

THE INFLUENCE OF CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES ON THE SELF-EFFICACY OF ORPHANED CHILDREN LIVING IN ORPHANAGES IN BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the impact of career guidance services on the self-efficacy of orphaned children in orphanages in Bungoma County. In many orphanages across Kenya, the primary focus is on providing shelter and food, with limited attention given to mental health care and counselling services that help children adjust to and cope with orphanhood. As a result, the connection between counselling services and the self-efficacy of orphans has not been adequately explored. Using a descriptive survey design, the study involved 280 participants, including orphans, caregivers, and administrators from 20 orphanages. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, measuring self-efficacy on a scale of 0 to 100. The analysis was carried out using SPSS version 20, adhering to strict ethical guidelines. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between career guidance services and the self-efficacy of orphaned children. The study concluded that career guidance services have a substantial influence on self-efficacy. Consequently, it is recommended that career guidance services be incorporated into orphanages, as these services can help orphans open up and focus on activities that enhance their lives after leaving the orphanage.

Key terms: Career, guidance, post-orphanage, referral services, self-efficacy.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The challenge of supporting orphaned children's psychological well-being is significant, particularly in fostering self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to achieve goals. The concept of self-efficacy, which emerged in Europe and the United States in the 1900s, has been fostered through guidance and counselling services globally to address various needs, including vocational guidance. In 1911, Godwin organised a self-efficacy program in the USA emphasising vocational information and awareness of the world of work, noting that understanding youth's problems is a key function of orphanages in achieving self-efficacy through guidance and counselling (Glazer & Liu, 2017).

In sub-Saharan Africa, this issue is acute due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has left approximately 43 million children orphaned, including 11 million by HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2014; Naswa & Marfatia, 2010). These orphans often reside in orphanages where basic needs like shelter and food are prioritised over psychological support, hindering their self-efficacy development. In Kenya, this global challenge manifests locally, with many orphans facing low self-esteem and struggling to reintegrate into society after leaving orphanages (Escapa & Julia, 2018). This study addresses this gap by examining the influence of career guidance services on the self-efficacy of orphaned children in Bungoma County orphanages.

In Kenya, the orphan crisis is compounded by local socio-political factors, particularly in Bungoma County. Between 2004 and 2008, inter-clan warfare involving the Sabaot Land Defense Force and the 2007–2008 post-election violence orphaned many children, leading to the proliferation of orphanages (UNICEF, 2007; Opala, 2009). Gang attacks following the 2013 general elections further exacerbated the situation (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Despite the need for self-efficacy, guidance and counselling services in Kenyan orphanages, formalised in 1970 by the Ministry of Education, have been underdeveloped due to insufficient support and untrained personnel (Osanloo & Boske, 2015; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MOEST], 2005). For instance, policy recommendations in 1976 to integrate counselling into subjects like religious education were poorly implemented (Carey et al., 2017). Moreover, violent incidents in the 1980s and 1990s, including arson attacks in schools, underscored the need for counselling, yet comprehensive programs remain lacking (Daily Nation, 2000; East African Standard Team, 2001; Republic of Kenya, 2001).

Consequently, many orphans in Bungoma County struggle with psychological challenges such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, which impede their self-efficacy (Hohenshil et al., 2015). Career guidance services, which equip orphans with skills for educational and occupational choices, offer a potential solution. However, their specific impact on self-efficacy in Kenyan orphanages has not been adequately explored, with existing studies including (Devi et al., 2013 Nzioki, 2014 and Ooi et al., 2018) focusing on general counselling or other contexts. By investigating this relationship in Bungoma County, this study aims to inform orphanage policies, enhance caregiver practices, and contribute to the literature, promoting better outcomes for orphans transitioning to independent living.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura (2001), self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. In other words, it is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura described these situations as determinants of how people think, behave and feel. Since the publication of his seminal paper in 1977 entitled "Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change", the subject has become one of the most studied topics in

psychology. As Bandura and other psychologists have demonstrated, self-efficacy has become such an important topic that it has had an impact on everything from psychological states to behaviours to motivation. Researchers in self-efficacy have found that an individual's self-efficacy plays a significant role in how goals, tasks and challenges are approached (Schunk & Luthans, 2010).

A strong sense of self-efficacy enhances human achievement and personal well-being in numerous ways. Individuals who possess a high level of confidence in their capabilities view difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interests and deep engrossment in activities. They set challenging goals for themselves and remain committed to achieving them. They deepen their efforts when facing failure and swiftly restore their sense of efficacy after setbacks. They attribute the cause of failure to a lack of effort or inadequate knowledge and skills which can be developed. They confront challenging situations with the confidence that they can manage them effectively. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal accomplishments, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability to depression (Guut, 2015).

Bandura (2002) explains that perceived self-efficacy serves to regulate the quality of an individual's functioning and emotional well-being that is attained through motivational, decisional, cognitive and affective processes. Regarding the motivational process, perceived self-efficacy determines the amount of effort that people put into a task and how much they will persevere when faced with challenges. The above suggests that individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to exert more effort and persevere than those with low self-efficacy.

In terms of the decisional process, perceived self-efficacy determines people's choice of behaviours. People are more likely to pursue the tasks that they believe they have the ability to perform and tend to avoid the tasks that they perceive are way beyond their capabilities. Perceived self-efficacy, thus, exerts its influence on an individual's psychosocial functioning by way of the accuracy of the judgment of one's abilities (Bernard, 2012). Bandura further asserts that if such a judgment slightly exceeds one's abilities, it is perhaps the most functional, as it then leads one to undertake practical, challenging tasks. Doing so, in turn, motivates the enhancement of capability.

In contrast, misjudgement of one's abilities (whether in the form of overestimation or underestimation) can lead to severe consequences. Those who underestimate their abilities tend to undertake self-limiting tasks that reduce their exposure to rewarding tasks and that also limit their ability to perform tasks due to the self-doubt within them. On the other hand, those who overestimate their abilities tend to undertake tasks that are beyond their capabilities and end up experiencing difficulty and failure (Magampa, 2014).

Cognitively and affectionately, efficacy beliefs influence one's ways of thought and emotional reaction during the actual or anticipated encounter with situations (Moturi, 2012). Bandura goes on to explain that when people perceive themselves as infectious, they tend to focus on their deficiencies and perceive potentially difficult situations as more daunting than they are! The result is the creation of more stress on the individual and a reduction in the use of competencies. In contrast, when people perceive themselves as highly efficacious, they are more likely to exert added effort and to pay extra attention to challenging tasks, being incited by the motivation to achieve. Such individuals are also more likely to blame their effort than their ability when they fail in challenging tasks (Mwoma & Pillay, 2015).

Developmental issues in self-efficacy have also been highlighted. Bandura emphasises that young children, due to their age, lack knowledge about their capabilities and, therefore, are most likely to misjudge their abilities (Okundi, 2014). At an early age, children depend on adults for judgment about their self-efficacy. As they grow in age and develop mature cognitive abilities, they tend to depend less on external support and more on their internal abilities to judge their own capabilities. During the early phase of the development of self-efficacy, the family becomes the children's primary source of self-efficacy experiences. As the child's social world expands, starting with siblings and then broadening to include peers in the larger society, such as in school, becomes the main source of efficacy experiences (Magampa, 2014).

Self-efficacy expectations influence an individual's ability to demonstrate coping behaviours and the duration of effort sustained when faced with obstacles. Individuals with high self-efficacy will exert sufficient efforts that, if well-executed, lead to successful outcomes, whereas those with low self-efficacy are likely to lose effort early and fail (Magampa, 2014). Other scholars have defined self-efficacy as the belief in inherent abilities, which includes recognising one's particular set of cognitive strengths. Additionally, it involves determination and perseverance to conquer obstacles that would prevent utilising those innate abilities to achieve goals. Self-efficacy affects every course of human endeavours by determining the beliefs a person holds. Regarding their power to affect situations, it strongly influences both the power a person actually has to face challenges competently and the choices a person is most likely to make (Guut, 2015).

People generally avoid activities where self-efficacy is low but undertake tasks where self-efficacy is high. Research indicates that the ideal level of self-efficacy is just above one's capabilities; in this context, individuals are the most motivated to tackle difficult tasks and acquire new experiences. In addition, self-efficacy is made up of dimensions like magnitude, strength and generality that help to explain how one believes one will perform a specific task.

Magampa (2014) argues that high self-efficacy can affect motivation in both positive and negative ways. In general, people with self-efficacy are more likely to make an effort to complete a task and to persist longer in those efforts than those with low self-efficacy. A negative effect of low self-efficacy is that it can lead to a state of 'learned helplessness'. This is a state where it is believed that no amount of effort will make a difference in the success of the task at hand (Usher & Pajeras, 2014). The concept of self-efficacy has been embraced by scholars and practitioners in management because of its relevance in professional settings. In general, self-efficacy has a strong and positive correlation with job performance. Parents' sense of academic efficacy for their children is linked to their children's scholastic achievement. When parents believe in their child's academic potential and have high goals for them, the child is likely to adopt those same beliefs. This promotes academic self-efficacy for the child, which leads to scholastic achievement. Incidentally, this is not possible for orphans living in orphanages. These kids lack the parental "Face" to project a strong and desired sense of academic efficacy for them to strive to achieve (Freedman, 2014).

Bandura (1997) uses the term self-efficacy to refer to beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of education required to produce given attainments. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy beliefs constitute the key factor of human agency. Bandura states that efficacy beliefs influence the course of action people choose to pursue, how much effort they put forth in given endeavours, how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles and failures, their resilience to adversity, whether their thought patterns are self-hindering or self-aiding, how much stress and depression they experience in coping with environmental demands, and the level of accomplishments they realise (Bandura, 1997, p.3).

Beliefs in self-efficacy can motivate a person to commit to carrying out the actions required to achieve desired results. The theory of self-efficacy posits that the degree and intensity of self-efficacy will influence the initiation of behaviours, the amount of effort exerted, and the duration of that effort when facing challenges. According to Goulao (2014), humans make life decisions based on our perceived self-efficacy by undertaking activities and choosing situations we deem to be within our capabilities for success. Additionally, activities associated with failure are avoided. When humans have a strong sense of perceived self-efficacy, they put forth a greater effort to accomplish a task despite the obstacles they encounter than those who have a weak sense of self-efficacy. It is believed that students who have a higher degree of self-efficacy will have a higher intention to remain enrolled in college and will be more likely to persist in the face of external obstacles. Though self-efficacy has an important influence on behaviours, it is not the only influence. Behaviour is a function of many variables that include skills, outcome expectations and the perceived value of the outcome (Goulao, 2014).

When essential skills are absent, self-efficacy won't lead to effective performance. According to Bandura (1997), once efficacy beliefs are formed, they are not stable. They can vary in strength because the individual strength is constantly evaluating new information. However, once efficacy beliefs have been formed over an extended period and are based on substantial information, they are difficult to alter. Since self-efficacy beliefs are specific, it is not feasible to talk about "general" or "global" self-efficacy. For instance, students might possess strong self-efficacy beliefs regarding their social skills but have weaker beliefs about their academic success, particularly in certain subjects.

Self-efficacy theory suggests that the degree and intensity of self-efficacy will influence various factors. For example, whether or not behaviours will be initiated, how much effort will result, and how long the effort will be sustained in the face of obstacles are all determined by self-efficacy. Self-efficacy provides individuals with the ability to influence their own course of action and alter their environments (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) hypothesised that an individual's choice of activities, persistence, and effort is affected by self-efficacy beliefs. For example, people who have a low sense of efficacy for accomplishing a task may avoid it, and those who believe they are capable should participate readily. Those individuals who feel efficacious are hypothesised to persist longer and work harder when they encounter difficulties, as opposed to those who doubt their capabilities. The most reliable guide for assessing self-efficacy is the individual's performance.

Self-efficacy may go up or down depending on success or failure, but once self-efficacy is developed in an individual, failure may not have much of an impact (Lillian, 2013). According to Usher and Pajeras (2013), accurate and strong expectations of personal efficacy are crucial to the initiation and persistence of behavioural performance in human development. Self-efficacy theory has been applied to several areas of psychosocial functioning, such as anxiety, phobias, health behaviours, and school achievement, with largely supportive results. For example, there is evidence that self-efficacy predicts such outcomes as academic achievement, social skills, pain tolerance and athletic functioning (Synder, 2010).

Self-efficacy has been used interchangeably with self-regulation in the learning context. In their publication, 'self-efficacy for self-regulated learning', Zimmerman & Schunk (1989) define self-regulated in terms of self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions, which are systematically oriented towards the attainment of students' own goals. Self-regulated learners engage in academic tasks for personal interest and satisfaction. They have also met cognitively and behaviourally active participants in their own learning (Ablard & Lipschultz, 2008). Self-regulated learners also have a large arsenal of cognitive and

metacognitive strategies that deploy when needed to accomplish academic tasks. They are also quite persistent in their efforts to reach their goals (Tewan, 2013).

Zimmerman (2009) identifies five key aspects of student's efforts to self-regulate their learning: goal setting, strategy use, context adaptations, social processes and self-monitoring. No single self-regulatory process can explain the complexity and variations in students' efforts to learn on their own. Self-efficacy beliefs also provide students with a sense of agency to motivate their learning through the use of self-regulatory processes such as self-monitoring, goal setting, self-evaluation and strategy use (Zimmerman, 2009). The more capable students judge themselves to be, the more challenging the goals they embrace (Zimmerman, Bandura & Martinez-pons, 2002). When self-efficacy and personal goal setting were compared with the verbal subscale of the scholastic aptitude test, there was an increase of 35% in predicting college student's final grades in writing courses (Guut, 2015).

Research in self-regulated learning supports an increase in academic performance when students actively engage in the academic process (Zimmerman, 1989). Therefore, self-regulated learners are typically high achievers (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 2009). For instance, students who achieve scores in the top 1% on an assessment test tend to utilise self-learning strategies that optimise (personal regulation, organising and transforming information, behavioural functioning (providing their own rewards and punishments based on performance and the immediate environment reviewing notes, seeking peer assistance and seeking adult assistance.

Sources of Self-Efficacy

People's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by four primary sources of influence (Bandura, 1997). The most effective method for establishing a strong sense of self-efficacy is through mastery of experiences. Achievements foster a solid belief in one's own efficacy. Failures undermine it, mainly if failures occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly rooted. Some setbacks and challenges in human endeavours serve a useful purpose in teaching that successes usually require sustained effort. By sticking it out through tough times, they emerge stronger from adversity (Mwoma & Pillay, 2015).

The second method of developing and boosting self-efficacy involves vicarious experiences offered by social models. Witnessing individuals who are similar to themselves achieve success through persistent effort increases the observer's confidence that they also have the skills necessary to master similar tasks needed for success. Conversely, seeing others struggle and fail despite their hard work diminishes the observer's perception of their own efficacy and can weaken their motivation. The third source of self-efficacy is social persuasion. Under this source, it is believed that people can be convinced to believe that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed. Self-efficacy achieved through social persuasion is measured regarding self-improvement instead of triumphs over others. Individuals also rely partly on their physical and emotional conditions when assessing their abilities. They interpret their stress reactions and tensions as signs of vulnerability to poor performance. Mood also affects people's judgment of their self-efficacy. Positive mood enhances perceived self-efficacy; despondent mood diminishes it (Ombuya et al., 2012).

Self-Efficacy and Human Functioning

At the heart of social cognitive theory are self-efficacy beliefs, which refer to individuals' judgments about their abilities to organise and execute actions needed to achieve specific performance goals. These beliefs significantly influence human functioning and behaviour. Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for

human motivation and well—and personal accomplishment (Bandura, 1977). This is because if individuals do not believe that their actions can lead to the results they want, they are unlikely to be motivated to continue striving when faced with challenges. A wealth of empirical evidence now backs Bandura's assertion that beliefs in self-efficacy influence nearly every facet of people's lives, including their thought patterns—whether constructive, self-defeating, pessimistic, or optimistic; their ability to motivate themselves and persist in difficult times; their susceptibility to stress and depression; as well as the decisions they make in life. Self-efficacy is also a crucial determinant of self-regulation (Bandura, 1977).

Human functioning is influenced by many factors. The success or failure that people experience as they engage in the myriad tasks that comprise their naturally influence the many decisions they must make (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2008). Furthermore, the knowledge and abilities they hold will undoubtedly be significant in determining their actions and inactions. People analyse the outcomes of their achievements in much the same way they evaluate the quality of the knowledge and skills they possess — for example, a student who has just received a grade of B on mathematics tests. In and of itself, attaining a grade of B has no inherent causal properties. An "A student" who worked hard on that assignment will view B in ways quite dissimilar from that of a "C student" who worked equally hard. For the former, the B will be received with disappointment; for the latter, the B is likely to be received with elation. The student accustomed to A's is likely to have his writing confidence negatively affected; the C- acquainted student is sure to have his confidence boosted (Bandura,1982).

Bandura's (1997) key contentions as regards the role of self–efficacy beliefs in human functioning is that people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true. For this reason, how people behave can often be better predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing, for these self–efficacy perceptions help determine what individuals do with the knowledge and skills they have (Bandura,1997). This helps explain why people's behaviours are sometimes disjoined from their actual capabilities and why their behaviours may differ even when they have similar knowledge and skills. For example, many talented people suffer frequent and sometimes debilitating bouts of self–doubt about capabilities they clearly possess, just as many individuals are confident about what they can accomplish despite possessing a modest repertoire of skills. Belief and reality are seldom perfectly matched, and individuals are typically guided by their beliefs when they engage the world (Magampa, 2014).

As a result, individuals' achievements are typically more accurately forecasted by their beliefs in their own abilities than by their past achievements, expertise, or capabilities. Of course, no amount of confidence or self–self–appreciation can produce success when requisite skills and knowledge are absent. People's self–efficacy beliefs should not be confused with their judgments of the consequences that their behaviours will produce. Typically, of course, self–efficacy beliefs help determine the outcomes one expects (Magampa, 2014). Individuals with confidence anticipate successful results. Students who are self-assured in their social abilities look forward to positive social interactions. Those who believe in their academic capabilities expect to achieve high scores on tests and believe that the quality of their work will lead to personal and professional rewards. Conversely, those who lack confidence tend to envision failure. Students who question their social skills often foresee rejection or mockery even before they make social connections. Those who doubt their academic abilities expect to receive a poor grade prior to taking an exam or enrolling in a course.

The anticipated outcomes of these imagined performances will be perceived differently: social triumph and enhanced career opportunities for the confident, while social exclusion and limited academic prospects for the less confident. According to James (1981), because the outcomes we expect are themselves the result of the judgments of what we can accomplish, our outcome expectations are unlikely to contribute to predictions of behaviours. Additionally, evaluations of effectiveness and results can occasionally be at odds. A higher sense of efficacy may not result in behaviours consistent with that belief; however, if the individual also believes that the outcome of engaging in those behaviours will have undesired effects (Nelson, 2014). A student highly self-efficacious in his/her academic capabilities may elect not to apply to a particular university whose entrance requirements are such as to discourage all but the hardest souls.

Low self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations are also possible. For example, students may realise that strong mathematics skills are essential for a good KCSE score and eligibility for university education, and this, in turn, may ensure a comfortable lifestyle, but poor confidence in math abilities is likely to keep them away from certain courses, and they may not even bother with the university education or the prestigious courses in the institutions of higher learning. Since people function both as part of a group and on their own, self-efficacy is regarded as a construct that is both personal and social.

A collective system develops a sense of collective efficacy, a group's shared belief in its capability to attain goals and accomplish desired tasks (Maddux et al., 2011). For instance, educational institutions cultivate shared beliefs regarding their student's ability to learn from their educators in order to improve not just their own lives but also those of the administrators and policymakers who work to establish supportive environments for these efforts. Schools with a strong sense of collective efficacy exercise empowering and vitalising influences on their students, and these effects are palpable and evident through good performance and achievements, be they academic or social (Ombuya et al., 2012).

Self-Efficacy in Academic Achievement

Perceived academic self-efficacy is defined as personal judgments of one's capabilities to organise and execute courses of action to attain designated types of education performances (Zimmerman, 2008). Bandura (1977) developed scales to measure perceived academic self-efficacy to assess its level, generality and strength across activities and contexts. In terms of academic functioning, self-efficacy refers to variations across different levels of tasks, such as increasingly different math problems. Self-efficacy generality refers to the transfer of self-efficacy beliefs across activities, such as different academic subject matters. Finally, self-efficacy strength in academics is measured by degrees of certainty that one can perform given tasks (Zimmerman, 2008).

According to Bandura (1997), performance successes generally strengthen efficacy beliefs, and repeated performance failures weaken them, particularly if the failure occurs early in the course of events and does not reflect a lack of effort or adverse external circumstances. A small performance success that persuades individuals they have what it takes to succeed will often enable them to achieve higher accomplishments and to succeed at new activities or in new settings (Bandura, 1997). However, solely basing judgments on performance does not give a complete picture of an individual's capability, as numerous factors unrelated to ability can influence performance.

According to Bandura (1997), perceived self-efficacy is often a better predictor under variable conditions than past performance because efficacy judgments encompass more information than just the executed action. Research in academic settings verifies that perceived self-efficacy beliefs contribute independently

to intellectual performance (Bandura, 1997). In research with children, Bernard (2012) selected children who judged themselves to be of high and low self-efficacy at each of these levels of mathematical ability; these children were then given mathematical problems to solve. Children who had stronger self-efficacy beliefs were quicker to discard faulty strategies, solved more problems, chose to rework problems they missed and did so more accurately than children of equal ability who doubted the self-efficacy.

In higher education settings, Pajeras (2013) reports that the mathematics self-efficacy of college undergraduates was a better predictor of their mathematics interest and majors than either their prior math achievement or math outcome expectations. According to Zimmerman, Bandura and Martinez-Pons (2002), academic self-efficacy influenced achievement directly as well as indirectly by raising students' grade goals.

Career Guidance Services and Self-Efficacy

Career guidance and counselling is a comprehensive developmental program designed to assist individuals in making and implementing informed educational and occupational choices (Liu et al., 2015). Programs focused on career guidance and counselling enhance a person's abilities in understanding themselves, investigating educational and job opportunities, and planning their careers. These programs assist individuals in gaining the knowledge, skills, and experiences required to recognise choices, examine alternatives, and thrive in society. These initiatives help individuals become more equipped for the evolving job market of the 21st century by educating individuals about shifts in the labour market and the intricacies of the workplace, expanding their knowledge, skills, and capabilities, enhancing decision-making abilities, boosting self-confidence and motivation, developing interpersonal skills, optimising career prospects, increasing job market attractiveness and options, facilitating effective job placement, and reinforcing relationships with employers.

Liu et al. (2015) further state that everyone benefits youth and adults, male and female, disabled, disadvantaged, minorities, limited English proficient, incarcerated, dropouts, single parents, displaced homemakers, teachers, administrators, parents and employers. All levels of education, including elementary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools, as well as community colleges, technical schools, universities, career resource centres, correctional institutions, community organisations, human services agencies, business groups, skill development clinics, and employment and job placement services. Career guidance and counselling programs aimed at helping students and pupils make more informed and better educational and career choices. Most students would wish to join the world of work after college and university education. Ideally, all students require career guidance and counselling services in the choice of subjects that are tailored to their prospective careers and job preferences. This is why there is every need for competent, informed and knowledgeable career teachers/masters.

As students finish colleges and universities, they need career guidance, including information on the type, requirements, salaries and trajectories of various occupations. Others will require support to make the right career, including trades to train in and venture into. Relevant experts with dedicated and unrivalled skills to facilitate the scholars' strategic choice of an institution will become handy. Another goal of career guidance and counselling services is to support scholars and students in making informed and impactful career choices within industries that practice corporate social responsibility (Nelson, 2014).

Besides, the importance of career guidance and counselling is increasing due to the higher number of graduates finishing school and college and the ever-changing demands in the labour market. Professional and career guidance and counselling take various shapes and forms. Some of these career guidance and counselling programs provide students with contacts of future employers, advice on finding jobs, and how to plan and shape professions. These career guidance and counselling programs are instrumental in the world today. They aid in placing talent where it is needed. The student is assisted to make the best possible career choice. Also, it strengthens the educational system by providing motivation and meaning to education. The students are always encouraged to make maximum use of all educational facilities and opportunities since this will be critical to them during their employment lives (UNESCO, 2014). Career guidance and counselling services also provide information about occupational opportunities. Students learn about the job market and the opportunities available. Orphans living in orphanages need this service as a preparation to live independently after disengagement from the orphanages (Lieu et al., 2015).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey research design to investigate the influence of career guidance services on the self-efficacy of orphaned children in Bungoma County orphanages, ideal for its non-intrusive nature, cost-effectiveness, and suitability for collecting data from children and caregivers without manipulation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Conducted across all 20 orphanages in Bungoma's nine sub-counties, the target population comprised 2,000 orphans, with a sample of 280 respondents: 240 orphans (12 per orphanage, balanced by gender), 20 caregivers, and 20 administrators, selected via purposive sampling based on observed low self-efficacy, assessed through caregiver reports and orphanage records of academic and social performance (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

Data were collected using two open-ended questionnaires—one for orphans and one for caregivers/administrators. A pilot study was conducted in two Trans-Nzoia County orphanages to ensure validity and reliability (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Quantitative data were analysed by use of descriptive statistics in SPSS, with assumptions of normality and homogeneity checked via Shapiro-Wilk and Levene's tests. Qualitative data were analysed by the use of a content analysis technique. Qualitative data from open-ended responses were coded thematically, with emergent themes interpreted narratively. Ethical considerations included informed consent, confidentiality via pseudonyms, and approvals from Kabarak University, NACOSTI, and county authorities. Data were securely stored with restricted access.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics on Career Guidance Services

Table 1 summarises the descriptive statistics on Career Guidance Services

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Career Guidance Services

| | True | | False | | Do not remember | |
|---|------|------|-------|----|-----------------|-----|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| I have always shared my Career challenges with fellow orphans in the orphanage. | 196 | 76.3 | 59 | 23 | 2 | 0.8 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|
| I have noted that my Career challenges are quite similar to those of fellow orphans. | 142 | 55.3 | 103 | 40.1 | 12 | 4.7 |
| I, together with fellow orphans, have willingly shared our Career challenges with counsellors | 195 | 75.9 | 45 | 17.5 | 17 | 6.6 |
| We have not felt shy to open up to the orphanage specialists concerning our Career matters. | 33 | 12.8 | 209 | 81.3 | 14 | 5.4 |
| Orphanage management has been receptive to all the Career challenges that we have shared with them. | 154 | 59.9 | 71 | 27.6 | 30 | 11.7 |
| There has been a continuous change of specialists brought into the orphanage to offer Career guidance services. | 186 | 72.4 | 44 | 17.1 | 27 | 10.5 |
| These Career guidance Sessions are well programed and held mostly during Weekends, on public and school holidays. | 176 | 68.5 | 59 | 23 | 22 | 8.6 |
| Some of my fellow orphans have NOT seen the need for these Career Guidance and Counseling services offered in the orphanage. | 154 | 59.9 | 93 | 36.2 | 10 | 3.9 |
| Senior Boys and Girls have had separate Career Guidance and Counselling sessions. | 118 | 45.9 | 120 | 46.7 | 19 | 7.4 |
| Career Guidance and Counseling sessions should be encouraged in our orphanage. | 236 | 91.8 | 16 | 6.2 | 4 | 1.6 |

The researcher set out to establish how psychological support was shared among orphans. The respondents were, therefore, asked to respond to the statement, "I usually share my career challenges with fellow orphans in the orphanage". The observed responses are presented in Table 1 above. 196(76.3%) of the respondents indicated that they always shared their career challenges with fellow orphans, compared to 59(23%) who indicated that they shared only sometimes. The respondents who indicated that they never shared their career challenges with fellow orphans accounted for 2(0.8%) of the total sample. The respondents were required to respond to the statement, "I have noted that my Career challenges are quite similar to those of fellow orphans", and their responses are shown in Table 1. Data presented shows that 142(55.3%) of the respondents agree that they had noted that their career challenges are quite similar to those of fellow orphans, 103(40.1%) disagree, and 12(4.7%) were not sure.

The researcher wanted to establish the respondents' ease of disclosure of career challenges and their relationship with the counselling service providers. Respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. "I, together with fellow orphans, have willingly shared our career challenges with counsellors". The responses are presented in Table 1. The findings show that 195(75.9%) of the

respondents indicated that they always, together with fellow orphans, have willingly shared their career challenges with counsellors. This compared to 45(17.5%) who indicated they only shared some of the times and 17(6.6%) who indicated that they were not sure they were free to willingly share their Career challenges with counsellors.

The researcher conducted a confirmatory test by asking the participants to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "I feel shy to open up to the orphanage specialists concerning our career matters". The results show that 209(81.3%) of the respondents disagree that they have felt shy to open up to the orphanage specialists concerning their career matters, while 33(12.8%) agreed and 14(5.4%) were not sure feeling shy to open up to the orphanage specialists concerning their Career matters. It was also observed that one respondent, representing 0.4%, did not respond to the statement.

The researcher asked respondents to state their level of agreement with the statement, "The orphanage management has been receptive to the career challenges that we have shared with them". The observed responses are presented in Table 1. 154(59.9%) of the respondents agreed that the orphanage management had been receptive to the career challenges that respondents shared. In addition, it was observed that 71(27.6%) of respondents disagreed, and 30(11.7%) indicated they were not sure if the orphanage management was receptive to the career challenges that were shared with them. Moreover, 2(0.8%) of the sampled orphans did not respond to the restatement.

The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with the statement, "There has been a continuous change of specialists brought in the orphanage to offer career guidance services". The results show that 186(72.4%) of the respondents agreed that there had been a continuous change of specialists brought to the orphanage to offer career guidance services. On the other hand, 44(17.1%) of respondents disagreed, and 27(10.5%) were not sure if there had been a continuous change of specialists brought to the orphanage to offer career guidance services.

The respondents were required to respond to the statement, "The career guidance sessions are conveniently scheduled". According to the results in Table 1 above, 176(68.5%) of the respondents agree that the career guidance sessions are conveniently scheduled, while 59(23.0%) disagree, and 22(8.6%) are not sure.

The respondents were required to respond to the statement, "My fellow orphans appreciate the career guidance and counselling services offered in the orphanage". The results above show that 93(36.2%) of the respondents agree that my fellow orphans appreciate the career guidance and Counselling services offered in the orphanage. In addition, 154(59.9%) disagreed that their fellow orphans appreciated the Career Guidance and Counselling services offered in the orphanage, and 10(3.9%) were not sure if their fellow orphans appreciated the career guidance and Counselling services offered in the orphanage.

The respondents were required to respond to the statement "Senior boys and girls have separate career guidance and Counselling sessions", and their responses are shown in Table 1. 118(45.9%) of the respondents affirmed that senior boys and girls have separate career guidance and counselling sessions compared to 120(46.7%) of respondents who disputed the statement and 19(7.4%) who indicated they were not sure if senior boys and girls have had separate career guidance and counselling sessions.

In order to establish the attitude of orphans towards psychosocial services, the respondents were required to respond to the statement, "Career guidance and Counselling sessions should be encouraged in our

orphanage". The table above shows that 236(91.8%) of the respondents agree that career guidance and counselling sessions should be encouraged in their orphanage, 16(6.2%) disagree, and 4(1.6%) did not remember if Career guidance and Counselling sessions should be encouraged in their orphanage. 1(0.4%) did not respond to the statement.

The researcher sought to triangulate the questionnaire responses with data from the interview guide. The sampled interviewees were asked to respond to the following question: *How do career guidance and counselling services influence your feeling of ability to handle challenges in your life?* A general theme was that respondents felt they had gained self-efficacy due to career guidance and counselling. A sample response is presented in the excerpt:

"Career issues were not known to me! When the specialist asked me about where my strengths were, I opened up. He explored with me the details of my preferred career, which was the art of drawing. He walked with me and opened up more horizons in the art of drawing, which I had not noted before. The more we explored, the more I enjoyed the art. My skills and knowledge grew very fast, unlike before. Because of my positive attitude and a newfound passion for drawing, my grades improved overall. My teachers were full of praise for me! Incidentally, they had no idea about the secret to my sudden improvement. I realised that my career guidance lessons also sharpened and improved my general perception of life."

Chi-Square Tests Between Career Counselling and Self-efficacy

In order to find out the relationship between career guidance and counselling and the self-efficacy of orphans, the researcher applied inferential statistics to generate data. Therefore, the researcher generated a null hypothesis H_03 : *There is no statistically significant influence of career guidance and counselling services on the self-efficacy of orphaned children living in orphanages in Bungoma County.* A chi-square analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis at a significance level of 0.05, with the results presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Chi-Square Tests between Career Counselling and Self-efficacy

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 780.312 ^a | 195 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 277.968 | 195 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 33.484 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 253 | | |

a. 211 cells (94.2%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .00.

In Table 2, a chi-square value of 780.312 with 195 degrees of freedom and an observed significance value of 0.000, which is less than the expected value of 0.05. Based on this observation, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was adopted. It was concluded that career guidance and counselling indeed significantly influenced the self-efficacy of orphaned children living in orphanages in Bungoma County.

These findings are in agreement with many scholars. Career Guidance and Counselling is a comprehensive, developmental program designed to assist individuals in making and implementing informed educational and occupational choices (Liu et al., 2015). A career guidance and counselling program enhances a person's abilities to understand themselves, explore educational and job options, and plan their career path. These programs assist individuals in gaining the essential knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to recognise choices, investigate alternatives, and thrive in society. By addressing the evolving nature of the 21st-century workplace, these programs equip individuals with the ability to grasp labour market shifts and workplace complexities, broaden their knowledge, skills, and competencies, and improve their decision-making abilities. They also boost self-esteem and motivation, enhance interpersonal skills, optimise career possibilities, elevate employability and job prospects, facilitate effective job placement, and strengthen relationships with employers.

Liu et al. (2015) further state that everyone benefits youth and adults, male and female, disabled, disadvantaged, minorities, limited English proficient, incarcerated, dropouts, single parents, displaced homemakers, teachers, administrators, parents and employers. Everywhere elementary, junior and senior high schools, community colleges, technical institutes, universities, career resource centres, prisons, organisations serving human services, local and business group organisations, and services for job placement and employment.

This is supported by the Systems Theory in Psychology. Human behaviours are often confusing and inexplicable to observers (Von Bertalanffy, 1967). The systems theory is a reaction to some of these practices. One of its central tenets is that the human mind is more than the mere total of its parts. System theorists suggest that the human mind consists of complex psychological, mental, and chemical processes, meaning that human beings should be regarded as systems in themselves.

Systems theory in psychology is an adaptation of general systems theory. Developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, general systems theory was developed as a response to what was seen as the radically impersonal nature of then-contemporary science. The mechanistic nature was pure in studying human beings, and there was no way to deal with Teleology (the study of purpose or goals). Humans and other life forms have a purpose, and a lack of acknowledgement of this trait can remove much of human behaviours from the context in which it occurs. General systems theory proposes interrelations between various elements in various systems and also proposes general principles governing those interactions (Nicklaus-Luhman, 2013).

The limitations of systems theory lie in structural functionalism theory (Cox & Paley, 1997). This theory places emphasis on the concept of homeostasis. It only agrees with changes that stabilise the system. This can pose a problem when presented with problems such as racism, LGBTQ, and the poor. Macrosystems benefit from having certain populations remain where they are. Abrupt changes in the rights, opportunities, and privileges of these populations pose a threat to the system by creating a disruption in the balance. Through this theory, only slow and steady change can occur rather than radical changes.

Correlation Results Between Career Counselling and Self-efficacy

Table 3 gives the correlation results linking Career Counselling and Self-efficacy.

Table 3: Correlations between Career Counselling and Self-efficacy

| N=280 | | 1 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------|
| 1. Career services | Pearson Correlation | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | |
| 2. Self-efficacy programmes | Pearson Correlation | .365** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |

The analysis shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between career guidance and self-efficacy of orphans at $r=0.365^{**}$, $P<.001$ significant level. The coefficient of determinant $R= r^2$ established that career guidance contributes 13.3% variability to the self-efficacy of orphans when other factors are held constant.

Regression Analysis for Predicting Career Counselling and Self-efficacy

In this section, the researcher sought to come up with a regression model to explain the efficacy of orphaned children. This enabled the determination of how well multiple independent variables (variables characterising each of the five categories) predict the value of a dependent variable. The dependent variable can be characterised as the efficacy of orphaned children. Multiple regression was used to predict the efficacy of orphaned children in a situation in which effect factors: individual guidance and counselling services, group guidance and counselling services, career guidance services, guidance and counselling referral services and mentorship programs influence the efficacy of orphaned children.

Table 4: Regression 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 |
| 3 | .533 ^c | .284 | .275 | 2.51669 | .005 | 1.734 | 1 | 244 | .189 |
| d. Predictors: (Constant), career services, referrals services | | | | | | | | | |
| f. Dependent Variable: efficacy of the orphans due to counselling programs | | | | | | | | | |

Table 4 shows that the R square is 0.284, implying that a 28.4% change in self-efficacy is explained by Career Counselling. Table 5 gives the ANOVA findings.

Table 5: ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--|--------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 3 | Regression | 612.123 | 3 | 204.041 | 32.215 | .000 ^d |
| | Residual | 1545.425 | 244 | 6.334 | | |
| | Total | 2157.548 | 247 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: efficacy of the orphans due to counselling programs | | | | | | |
| , e. Predictors: (Constant), career services | | | | | | |

The output in Table 5 shows the next part of the output, which contains an analysis of variance (ANOVA) that tests whether the model is significantly better at predicting the outcome than using the mean as a "best guess". Specifically, the F-ratio represents the ratio of the improvement in the prediction that results from fitting the model relative to the inaccuracy that still exists in the model. This table is split into three sections: one for each model. The value of the sum of squares SS_m for the model represents the improvement in prediction resulting from fitting a regression line to the data rather than using the mean as an estimate of the outcome. If the improvement due to fitting the regression model is much greater than the inaccuracy within the model, then the value of F will be greater than one. For the third model, the value of F is 32.215, which is also highly significant ($P < .001$). Table 6 gives the beta coefficients and significance.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

| Mod | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| (Constant) | .658 | 1.070 | | .615 | .539 | -1.450 | 2.766 |
| career services | -.002 | .072 | -.001 | -.022 | .982 | -.144 | .141 |

a. Dependent Variable: efficacy of the orphans due to counselling programmes
 Self-efficacy of orphans = $1.070 + .072X_3$

Where

$\alpha_0 = 1.070$ is a constant, shows that if all independent variables were rated zero, the Self-efficacy of orphans rating would be 1.070

Career counselling (standardise $\beta = .072$). This value indicates that as career counselling increases by one standard deviation, the Self-efficacy of orphans increases by .072 standard deviations when other factors are held constant.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: This study intended to establish the influence of career guidance services on the efficacy of orphaned children. This was in relation to the fact that the challenge of orphaned and vulnerable children is taking centre stage all over the world since the mismanagement of the phenomenon could result in deleterious long-term socio-economic challenges. In third-world countries such as Kenya, best practices in orphanages are not a priority in children's homes. Since the clients of orphanages lack the psychosocial support that is key to the successful negotiation of developmental milestones, the majority of the children end up vulnerable to relapse once they are released from their care homes. The primary focus of many orphanages in Kenya is the provision of shelter and food without much investment in primary psychological care.

This has led to low self-esteem among children brought up in orphanages, which could persist in their adulthood. Most orphanages have an age limit for orphans who live in their orphanages, after which the support program is discontinued. However, a significant percentage of these orphans graduated before achieving the self-efficacy for successful re-integration into mainstream society. Many of them end up living destitute and engaging in anti-social and maladaptive behaviours. Several variables have been identified in research as the cause for the high cases of relapse of rehabilitated children who are released back to society. However, the role of psychological behaviour management strategies such as guidance and counselling has not received adequate attention in research in Kenya. Therefore, little is known about the influence of psychological interventions in building self-efficacy for orphaned children in managed care.

This research aimed at bridging this gap by investigating the influence of career guidance services on the self-efficacy of orphaned children living in orphanages in Bungoma County. The study established that there was a positive and significant influence between the efficacy of orphaned children and individual guidance and counselling services. Career guidance services had a significant effect on self-efficacy. Thus, enhancing the efficacy of the orphans requires orphanages to invest resources in career guidance services.

Recommendations: Despite its limitations, these study findings should be used to enhance the efficacy of orphaned children. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that the government develop policies to guide all orphanages in Kenya, including processes for guidance and counselling. Career guidance services should be encouraged in orphanages as they provide a platform for the orphans to share their career challenges with fellow orphans and counsellors as they shape the future careers of these orphans. It enables the orphans to make more informed and better educational and career choices that make them live independent and gainful lives in their post-orphanage days.

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