Relationship between Students’ Fear of Self Disclosure and Help - Seeking Behaviour among Secondary School Students in Nakuru District

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The study sought to find out whether students in the selected schools in Nakuru District feared revealing information to their teacher counsellors and whether there was a significant relationship between students’ fear of self disclosure and help seeking behaviour. It further investigated factors that lead to fear of self disclosure like content of disclosure, fear of lack of privacy/confidentiality, vulnerability avoidance, fear of perceived negative feedback and fear of change in teacher counsellor’s perception. Hence leading to fear of seeking help from the teacher counsellor by students.

The study targeted form two and three students in Nakuru District. Using stratified random sampling, a sample of 240 form two and form three students were obtained from public schools in Nakuru District. The instrument used for data collection was a 2-part questionnaire. A pilot study was carried out to ascertain the validity of the instrument. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics, correlations and the t-test was used for the gender differences. The statistical procedures were done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study revealed that 61.7% of the interviewed students didn’t utilize the Guidance and Counselling programmes in their schools. Fear of self disclosure to the teacher counsellor was found to exist among the sampled students. A significant relationship was found to exist between fear of self disclosure and help seeking behaviour. Gender differences were also observed as far as self disclosure to the teacher counsellor is concern. It was also revealed that the nature of the problem, fear of lack of confidentiality, fear of negative feedback and fear of change in teacher counsellor’s perception influenced students’ decision to seek guidance and counselling.

The study recommends that teacher counsellors should reassure students seeking counselling of their privacy, it also recommends that teacher counsellors should hold public meetings with their students and demystify their roles as counsellors. A separation of the teaching and counselling roles to encourage students to seek help is also recommended by the study.