To Examine the Challenges in the Implementation of Counseling Services for Teenagers' in Secondary Schools: Tanzania

Irene Muyango Makene[1]

[1]University of Iringa (UoI)

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the role of counseling services in enhancing teenagers' academic performance in secondary schools within Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. A case study research design was adopted, utilizing a qualitative research approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary reviews. Purposive sampling was employed to select four secondary schools out of the forty-five in Iringa Municipality, as well as to identify heads of schools, academic teachers, counseling teachers, and students who participated in focus group discussions. Additionally, simple random sampling was used to select thirty-two teenagers. Key informant interviews served as the primary data collection instruments. The findings indicated that teenagers' academic performance in secondary schools is influenced by the implementation of counseling services. However, counseling services were found to be only partially effective, with limited availability and accessibility. Although students recognized the importance of counseling services and their positive impact on academic performance, they expressed dissatisfaction with the way these services were delivered. Challenges identified included inadequate counseling facilities, the assignment of discipline teachers as counselors, an insufficient number of trained counselors (often one or two per school), shortage of funds, and a lack of motivation among many school counselors. The study concluded that counseling responsibilities should be separated from teaching duties, and parents or caregivers should play a more active role in supporting their children's mental well-being. It recommended that the government prioritize the development of policies to improve counseling services in secondary schools and promote mass education to raise awareness about the importance of seeking professional help or confiding in trusted individuals.

Keywords: *Counseling Services, Secondary Schools, Teenagers', Academic Performance.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Secondary education in formal schools plays a crucial role in fostering students' rational, emotional, cognitive, and social development (Ntuli et al., 2020). It represents a key stage in the educational process where learners undergo significant intellectual and personal growth. Consequently, the provision of counseling services has become essential worldwide to help students manage the challenges associated with adolescence (Mughai, 2020).

Adolescence is a critical period characterized by rapid changes and various struggles. Teenagers frequently encounter psychological challenges that can affect their overall well-being and academic potential (Moeti, 2016). These challenges often include school-related stress, peer relationships, identity exploration, family dynamics, cultural adjustments, and social pressures (Warui, 2018). Combined, these factors contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and mental health concerns among students.

➤ *The Global History of Counseling Services*

The history of counseling services reveals a complex and dynamic evolution across different cultural and historical contexts (Naidoo & Carturing, 2020). While informal emotional support and guidance have existed for centuries, modern counseling as a profession began to emerge in the 20th century. In ancient societies, individuals sought guidance from religious leaders, philosophers, and wise elders (Bogba, 2016).

During the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods, as philosophers such as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasized individual rights and the importance of education for human development, the need for structured counseling support became more evident (Chidarikire, 2017). Sigmund Freud's pioneering work on psychoanalysis in the

19th century further highlighted the significance of the unconscious mind and early life experiences in shaping adult behavior (Abel, 2016). Similarly, vocational counseling emerged in the early 20th century in response to rapid industrialization and urbanization, with Frank Parsons recognized as the founder of the vocational guidance movement (Sima, 2018).

The psychological impact of World War II heightened awareness of mental health needs, especially among returning veterans, underscoring the importance of counseling services (Mekgwe & Kok, 2017). The humanistic psychology movement of the 1950s and 1960s, led by scholars such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, further advanced counseling practices by emphasizing empathy, personal growth, and unconditional positive regard (Mughai, 2020). The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the diversification of counseling approaches, including multicultural counseling, family therapy, and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) (Ntuli et al., 2020).

In Africa, the post-independence era marked the establishment of national education systems, where the need for counseling services to support students' academic and personal development gained recognition (Mekgwe & Kok, 2017). Today, secondary school students worldwide face psychosocial challenges that cut across cultural and geographic boundaries, such as academic pressure, peer influence, family expectations, and social transitions (Lasode et al., 2017; Warui, 2018).

In Tanzania, the integration of counseling services in schools aligns with the global movement recognizing the link between mental health and academic success. School counselors now provide services such as individual and group counseling, career guidance, and support for issues like bullying and substance abuse (Kennedy et al., 2019).

Kurunsaari et al. (2021) argue that students who lack access to counseling services often struggle to cope with academic, personal, and family challenges, which negatively affects their academic success. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the availability, accessibility, impact, and challenges of counseling services in secondary schools within Iringa Municipality to provide insights into how counseling can be better utilized to support teenagers' academic achievement.

➤ *Statement of the Problem*
In secondary education, teenagers face a range of challenges that can significantly affect their academic performance. These challenges often include emotional stress, socio-economic hardships, peer pressure, and personal issues such as family conflicts or mental health concerns. Such factors may disrupt teenagers' concentration, limit their engagement in learning activities, and hinder academic achievement, sometimes leading to low grades or even school dropouts.

This study examines the relationship between the provision of effective counseling services and teenagers'

academic performance. Specifically, it aims to identify the most common psychosocial stressors affecting teenagers, assess the availability and utilization of counseling services in secondary schools, and explore the challenges that limit the effectiveness of these services in enhancing teenagers' academic success. The findings are expected to offer practical insights into how counseling interventions can be strengthened to support teenagers' educational outcomes.

In Tanzania, only a few studies have explored counseling services in secondary schools. For example, Kazimoto (2022) investigated the prevalence of guidance and counseling services in public and private schools, Sima (2010) examined the challenges of providing counseling services in secondary schools, and Mbilinyi (2025) focused on teachers' attitudes toward counseling service provision. Internationally, Kiptala and Kipruto (2021) explored students' perceptions of guidance and counseling services and their influence on academic performance in Baringo County, Kenya; Arfasa (2018) examined perceptions of students and teachers toward counseling services in South West Ethiopia; and Nzeleni (2015) studied the provision of guidance and counseling services in schools within the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape, Pretoria.

Despite these contributions, a knowledge gap remains regarding the role of counseling services in improving teenagers' academic performance within the Tanzanian context. The study aimed to determine whether the counseling services provided in secondary schools were effectively conducted to enhance teenagers' academic performance by addressing their emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*
The general objective of this study was to examine the challenges in implementing counselling services for teenagers in secondary schools.

To achieve the stated main objective, the study intended to answer the following questions:

- From perspective, what are the main challenges in the implementation of counselling services?
- What barriers, if any, prevent teenagers from utilizing counseling services more frequently?
- How could the school improve its counseling services to better support academic goals?
- How do budget constraints affect the availability and quality of the counseling services?

The findings from this research may inform school administrators and policymakers on the necessity of integrating comprehensive counseling programs into the educational system, thus paving the way for evidence-based policy formulation. Lastly this study paved the way for future research on the intersections of counseling, mental health and academic performance, opening new avenues for investigation and understanding within the academic and psychology fields.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews literatures related to the study. It provide insight on the role of counseling services on teenagers academic performance, its availability and accessibility, impact and challenges.

➢ *Availability and Accessibility of Counseling Services*

In Tanzania, guidance and counseling services are recognized as essential supportive programs within the teaching and learning process, as outlined in various education policy documents, including the Education and Training Policy (2014), the national curriculum, and government directives such as Circular No. 11 of 2002.

Nkuba and Kyaruzi (2015) emphasize that counseling services play a crucial role in transforming lives and promoting human development. They argue that secondary school students require these services due to the wide range of social, psychological, and academic challenges they face during their educational journey. Inadequate adaptation to such challenges can negatively affect students' academic performance and expose them to problems that hinder their well-being (Wako, 2016). Similarly, Salgong et al. (2016) note that the primary purpose of guidance and counseling is to help students understand life from a healthier perspective, identify the causes of their problems, and find appropriate solutions to avoid harmful behaviors.

According to Sima (2018), counseling services are critical for addressing psychosocial challenges in Tanzanian secondary schools. These services provide students with a safe environment to share concerns, explore coping strategies, and develop essential life skills. By doing so, counseling not only addresses immediate issues but also equips students with the skills to handle future challenges such as peer pressure, identity crises, family conflicts, academic stress, and social expectations (Abel, 2016).

The introduction of counseling services in schools is part of a broader global recognition of the relationship between mental health and academic success. School counselors now offer services including individual and group counseling, career guidance, and support for issues such as substance abuse and bullying (Kennedy et al., 2019). Moreover, studies show that guidance and counseling services help students develop lifelong learning skills, make informed decisions, and lead more fulfilling lives (Nzeleni, 2015). In Tanzania, the introduction of counseling services in secondary schools followed the 2002 government directive (Circular No. 11), which mandated the appointment of teacher-counselors to help shape students' behavior and bridge the gap between modern education and traditional values (MoEC, 2002).

➢ *Perceived Impact of Counseling Services on Teenagers' Academic Performance*

Given the importance of psychosocial support, education policymakers have integrated counseling services into the school system. The Education and Training Policies of 1995 and 2014 required all schools to appoint school counselors to address students' psychosocial needs and support holistic student development (Lyimo et al., 2024). Studies have shown that counseling services contribute significantly to improving students' academic performance by addressing their emotional, social, and psychological needs. For instance, Mduma (2017) highlights that providing a supportive environment that considers both academic and non-academic factors enhances students' focus, learning capacity, and academic success. Similarly, AlKhayat (2021) concludes that counseling services improve students' well-being by offering support for mental health, stress management, and emotional resilience, enabling students to better overcome challenges and succeed academically.

Conversely, ignoring students' emotional and psychosocial needs can have severe consequences. D'Costa et al. (2021) note that failure to address these needs undermines students' coping abilities during times of stress or adversity. Knight (2019) warns that untreated emotional and psychosocial issues often manifest as disruptive classroom behaviors, reduced concentration, and difficulties in forming positive peer relationships. Warui (2018) further observes that neglecting students' broader psychosocial needs can contribute to increased dropout rates.

Additionally, Kurunsaari et al. (2021) argue that focusing solely on academic guidance overlooks opportunities to foster students' holistic development. Academic success requires not only cognitive skills but also social competence, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, many Tanzanian school administrators reportedly emphasize academic guidance over psychosocial support, leading to unresolved mental health issues among students (Lyimo et al., 2024).

➢ *Challenges in the Implementation of Counseling Services*

Research highlights several challenges hindering the effective implementation of counseling services in Tanzanian secondary schools. One major issue is the shortage of qualified counselors and psychologists. Many schools rely on a limited number of teacher-counselors who often face overwhelming workloads, making it difficult to provide regular follow-up sessions for all students in need (Abdaalla, 2022). The high student-to-counselor ratio not only limits individual attention but also reduces the capacity to respond promptly during mental health crises, sometimes leading to severe consequences for affected students (Yusuph & Neglect, 2016).

Counselors themselves face stress and burnout due to emotional demands and large caseloads, which can compromise the quality of services offered (Bantjes & Mapaling, 2021). Moreover, limited funding and inadequate facilities further constrain the provision of effective counseling services. Many schools lack proper counseling offices, materials, and financial resources for training programs, resulting in students having little or no access to professional mental health support (Lyimo et al., 2024).

Additionally, modern counseling approaches require continuous professional development to equip counselors

with new skills and techniques for addressing evolving psychosocial challenges. Badrujaman et al. (2018) stress that without ongoing training, counselors may struggle to adopt evidence-based interventions. Pascoe et al. (2020) add that exposure to diverse cultural perspectives and innovative practices during professional training enhances counselors' capacity to adapt services to students' unique needs.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to check on whether counseling services in secondary schools enhance teenagers' academic performance by examining their availability and accessibility, overall impact, and the challenges faced by the main users of these services. The research focused on both public and private secondary schools within Iringa Municipality to identify any differences in counseling service provision and their perceived effects on academic performance.

The study involved 42 participants from four secondary schools, comprising 32 teenagers (eight from each school), four academic teachers, and four school counselors or psychologists (one from each school). In addition, two head teachers participated in the study.

A qualitative research approach was employed. As noted by Creswell (2013), qualitative research investigates phenomena in their natural settings to understand or interpret events based on the meanings individuals assign to them. Research approaches provide overarching strategies that guide the research process—from formulating questions to data collection, analysis, and interpretation—and are generally classified as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. Qualitative research, in particular, explores phenomena in depth, emphasizing meanings, experiences, and interpretations through methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations (Kothari, 2004). A case study design was adopted for this research.

Both probability and non-probability sampling methods were used. For non-probability sampling, the purposive technique was applied to select teachers, including head teachers, academic teachers, and school counselors or psychologists from each school, as well as three teenagers per school for focus group discussions. The same method was used to select two public and two private schools.

For probability sampling, simple random sampling was used to select five teenagers from each school in the sample. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, while secondary data were gathered through documentary analysis of reports on counseling services and academic performance.

IV. RESULTS

➢ *Challenges Affecting the Implementation of Counseling Services*

During discussion, participants shared their opinions on the challenges faced on the implementation of counselling services, as outlined hereunder.

In School A, teenagers reported several challenges affecting effective counseling services. One participant stated: "The challenge is the lack of a specific counselor. When I have a problem, I look for a teacher who is not too strict. I wish we had a dedicated counseling unit where we could feel comfortable and discuss issues freely with someone we trust."

Another teenager explained: "There is no counseling unit. When you need help, you must talk to teachers in the staffroom where others might overhear, or walk with them outside the school compound. Most students feel uncomfortable. The school should form a student committee to advise peers who fear approaching teachers. I would share my problems if I trusted the person."

Other teenager added that discipline teachers were often too strict and lacked confidentiality. Some feared punishment rather than support, while others were discouraged by peers who questioned why they sought help instead of solving problems independently. Students recommended hiring a trained counseling teacher who could provide private and confidential services. Overall, major barriers in School A included strict teachers, lack of privacy, absence of counseling facilities, and fear of punishment.

In School B, teenagers expressed similar concerns. One participant noted: "Our school should employ someone specifically for counseling services rather than relying on classroom teachers. We have a counseling unit, but it is not used properly. If the headmistress ensured it was functional, students would benefit."

Another teenager added: "I don't trust the current system. Sometimes teachers discuss students' issues openly. I wish we had a professional counselor because facing my physics teacher in class after disclosing personal matters feels uncomfortable."

Teenagers also reported limited time for counseling, as sessions were often scheduled after classes when teachers were tired or unavailable. They suggested employing more counselors and ensuring counseling services were accessible throughout the school day rather than relying on a single teacher.

In School C, teenagers' emphasized the shortage of professional counselors and the small number of teachers involved in counseling. One teenager said: "We only have two parenting teachers handling counseling sessions. They are not professionals. I wish the school could employ trained counselors who respect confidentiality."Another teenager added: "Sometimes we wait for external visitors from the

police or social welfare departments instead of receiving regular counseling from teachers. More time should be allocated for counseling."

While some teenagers reported no major challenges, others highlighted lack of confidentiality, shortage of trained counselors, and dependence on untrained teachers as significant problems.

Teenagers in School D also expressed dissatisfaction with the current system. One participant said: "We need a counseling unit for academic and personal issues. The head teacher should hire a professional counselor for our school." Another explained: "Our main challenge is lack of confidentiality. Counseling happens in the parenting teacher's office where others can overhear. Sometimes teachers even share students' issues with colleagues, so we lose trust."

Teenagers also noted that counseling was only provided during crises rather than as a continuous support service.

Interviews with academic teachers revealed additional challenges: Shortages of trained counselors, most schools had only one teacher handling counseling alongside full teaching responsibilities, causing workload stress and burnout. Lack of confidentiality: Counseling often took place in open offices, discouraging students from speaking freely. Limited awareness: Both teachers and students lacked sufficient understanding of the purpose and importance of counseling services.

One academic teacher stated: "Teachers themselves don't fully understand counseling. Schools should organize workshops under professional psychologists to train both teachers and administrators." Another added: "We have no records of counseling cases because there is no private unit, and the selected teachers often lack professional skills."

Counseling teachers explained that many teenagers avoided counseling due to past experiences with broken trust or fear of disciplinary action. Some students also reported that parents discouraged them from sharing personal issues with teachers. One counseling teacher noted: "Some teenagers refuse to open up unless you approach them first. Others don't trust the confidentiality of our office because sensitive issues often end up with the discipline master or head teacher."

Interviews with heads of schools highlighted institutional challenges such as lack of funding, absence of dedicated counseling rooms, and reliance on teachers without professional counseling training. One head teacher explained: "We use the discipline office for counseling because we have no special room and no funds to build one. The government should allocate resources for counseling services in schools."

V. DISCUSSION

The study sought to examine the challenges affecting the implementation of counseling services in secondary schools. The findings revealed several key challenges, including inadequate facilities, insufficient time, lack of professional counselors, low motivation, irregular counseling sessions, limited documentation, staff shortages leading to overload and burnout, inadequate funding, skepticism among teachers regarding non-punitive counseling approaches, lack of confidentiality, and teenagers' reluctance to disclose personal issues. The sections below discuss the most prominent challenges observed across the schools, all of which significantly impacted the effectiveness of counseling services.

Inadequate and poor counselling facilities, the study found that only two of the four schools investigated had designated counseling rooms, and only one actively used the space for counseling purposes. In some schools, counselors lacked awareness of the importance of confidentiality. Teenagers reported that the absence of appropriate facilities made them anxious and uncomfortable, as counseling sessions were often conducted in staffrooms or open areas, thereby compromising privacy.

These findings align with previous research emphasizing the need for proper counseling infrastructure. Lengkey (2020) noted that dedicated counseling spaces are essential for providing emotional, social, and psychological support in a secure and confidential environment. Similarly, Sugiarto et al. (2021) argued that adequate facilities improve counseling effectiveness and encourage students to seek help, while Arianto and Huda (2022) asserted that standardized, well-equipped counseling units should be an integral part of school-based programs.

At Miyomboni Secondary School, for example, an academic teacher reported that no private counseling office existed and that sensitive documents were kept in the student affairs department without restricted access, undermining confidentiality. Semi-structured interviews confirmed that a lack of appropriate facilities discouraged students from seeking help. Improved counseling infrastructure, therefore, has the potential to promote students' emotional well-being and enhance academic performance.

The findings also showed that even where counseling rooms existed, they were often underutilized. Sessions were frequently held in staffrooms or shared offices, which reduced privacy and service effectiveness. These results support Biswalo (2019), who emphasized that well-equipped and private counseling spaces are critical for fostering trust and creating environments conducive to effective counseling. Additionally, teachers' heavy teaching workloads often led to irregular counseling sessions delivered when teachers were fatigued, echoing Nwoye's (2017) observation that overburdened teachers cannot effectively balance instructional and counseling responsibilities.

Shortage of counseling teachers, the study revealed a severe shortage of trained counseling teachers, creating major challenges. Students seeking counseling often found counselors occupied with teaching duties or other students, leaving many issues unaddressed and potentially worsening psychological distress. The shortage also contributed to counselor burnout due to unmanageable workloads.

These findings are consistent with Weni et al. (2023), who reported that excessive workloads negatively affect both employee well-being and job performance. Similarly, Warui (2018) noted that the lack of trained counselors limits schools' ability to deliver comprehensive counseling programs. Marshall (2019) emphasized that this shortage restricts access to crucial services such as early interventions, while the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019) highlighted that the effectiveness of counseling services declines when one counselor is responsible for too many students. Other studies (Botor, 2015; Magsambol & Chi, 2020; Valdez, 2017) also identify the scarcity of licensed counselors as a major barrier to service provision.

Interviews with teenagers, academic teachers, and counseling staff confirmed that emotional, psychological, and behavioral challenges were common among teenagers. Although many teenagers were willing to seek support, the limited number of counselors often just one or two per school made it difficult to meet demand effectively.

Limited funding, the findings also highlighted funding constraints as a significant obstacle. Government policies often prioritize academic infrastructure, such as classrooms and laboratories, over counseling facilities. As a result, many schools repurposed staffrooms or discipline offices for counseling, spaces that did not meet the privacy standards required for effective service delivery. School heads acknowledged that counseling services were rarely prioritized in budget allocations and that many administrators underestimated the role of counseling in improving academic performance. One academic teacher remarked that creating an appropriate counseling environment should be a priority, but limited budgets led many school leaders to dismiss it as unnecessary.

These findings align with Baghdady and Zaki (2019), who reported that secondary schools in Sub-Saharan Africa often face funding and infrastructure shortages that compromise educational outcomes. Similarly, Orodho (2014) noted that the lack of budgetary allocations for psychosocial support services in many schools prevents counseling programs from being delivered effectively. Without adequate financial resources, counseling remains ad hoc, offered only in response to crises rather than as a continuous, structured support system.

Inadequate Counseling Services, the study also found that many schools offered ineffective counseling services due to inadequate staffing and poor infrastructure. Schools with more than 700 students were often served by only one or two counselors, resulting in counselor fatigue and reduced service delivery. Moreover, counseling sessions were frequently conducted in staffrooms or open areas, compromising comfort and confidentiality.

Most teachers assigned counseling responsibilities were untrained, with school heads selecting them from the teaching staff. In private schools, teenagers were allowed to choose their counselors, but these individuals often lacked both professional training and motivation. Even where counseling rooms existed, they were rarely used, and ethical standards regarding confidentiality were not always followed. Previous studies similarly indicate that guidance and counseling services in schools are often inadequate, leaving many students feeling unsupported (Abel, 2016; Manyerere, 2017; Mduma, 2017).

Limited documentation, which involves systematically recording psychological assessments, treatment plans, and progress reports, is critical for effective treatment planning, ethical compliance, and legal accountability. However, the study revealed that most secondary schools lacked specific tools for monitoring student progress. Instead, general records such as attendance sheets and academic reports were used.

Bizimana and Bimerew (2021) observed that poor record-keeping can delay care and compromise treatment quality. Similarly, Kaseye et al. (2022) noted that inadequate documentation often results from limited understanding of its importance in verifying clinical information, facilitating legal processes, and improving communication among professionals and stakeholders.The findings reveal systemic barriers that hinder the effective implementation of counseling services in secondary schools. The absence of professional counselors undermines the credibility and trustworthiness of the services. Confidentiality breaches further discourage teenagers from seeking help. The use of discipline teachers as counselors conflates counseling with punishment, which contradicts the principles of supportive guidance. Additionally, inadequate facilities and limited time allocation reduce the quality of service delivery. These challenges collectively compromise the potential of counseling services to positively influence teenagers' academic performance.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that the implementation of counseling services in secondary schools faces multiple challenges, including lack of professionalism, confidentiality issues, inadequate facilities, and administrative neglect. The challenges identified in this study reflect broader systemic barriers common in many developing countries. The findings confirm existing literature that effective school counseling requires professional expertise, adequate facilities, confidentiality, supportive administrative structures, and sufficient funding. Without addressing these barriers, counseling services cannot fully contribute to enhancing teenagers' academic performance and overall well-being.

➢ *Recommendations for Action*

- The government should develop clear policies requiring the provision of counseling services in all secondary schools, along with allocating financial resources to support counselling infrastructure, professional training, and recruitment.
- The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, in collaboration with school authorities, should ensure that each secondary school has at least one trained and licensed professional counselor to provide psychological, emotional, and academic guidance to students.
- Schools should establish well-equipped, private counselling rooms to create a safe and confidential environment where teenagers feel comfortable discussing personal and academic challenges without fear of exposure or judgment.
- School timetables should allocate specific periods for counseling services to ensure teenagers can access support without interfering with academic activities.
- Schools should conduct awareness campaigns targeting teachers, students, and parents to eliminate negative perceptions and stigma associated with counseling services. Peer counseling programs can be introduced to encourage students to seek help without fear or shame.
- Counselors should maintain high ethical standards, including confidentiality and respect for teenagers' privacy, to build trust and encourage openness. Clear policies and guidelines on counseling ethics should be developed and enforced at the school level.
- Counseling services should be formally integrated into the school curriculum as a core component of teenager welfare and academic success. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established to assess the impact of counseling services on students' academic and psychosocial well-being.
- Employing more than one counselor per school or creating cluster counseling centers for schools in the same locality can reduce counselor overload and burnout.
- Furthermore, immediate in-service training programs should be provided for teachers currently serving as counsellors to equip them with essential counselling skills and ethical principles, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in supporting students.

VII. SUMMARY

The study sought to examine the challenges affecting the implementation of counseling servicesfor teenagers in secondary schools. Findings revealed several critical barriers, including inadequate counseling facilities, shortage of trained counselors, limited funding, lack of time allocation for counseling activities and heavy workload on the few available counselors. Additional issues such as low awareness among teenagers, lack of confidentiality, negative attitudes toward counseling and insufficient collaboration between schools and Ministry of Education science and technology(Moeti) further limited the effectiveness of counseling programs. These challenges collectively hindered the role of counseling in addressing teenagers' psychosocial and academic needs.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that despite the recognized importance of counseling services in promoting teenagers' academic success and personal well-being, their implementation in secondary schools remains inadequate due to multiple structural, financial, and attitudinal barriers. Without proper facilities, trained personnel, adequate funding, and awareness campaigns, counseling services cannot achieve their intended objectives. Therefore, comprehensive measures involving government support, school administration commitment, community engagement, and professional training are essential to strengthen the delivery and effectiveness of counseling services in secondary schools.

REFERENCES

[1]. Abdaalla, S. M. (2022). Assessment of quality of guidance and counselling services in Zanzibar: A case of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait University and Zanzibar University. International Journal of Novel Research in Healthcare and Nursing, 9(3), 114–122.

[2]. Abel, J. (2016). Investigating counselling services as a strategy of enhancing academic achievement of secondary school students in Tanzania: A case of Mbeya city (Unpublished Master's dissertation). University of Dar es Salaam.

[3]. Ajayi, E. E., Aboho, D. A. & Ajayi, V. O. (2018). Effects of experiential and inquiry teaching strategies on upper basic students' achievement in social studies. Journal of Education, Benue State University Makurdi,18(1), 119–129.

[4]. Akaranga, S. I., & Makua, B. K. (2016). Ethical considerations and their applications to research: A case of the University of Nairobi. Journal of Educational Policy and Entrepreneurial Research, 3(12), 1–19.

[5]. Al-Khayat, A. M. (2021). Exploring the impact of the displaced happy helping hand app for Syrian adolescents in Lebanon: Digitalized psychosocial support in education (Master's thesis). Oslo Metropolitan University.

[6]. Alloph, J. M., & Msonge, E. (2023). Challenges facing teachers in the provision of career guidance services to secondary school students in Magu District, Tanzania. "East African Journal of Education Studies", 6(2), 171–181.https://doi.org/10.37284 /eajes. 6.2.1277

[7]. American Counseling Association. (2014). ACA code of ethics. Retrieved from https://www. Counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/2014-code-of-ethics.pdf

[8]. American Psychiatric Association. (2017). Diagnostic and statistical manual for mental disorders (7th ed.). American Psychiatric Publishing.

[9]. American School Counselor Association. (2023). The ASCA national model: A framework for school

counseling programs (4th ed.). American School Counseling Association.

[10]. Argentova, T. (2018). Department of psychological sciences of social-psychological. Nova Science Publishers.

[11]. Arianto, A., & Huda, N. (2022). Facilities and infrastructure: A conceptual study of guidance and counseling in Islamic education. Al-Ulum Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian Ke-Islamic, 9(2), 186–195.

[12]. Auger, R. W., Abel, N. R., & Oliver, B. M. (2019). Spotlighting stigma and barriers: Examining secondary students' attitudes toward school counseling services. Professional School Counseling, 22(1), 1–12.

[13]. Auger, R., Abel, N. R., & Oliver, B. M. (2018). Spotlighting stigma and barriers: Examining secondary students' attitudes toward school counseling services. Butler Digital Commons. https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/coe_papers

[14]. Ayandele, & Ayoola. (2019). Cohabitation: Harbinger or slayer of marriage in Sub-Saharan Africa? Gender and behaviour,17(2), 13029-13039.

[15]. Baghdady, A., & Zaki, O. (2019). Secondary education governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. Secondary Schools in Africa. https://masrecardfdn.org

[16]. Bantjes, J., & Mapaling, C. (2021). "I'm not afraid of dying because I've got nothing to lose": Young men in South Africa talk about nonfatal suicidal behaviour. American Journal of Men's Health, 15(2), 1–12.

[17]. Beebe, A. (2017). Barriers to mental health service access at a large public university. PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal, 11(2), 14.

[18]. Biswalo, P. (2019). Guidance and counseling in Tanzanian secondary schools: Challenges and opportunities. Dar es Salaam University Press.

[19]. Boitt, M. L. J. (2016). Evaluation of the challenges in the implementation of the guidance and counselling program in Baringo County secondary schools, Kenya. Journal of Education and Practice, 7(30), 27–34.

[20]. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), International encyclopedia of education (3rd ed., Vol. 2, pp. 37–43). Oxford: Pergamon.

[21]. Bryan, K. (2004). Research methods in educational psychology: Guide for students. SAGE Publications LTD

[22]. Castleberry, A., & Nolen, A. (2018). Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: Is it as easy as it sounds? Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning, 10(6), 807–815.

[23]. Chidarikire, M. (2017). A peer counselling strategy for alleviating drug abuse in Zimbabwean rural learning ecologies (Doctoral dissertation). University of the Free State.

[24]. Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies. SAGE Publications.

[25]. D'Costa, B., Lobo, R., & Ward, J. (2021). Lessons learned from the implementation of the Young Public Health Research. Public Health Research, 8(15), 1–52.

[26]. Darby, W. C. (2018). The limits of confidentiality: Informed consent and ethical considerations in counseling. Journal of Counseling Ethics, 45(2), 123–135.

[27]. Denscombe, M. (2010). The effect of perceptions of 'the young smoker' as a risk object. Health, Risk & Society, 12(5), 425–440.

[28]. Douglas, M. (2015). Meaning of data. Retrieved September 22, 2017, from http://www.onlineetymologydictionary/data

[29]. Enon, J. C. (1998). Educational research, statistics and measurements. Makerere University.

[30]. George, T. (2022). Types of interviews in research. Scribbr.

[31]. George, T. (2022). What is a focus group discussion: Step-by-step guide and examples. Scribbr.

[32]. Ismail, M., Jamaluddin, S., & Sumari, M. (2017). The counselors' psychological wellbeing. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Science, 7(03), 733–738.

[33]. Jason, L. A., & Glenwick, D. S. (2016). Handbook of methodological approaches to community-based research: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Oxford University Press.

[34]. Kambouropoulos, A. (2015). Barriers to the utilization of counselling services by international students. World Journal of Education, 4(5), 4–8. https://doi.org/10.5430/wje.v5n5p1

[35]. Kennedy, T. D., Flach, Y., Detullio, D., Millen, D. H., Englebert, N., & Edmonds, W. A. (2019). Exploring emotional intelligence and IQ as predictors of success of foster care alumni. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 6(7), 1–10.

[36]. Kerlinger, F. N. (1993). Foundations of behavioral research. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

[37]. Knight, M. A., Haboush-Deloye, A., Goldberg, P. M., & Grob, K. (2019). Strategies and tools to embrace prevention with upstream programs: A novel pilot program for enhancing social and emotional protective factors in middle school students. Children & Schools, 41(4), 213–220.

[38]. Kombo, D. K., & Tromp, D. L. (2006). Proposal and thesis writing: An introduction. Paulines Publications Africa.

[39]. Kosomo, D. (2006). Research methods. Egerton University Press.

[40]. Kothari, C. R. (2004). Research methods and techniques. New Age International (P) Ltd.

[41]. Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015). Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

[42]. Kumar, R. (2021). Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

[43]. Kurunsaari, M., Tynjälä, P., & Piirainen, A. (2021). Stories of professional development in physiotherapy

education. Physiotherapy Theory and Practice, 9(1), 1–14.

[44]. Lambert, S. D., & Hoffman, K. (2008). Combining individual interviews and focus groups to enhance data richness. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 62(2), 228–237.

[45]. Lasode, A. O., Lawal, O. O., & Ofodile, M. C. (2017). Students' need for, awareness, perception, and use of guidance and counselling services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Problems of Education in the 21st Century, 75(2), 170–181.

[46]. Lengkey, Y. (2020). The role of guidance and counseling teachers in developing students' interests and talents. Educouns Journal: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bimbingan Konseling, 1(1), 1–7.

[47]. Manyerere, M. (2017). The perceived influence of indiscipline behaviours on students' learning in public secondary schools in Musoma Municipality, Tanzania (Unpublished Master's dissertation). University of Dar es Salaam.

[48]. Maxwell, J. A. (2012). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

[49]. Mduma, E. A. (2017). Exploring students' understanding and attitudes toward counseling services in secondary schools: A case study of Kunduchi ward in Kinondoni Municipality (Unpublished Master's dissertation). University of Dar es Salaam.

[50]. Mekgwe, N. K., & Kok, A. (2017). The personal career planning needs of secondary school learners in Botswana. International Journal of Educational Sciences, 17(1–3), 238–246.

[51]. Mesly, O. (2015). Creating models in psychological research. Springer.

[52]. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). (2022). Education sector performance report. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

[53]. MitchMekgwe, N. K., & Kok, A. (2017). The personal career planning needs of secondary school learners in Botswana. International Journal of Educational Sciences, 17(1–3), 238–246.

[54]. Moeti, B. (2016). Perceptions of teacher counsellors on assessment of guidance and counselling in secondary schools. International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 15(6).

[55]. Morgan, D. L., & Hoffman, K. (2018). Focus groups and interviews: Theoretical implications of mixing data collection methods. Qualitative Health Research, 28(3), 401–405.

[56]. Mugai, W. J. J. (2020). Relationship between counsellors' powers and counselling outcomes of learners with behaviour problems in inclusive primary schools in Embu County, Kenya (Doctoral Dissertation). Chuka University.

[57]. Mughal, A. W. (2020). Secondary school students who drop out of school in rural Pakistan: The perspectives of fathers. Educational Research, 62(2), 199–215.

[58]. Musabila, D. T., & Nalaila, S. G. (2013). Research proposal and dissertation writing: Principles and practice. Nyambari Nyangwine Group of Companies.

[59]. Mwale, M., & Muula, A. S. (2019). The efficacy of peer education in sexual behavioral change among school-going adolescents in Northern Malawi: A quasi-experiment. Journal of HIV/AIDS & Social Services, 5(1), 1–19.

[60]. Naidoo, P., & Cartwright, D. (2020). Where to from here? Contemplating the impact of COVID-19 on South African students and student counselling services in higher education. Journal of College Student Psychotherapy, 2(8), 1–15.

[61]. Nkuba, J. M., & Kyaruzi, R. (2015). Counseling and guidance in the context of education in Tanzania: Challenges and opportunities. International Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 5(2), 34–45.

[62]. Ntuli, B., Mokgatle, M., & Madiba, S. (2020). The psychosocial wellbeing of orphans: The case of early school leavers in a socially depressed environment in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. PLoS One, 15(2), e0227890.

[63]. Nwachukwu, C. O., & Uka, D. A. (2022). The influence of school counseling services on students' academic adjustment. International Journal of Educational Development, 93, 102662.

[64]. Omulema, D. (2016). Awareness creation and sensitization in fostering a supportive counseling culture. Journal of Educational Development, 8(3), 45–59.

[65]. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (2021). Education at a glance 2021. Paris: OECD Publisher.

[66]. Orodho, A. J., & Kombo, D. K. (2000). Research methods. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, Institute of Open Learning.

[67]. Orodho, J. A. (2014). Educational costing and financing in developing countries: Focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 655. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

[68]. Pascoe, M. C., Hetrick, S. E., & Parker, A. G. (2020). The impact of stress on students in secondary school and higher education. International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 25(1), 104–112.

[69]. Patton, M. (2000). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

[70]. Rocco, T. S., & Plakhotnik, M. S. (2009). Literature reviews, conceptual frameworks, and theoretical frameworks: An introduction for new biology education researchers. CBE—Life Sciences Education.

[71]. Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. R. (1989). Research methods for social work. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishers.

[72]. Sandow, V. A. (2023). Assessing the benefits and challenges of guidance and counseling in Nigerian secondary schools. International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 7(3), 45–59.

[73]. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). Research methodology for business students (5th ed.). Harlow: Prentice-Hall.

[74]. Sima, R. G. (2018). The challenges in the provision of counselling services in secondary schools in Tanzania. Journal of Education Psychology, 29(1), 15–26.

[75]. Stake, R. E. (2010). Qualitative research: Studying how things work. New York: Guilford Press.

[76]. Steinberg, L. (2022). Adolescence (13th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

[77]. Sugiarto, S., Neviyarni, S., & Firman, F. (2021). The important role of facilities and infrastructure in guidance counseling learning in schools. JPT: Jurnal Pendidikan Tematik, 2(1), 60–66.

[78]. Wang, M. T., & Degol, J. L. (2021). School climate and adolescent academic achievement. Educational Psychologist, 56(4), 263–278.https://doi. Org /10. 1080/00 461520.2021.19

[79]. Warui, J. W. (2018). Status and challenges of guidance and counselling programme in discipline management in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya (M.A. Dissertation). Kenyatta University.

[80]. Weni, N. N., Kawiana, I. G. P., & Astrama, I. M. (2023). The effect of workload and work stress on employee performance with burnout as a mediation variable: Case study at a health laboratory in Denpasar City. International Journal of Management, 18(3), 397–410.

[81]. Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2009). Research design in quantitative research. In Research methods in education: An introduction (9th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

[82]. World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). Adolescent mental health. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mentalhealthsheets/detail/mental-disorders

[83]. World Health Organization (WHO). (2023). Adolescent health. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/health-topics/adolescent-health

[84]. York, T. T., Gibson, C., & Rankin, S. (2021). Defining and measuring academic success. Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation, 28(1), Article 3.

[85]. Yusuph, K., & Negret, I. (2016). Adolescents and drug use in Tanzania: History and education. Advanced Research, 7(2), 1–10.