and principal was also purposively selected.

Questionnaires were utilised to collect data from the learners. Use of questionnaires is economical in time saving and less expensive in obtaining information, which are factual. It is also easier to administer. One can reach a large sample size of respondents within a short time using questionnaires (Young, 2016). The questionnaire contained items, positively worded for the respondents' feelings towards influence of peer counselling on learners' self-efficacy and school adjustment. Focus group discussion was used to collect data from the peer counsellors to elicit a multiplicity of views and insights on learners' self-efficacy and school adjustment in boarding secondary schools (Nyumba, *et al*, 2018). Face-to-face interview with the principals and heads of guidance and counselling enabled the study to collect in-depth information, which may not have been possible by the use of a questionnaire Marshall (2016).

Data was analysed per the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques in the analyses of the quantitative data. The researcher coded the quantitative data generated from the questionnaires. The researcher did both descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis using SPSS software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher collected data using a questionnaire, focus group discussion from the students and peer counsellors as well as and interview schedule from heads of guidance and counselling and principals. Frequencies, percentages, mean scores and factor analysis formed the descriptive statistics in the results. For Inferential statistics, the researcher involved linear regression and multiple regression, where the researcher used β coefficients to explain the interactions among variables. The hypothesis tests was at a 0.05 level of significance. The study based the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis on the calculated test statistics and the value of the probability of significance (p value).

The students rated their views on the five items reflecting learners' self-efficacy using a 5-point Likert scale as summarized in Table 1. In Likert scale, 1 represent strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3 moderately agreed, 4 agree and 5 as strongly agree which was collapsed into: agreed, moderately agreed and disagreed.

Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Self-Efficacy

The study collapsed the Likert scale into agreed, moderately agreed and disagreed as shown in Table 1. The study determined five aspects of self-efficacy, these were, self-confidence, self-believe, decision-making, time management and goal setting.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Learners Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy Aspects	Agree		Moderately Agree		Disagree		Mean	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. Self Confidence	322	80.9	29	7.3	47	11.8	4.05	1.15
2. Self-Belief	365	91.7	6	1.5	27	6.8	4.43	0.95
3. Decision Making	325	81.7	33	8.3	40	10.1	4.07	1.06
4. Time Management	323	81.1	34	8.5	41	10.3	4.15	1.06
5. Goals Setting	331	83.2	32	8.0	35	8.8	4.18	0.75
Mean							4.18	0.75

Note N = 398

On self-confidence, Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents 322 (80.9%) agreed that the peer counsellors helped in developing learners' self-confidence, 29 (7.3%) moderately agreed and 47 (11.8%) disagreed ($M=4.05$; $SD=1.15$). The results clearly indicate that majority of the respondents supported that peer counselling helped in developing learners' self-confidence. A similar indication of the importance attached to the study is by Tiwari (2021) confirmed that confidence helps a person accept difficult challenges and to hold back to setbacks. Equally, Bandura in Vijeila (2019) theorized that self-efficacy promotes an individual's energy use, ability to deal with fear, and level of participation in tasks in order to achieve their objectives. In addition, social development theory according to Udem (2020) verified that scaffolding helped the learner to develop the skills necessary to work independently without help at their zone of proximal development. This is vital during cooperation and collaboration among peer counsellors and learners.

During the focus group discussion, some of the comments were:

I compliment them to make them feel good. I encouraged my peer friends to participate in public speaking in barazas, during assembly time and during group discussions especially the shy ones and silent ones (Extract, Focus group Discussion, 2020).

The face-to-face interviews with the principals and the heads of guidance and counselling revealed that peer counselling has helped learners develop their self-confidence as supported in the following quotations from a participants:

Peer counsellors encourage learners to be confident in what they are doing; they also help them to believe in themselves and to have a positive mind about themselves and their schools. They have been helping learners develop their confidence through public debate, barazas and public speaking when they talk about themselves (Extract, Interview, 2020).

An examination of the aspect of self-belief in performing well in their studies, Table 1 confirmed that most of the respondents 365 (91.7%) agreed, six (1.5%) moderately

agreed and 27 (6.8%) disagreed ($M=4.43$; $SD=0.95$). From these findings, it emerges that most of the respondents agreed that peer counsellors helped them to have self-belief that they could do well in their studies. These results are in line with Cherry (2020) who confirmed that self-belief in one's abilities can predict how motivated one feel, ones' feeling about themselves, and the amount of effort one put into achieving goals. Bandura 1994 in Kundu (2020) expounded that creating and strengthening self-beliefs of efficacy is through vicarious experiences of success stories of social models. These social models in the case of this study are the peer counsellors. They act as models especially when they engage themselves in studies and their performance starts improving.

The open-ended question in the questionnaire revealed that:

Peer counsellors encourage us to have self-belief and to have positive mind about our school and ourselves. Peer counsellors have helped me to believe that I can make it in life and to accept myself the way I am. Peer counsellors lead by example. I encourage that they can do better especially when some improvement (Extract, Questionnaire, 2020).

On the aspect of decision-making, 325 (81.7%) respondents agreed that peer counsellors help them to be competent in decision-making, 33 (8.3%) moderately agreed 40 (10.1%) disagreed ($M=4.07$; $SD=1.07$). These results confirm that most of the participants agreed that peer counsellors help them to be competent in decision-making. These findings agreed with Furthermore, De Guzman in Mosh (2017) verified that in decision-making, peers of common academic status and interests seem to gravitate toward each other. Kamunyu *et al* (2019) found that students acknowledged that counselling help them make rational decisions and to conceptualize the root causes of their social problems and how to solve.

A peer counsellor during focus group discussion commented that: *Competence is a simple task, which is achievable at any level of hard work (Extract, Focus group Discussion, 2020).*

Most of the respondents 323 (81.1%) agreed that peer counsellors help them to confidently manage study time well, with 34 (8.5%) moderately agreed and 41 (10.3%) disagreed ($M=4.15$; $SD=1.06$). From the results, majority of the

participants supported that peer counsellors help them confidently manage their time well. Osgood *et al* 2017 in Kaminske (2020) mentioned that learners with better time management skills have higher self-control and abstain from acting on impulses. Again, Hartman (2020) confirmed that working together as a group is a cooperative or collective experience where modeling takes place to improve expertise, according to Vygotsky.

During the focus group discussion, a participant gave the following response on the aspect of time management: *I always encourage my peers to manage their time well and to believe that they can utilise their time well, as this will make them to be successful in their studies (Extract, Focus group Discussion, 2020).*

The participants in face-to-face interviews expressed similar views with focus group discussion as conveyed in the following comments:

The influence is a great deal; peer counsellors encourage learners who may be reluctant in their schoolwork to manage their time well. Our school has a programme where peer counsellors lead class discussion on issues affecting their classes including time management. This programme has assisted the administration to identify students with time management challenges (Extract, Interview, 2020).

On the aspect of goal setting, 331 (83.2%) respondents agreed that peer counsellors help learners develop high self-efficacy in goals setting, with 32 (8.0%) moderately agreed and only 35 (8.8%) disagreed ($M=4.18$; $SD=0.75$). These findings support that peer counsellors helps learners develop high self-efficacy in goal setting. This is in consistent with what Smithson in Sides and Cuevas (2020) emphasised that goal setting fosters motivation. Additionally, Bandura (2019) confirmed that ability to achieve a goal or complete a task depends on the self-efficacy of an individual. Someone with high levels of self-efficacy for a given task will be resilient and persistent in the face of setbacks.

A participant in focus group discussion commented that:

I encourage my peer friends to participate in public speaking in barazas and during assembly time, to help in building high self-efficacy as they identify their potentials. I also encourage them to set attainable goals so that they do not get discouraged when they are not able to achieve (Extract, Focus group Discussion, 2020). A similar comment came from participants during face-to-face interview. *Peer counsellors have helped learners develop high self-efficacy through public debate, barazas and public speaking by expressing themselves and talk freely (Extract, Interviews, 2020).*

Learners Self-Efficacy Factor Analysis

The study used Kaiser-Mayor-Oklin (KMO) and Bartlett's tests of sphericity to check whether there was a connection between the research variables, peer counselling and learners'

self-efficacy. The researcher used Kaiser- Mayor- Oklin as a criterion for sampling adequacy in the report. A p-value of 0.5 and a value of $>.5$ is considered sufficient. KMO index ranges from 0 to 1, with values 0.00 to 0.49 unacceptable, 0.50 to 0.59 bad, 0.60 to 0.69 sensible, 0.70 to 0.79 good, 0.80 to 0.89 great 0.90 to 1.00 excellent (IBM Corp (2020).

In this respect, the study used factor analysis in the sample to aid in determining the actual number of variables that evaluated each construct as viewed by the respondents. The study assessed the validity of the instrument using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The data is suitable for further study where the relevant value is less than 0.05.

The researcher used factor extraction to figure out how many factors the sample should use to describe the strongest interrelationships between the different sets of variables (Ocak *et al*, 2020). To derive factors from the scales of each build, the researchers used component factor analysis with varimax rotation on all variables. All items loading below 0.50 were supposed be deleted, and those with more than 0.50 loading factor retained. All items were well loaded into their various underlying variable structure of dimensions. This study used factor analysis to validate whether the items in each section loaded into the expected categories (Revelle, 2021). The study used Varimax rotation to validate the five variables that are distinct as shown in Table 2.

The researcher subjected many of the objects to theory aspect analysis and Varimax rotation. As predicted by the researcher, products with factor loadings less than 0.50 were eliminated (Ocak *et al*, 2020). Learners' self-efficacy aspects were subjected to factor analysis, and one part with Eigen values greater than 1 was derived, which explained 51.519 percent of variance, as seen in Table 4. The KMO for self-efficacy was 0.810, and the Bartlett's Test of sphericity was important ($p.05$), as was the chi square test (430.927). The five statements were retained, computed and renamed self-efficacy for further analysis.

Table 2: Learners Self-Efficacy Rotated Factor Matrix on Measurement Items

Survey items	Component
	1
1. Self-confidence	.690
2. Self-believe	.742
3. Decision Making	.687
4. Time Management	.712
5. Goal setting	.756
KMO	.810
Approx. Chi-Square	430.927
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($P<0.001$) $df=10$	
Eigenvalues	2.576
% of Variance	51.519

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. 1 component extracted.

Regression Analysis on the Impact of Peer Counselling on the Learners' Self-Efficacy

These results of the analysis in Table 3 showed evidence that: the coefficient of determination (R squared) of 0.286 showed that 28.6% of learners' self-efficacy was explained by peer

counselling. The adjusted R-square of 0.284 indicated that peer counselling in exclusion of the constant variable explained the change in self-efficacy by 28.4%. The variables not used in the formula clarified the residual percentage. The independent variables deviated from the line of best fit, as shown by the standard error of approximation (0.637).

Table 3: Peer Counselling on the Learners' Self-Efficacy Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.535 ^a	.286	.284	.63747	.286	158.682	1	396	.000

Note. Predictors (Constant), Peer Counselling

Peer counselling on Learners' Self-efficacy ANOVA

Table 4 shows the results of the Analysis of Variance for the regression coefficient: F=158.682, p value = 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it is obvious that peer counselling has a positive impact on boarding school students' self-efficacy. These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which stated that peer counselling had no substantial impact on learners' self-efficacy in boarding secondary schools.

Table 4: Peer counselling on Learners' Self-efficacy ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	64.483	1	64.483	158.682	.000 ^b
	Residual	160.921	396	.406		
	Total	225.404	397			

Note. a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy; b. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Counselling.

Peer Counselling on Learners' Self-Efficacy Coefficients

In order to test the hypotheses, the study generated the β coefficients for peer counselling as independent variable from the model. Table 5 shows the estimates of β -value and gives contribution of the predictor to the model. The β -value for peer counselling had a positive coefficient, depicting positive impact with learners' self-efficacy as summarized in the model as:

$$Y = 1.813 + 0.591X_1 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 4.1}$$

Where: Y = Self-efficacy, X = peer counselling, ϵ = error term.

Table 5: Peer Counselling on Self-efficacy Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.813	.191		9.502	.000
	Peer Counselling	.591	.047	.535	12.597	.000

Note. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy

The study hypothesized that peer counselling has no significant impact on learners' self-efficacy at boarding secondary schools. The results of the study indicated that peer counselling has a strong substantial impact on learners' self-efficacy in boarding schools (=0.591 and p value=0.000). Increase in peer counselling led to an increase in learners' self-efficacy. The study rejected the null hypothesis (Ho). These observations are consistent with previous findings.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase in peer counselling led to a rise in learners' self-efficacy in boarding secondary schools. This led to the conclusion that peer counselling has a positive impact on learners' self-efficacy in boarding schools. The study recommends that boarding secondary school's management should develop peer-counselling programmes that will assist learners to develop self-confidence in whatever they are doing translating to goal setting and high self-efficacy among students. The individual learner in boarding secondary school, should develop, and constructs self-efficacy by interacting with others in the school environment and reflecting on that interaction. Many of the successes and failures that learners experience in schools result on how they view themselves and their relationship with others.

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