

**INFLUENCE OF COUNSELLING ON DROPOUT AMONG PUPILS IN  
PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MURANG'A EAST  
SUB-COUNTY, MURANG'A COUNTY,  
KENYA**

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**DECLARATION**

**Declaration by the Student**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or for any other award.

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**Approval by the Supervisors**

We confirm that this thesis has been prepared by the candidate with our approval as University Supervisors

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my husband, Josephat Kinyanjui, sons, Andrew Ngure and James Njihia and daughters, Caroline Njeri and Rachel Wanjiku, for their support during my studies.

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## ABSTRACT

Primary school dropout in Murang'a East Sub-county is an ongoing phenomenon. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the influence of counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya. The objectives were: to establish the influence of peer counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools; to determine the extent to which group counselling influences dropout among pupils in public primary schools; to assess the influence of life skills counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools and to examine the influence of mentorship programmes and pupils' dropout from school in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county. The study was guided by the behavioral theory and Tinto's retention theory. The study adopted mixed methodology and thus applied concurrent triangulation research design. Target population comprised of 60 head teachers and 120 teacher-counsellors all totaling to 180 from which a sample of 124 respondents was obtained using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create four different strata based on the number of zones in Murang'a East Sub-county. From each zone, three head teachers and 28 teacher-counsellors were selected using purposive sampling considering schools which have had cases of high dropout rates. This procedure enabled the researcher to sample 12 head teachers and 112 teacher-counsellors. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from teacher-counsellors whereas an interview guide was used to collect data from head teachers. Piloting was conducted amongst 13 respondents from primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county to ascertain validity and reliability of the research instruments. Validity was ascertained through expert judgment. Reliability was determined using test re-test technique and the reliability index,  $r = 0.7$ , was obtained using Cronbach Alpha Method which indicated reliability. Data analysis began by identifying common themes. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-Version 23) and presented using tables. The study established that cases of dropout among pupils are very high in public primary schools. From the study findings, it is also evident that peer counselling, group counseling, life skills and mentorship activities are rarely adopted by teachers in public primary schools as a way of reducing cases of dropout among pupils. Thus, the teachers should partner with counsellors to train learners as peer counsellors which may enable them acquire basic skills to enable them help their colleagues with challenges of dropout. Teachers should learn to adopt group counselling since it can enable pupils to learn from each other's experiences and share their personal challenges and how such challenges can be overcome. Teachers should ensure that life skills' lessons are well utilized and content should be geared towards enabling pupils to develop good behavior patterns as a strategy for reducing cases of dropout from schools. The Ministry of Education should ensure that every primary school has a trained teacher-counselor and counselling units.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>KNBS</b>	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Commission for Science, Innovation and Technology
<b>NCEOP</b>	National Commission on Educational Objectives and Policies
<b>RoK</b>	Republic of Kenya
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children Education Fund
<b>USA</b>	United States of America

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Dropout from school is defined as the failure of a pupil to complete his or her studies due to a variety of reasons. In Paris, dropping out most commonly refers to a pupil quitting school before he or she graduates or avoiding entering secondary school or any institution of higher learning (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, [UNESCO] 2015). According to UNESCO (2015), reasons are varied and may include: to avoid bullying, family emergency, poor grades, depression and other mental illnesses, unexpected pregnancy, bad environment, lack of freedom and boredom. In the same token, in China, Connelly and Zheng (2011) posit that the national school dropout rate is far too high and many pupils are leaving high school without the skills and credentials they need to become successful, productive members of society.

Connelly and Zheng (2011) assert that pupils' dropout from school has highly increased due to decline in moral virtues which are attained through teaching of moral character. In other words, pupils' dropout from school in schools is a product of various dynamics found within school and home microsystems. Connelly and Zheng (2011) further note that, while every professional working in a school can work to prevent school dropouts, teacher-counsellors have a unique ability to reach individual learners on a more personal level by adopting strategies such as guidance and counselling.

However, the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in reducing cases of pupil dropout is yet to be fully explored. Counselling have been conceived internationally in different ways. Norwich (2010) defined counselling as interaction processes co-joining the counselee, who is

vulnerable and who needs assistance and the counselor who is trained and educated to give this assistance, the goal of which is to help the counselee learn to deal more effectively with himself or herself and the reality of his or her environment. Eddy (2011) posits that one of the functions of education is to provide opportunities for each learner to reach his or her full potential in the areas of educational, vocational, personal, emotional and moral development. In the Netherlands, Kauchak (2011) revealed that guidance is an integral part of education and is centered directly on this function aimed at reducing instances of school dropout. Counselling services prepare learners to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices (Kauchak, 2011). The ability to make such intelligent choices is not innate but, like other abilities, must be developed. Cognizant of these assertions, Nugent (2010) indicated that, next to counselors, teacher-counsellors are the most important components in implementing a successful comprehensive guidance program. In other words, teacher-counsellors are the key adult figure in the average children's school day. Teacher-counsellors are the most influential figures, be it positive or negative, to the average child. Without teacher support and involvement, children's moral developmental guidance won't work. To lend credence to these findings, Othman and Baker (2013) assert that, in Malaysia, teacher-counsellors represent the first line of defense in identifying pupils' special needs. They are the key advisors to the children and represent the best hope of personalization of learning.

Othman and Bakar (2013) indicate that teamwork between teacher-counsellors and professional counselors is a necessity for counselling programs to thrive. However, inconsistent with these assertions, Myrick (2013) argues that some teacher-counsellors hold misconceptions about the role and function of counselors. For counselling to be comprehensive, according to Eddy (2011), it should also be relevant for the primary school

pupils and not merely maintain a status quo. It must be purposeful and designed to meet the priority needs of the primary school pupils and one aimed at reducing cases of dropout from school. In Moscow, Brammer (2010) and Patterson (2012) observe that the primary school pupil with a problem must be willing to seek assistance from a counselor and if he or she is unable to do this, then it is very difficult to work cordially with him or her. In most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya, it is a popular view that successful counselling involves, to some reasonable degree, voluntary pupils' participation (Celestine, 2012). For example, in South Africa, Othman and Bakar (2013) have noted that how a pupil perceives counselling might serve as a barrier of the process.

In Kenya, scenario is the same with cases of pupils' dropout from school being on the rise in most public primary schools. Gitome, Katola and Nyabwari (2013) report that a great deal of emphasis in primary schools is placed on helping pupils regulate their behavior in order to succeed in social interactions and thus improve their desire to stay at school. To address the challenge of pupils' dropout from school, provision of counselling services in Kenyan primary schools and secondary schools was formally started in the 1970s (Celestine, 2012). This was as a result of the 1967 and 1968 careers conference reports. This was followed with the establishment of counselling unit in the Ministry of Education in July, 1971.

Before this year (1971), counselling services in schools mainly concentrated on career guidance which was almost entirely based on the voluntary efforts of teacher-counsellors who somehow felt motivated to provide it. In primary settings, counselling services were commenced to cater for learners with social, personal, psychological, educational and vocational problems (Republic of Kenya, 2009). In Kisumu East Sub-county, Jack and Enose (2010) assert that the role of counselling in the administration and management of learners' dropout from school in Kenya has been recognized by the various government policy

documents since independence. Despite this assertion, the use of counselling services in Murang'a East Sub-county is still wanting in helping curb dropout from school amongst children in primary schools, which was increasing. Although, the Ministry of Education made a move to curb the increasing cases of school dropout amongst pupils, the dropout rates are still high at 29.7% (Wagachira, 2015). To mitigate this, Stoops, Raffer and Johnson (2011) maintain that many learners dropout from school.

Problems that occur in primary schools might not exist if counselling services were correctly offered. All these incidents make it necessary to strengthen counselling services in the management of learners' dropout from school. This call can also be realized from the words of Oliva (2012) that, what is lacking is a type of moral issues which empowers an individual primary school child to take responsibility for his or her action in a socially acceptable way. According to Bundotich (2018), there is need for the learners to be listened to, be understood well and then be guided out of their straining circumstances. Moreover, high number of cases of dropout amongst learners is a pointer to the fact that there is something grossly wrong with the way the learners are guided in most schools.

Despite the importance of counselling services at the beginning of primary schooling, few studies have examined the influence of counselling services on pupils' dropout from school in public primary schools. This lack of research is notable, given that pupils' dropout from school in primary schools is closely related to their overall adjustment to school. In Murang'a East Sub-county, pupils' dropout cases in primary schools has had immediate consequences for the classroom environment and teacher-counsellors' counselling efforts. A study conducted by Gichomo (2013) indicated that out of 1280 pupils who enrolled in standard one, 313 boys dropped out of school in Murang'a East. Besides, a report by Emis (2015) shows that, in 2015, there was a dropout of 8.26% of pupils in Murang'a East sub-county. However, much is



yet to be done to interrogate the influence of guidance and counselling on pupils' dropout from school in public primary schools; hence the need for the study.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Dropout from school among pupils in public primary schools is a problem that has persisted over the years throughout the world. In Malaysia, for example, Othman and Baker (2013) assert that cases of pupils' dropout from primary schools are very high. In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya, the scenario is the same with Nigeria registering 23.8% dropout among pupils in public primary schools and is worsening each day (Celestine, 2012). In Murang'a East Sub-county, the number of primary school pupils who dropout from schools is alarmingly high with such dropout rates standing at 29.7% (Wagachira, 2015). Further, Gichomo (2013) indicated that out of 1280 pupils who enrolled in standard one, 313 boys dropped out of school in Murang'a East. Similarly, a report by Emis (2015) shows that, in 2015, there was a dropout of 8.26% of pupils in Murang'a East Sub-county. To mitigate on this, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with other education stakeholders introduced counselling in primary schools. Despite this move, dropout amongst pupils in primary schools has remained high. This study therefore, set out to examine the influence of different approaches of counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To establish the influence of peer counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- ii. To determine the extent to which group counselling influences dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- iii. To assess the influence of life skills counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- iv. To examine the influence of mentorship programmes on pupils' dropout from school in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.

## **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

This study attempted to test the following research hypotheses:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant influence of peer counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant influence of group counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant influence of life skills counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant influence of mentorship programmes on dropout among pupils in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.

## **1.6 Justification of the Study**

In Murang'a East Sub-county, dropout from school among pupils in public primary schools is still a problem that has persisted over the years and is worsening each day. The number of

primary school pupils who dropout from schools is alarmingly high with such dropout rates standing at 29.7% (Wagachira, 2015).

Despite these observations, few empirical studies have interrogated the relationship between counselling and dropout from school amongst pupils in public primary schools.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The Ministry of Education may benefit from the study in engaging teacher-counsellors in decision-making as far as reasons for pupils' dropout from school are concerned. The findings of this study may provide a foundation for developing a more focused and development-oriented pupil with an aim of realizing the tenets and basic principles of Kenya's Vision 2030. School management may benefit from the study in offering an opportunity to school authority and teacher-counsellors to embrace parents-teacher partnership designed to produce all-round pupils. Teacher-counsellors may benefit from the study since they may be able to gain an insight on most appropriate counselling strategies which immensely improve learners' desire to come to school and thus, enhance their retention. Pupils may benefit from the study in that a conducive environment for their learning may be created at school. Academicians and researchers may benefit from the study in that the study findings may offer a foundation for motivation to carry out more studies in a similar field.

### **1.8 Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

This study was conducted in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county in Murang'a County, Kenya. The study focused on the influence of peer counselling, group counselling, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes and dropout among pupils in public primary schools. The study adopted mixed methods approach and thus apply concurrent triangulation research design. In this study, questionnaires were used to collect

quantitative data from teacher-counsellors whereas interview guide was used to collect qualitative information from head teachers. In this study, data were collected from head teachers and teacher-counsellors.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The sample size for the study could not reflect the entire population in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county. In this case, the researcher ensured that the sample was as representative as possible through randomization. The findings of this study may not be generalized to other public primary schools outside Murang'a East Sub-county since there could be other dynamics influencing dropout among pupils other than counselling activities under investigation. In this case, the researcher recommended that other similar studies be conducted on dropout among pupils in public primary schools with focus on different dynamics. Data analysis was used to compare the relationship between variables under study since there are many statistical tests showing relationships. In this study, Pearson's Product moment Correlation test was picked to present the relationship sought in the study.

### **1.10 Assumptions of the Study**

- i. That counselling is offered in public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county.
- ii. That peer counselling, group, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes influence pupils' dropout from school.
- iii. That the respondents would be competent and cooperative to provide honest information.

## **1.11 Operational Definitions of Terms**

- Group counselling:** refers to a kind of counselling where pupils are arranged into convenient groups so that they talk about a variety of issues including exploring relationships, improving self-esteem and enhancing coping skills. Pupils share information about themselves and provide feedback to others while group leaders facilitate productive communication in the group.
- Counselling:** refers to professional services offered by a counselor to help pupils in primary schools to adjust in his or her environment effectively by manifesting desirable behavior patterns.
- Life skills counselling:** is the type of counselling offered to primary school pupils to equip them with abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour which enable them to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life at school.
- Mentorship programmes:** are kinds of programmes designed as a learning process where the pupils under mentorship (mentees) acquire skills and values through conversations with more experienced mentors who share knowledge and skills.
- Peer counselling:** is the form of counselling aimed at teaching pupils how to be effective in helping themselves and others with emotional issues and in regaining our innate goodness and intelligence. It evolves from the experiences of the pupils themselves.

**Pupils' dropout from school:** refers to the act in which pupils terminate their primary school education before completion of the academic programmes.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the literature of the previous studies covered related to the researcher's area of study. It is divided into the following sections; the empirical literature review, the concept of pupils' dropout from school, the concept of counselling and the influence of peer, group, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes on dropout among pupils in public primary schools. The researcher provides divergent views which are critical to different authors who raised various versions related to the issues being investigated. It also provides theoretical and conceptual frameworks and a summary of literature reviewed citing the gaps identified.

#### **2.2 The Concept of Pupils' Dropout from Primary Schools**

Pupils' dropout refers to proportion of pupils who leave or terminate their academic studies in a particular year as compared to those who are enrolled and fail to drop out of pre-primary schools (Baker, Sigman & Nugent, 2001). According to Nugent (2001), dropping out is not something that occurs at a single point in time and is the final stage in a dynamic and cumulative process of disengagement from school. In a study carried out in Australia, Azzam (2014) established that disengagement may begin as early as elementary school, when pupils fail to become involved in either the academic or the social aspects of school. Azzam (2014) noted that poor performance on assignments, misbehavior, failure to do homework, and lack

of participation in extracurricular activities are all signs of disengagement, which often leads to frequent absences, retention in grade, and repeated transfers to other schools. According to Azzam (2014), these signs of disengagement are precursors to dropping out, and pupils may advertise their intentions fairly early on.

This implies the problem of school dropout is high amongst pupils in primary schools due to a multiplicity of factors. This further indicates that the phenomenon of school dropout amongst primary school pupils remains a big challenge and is a multiple tragedy since leaving school not only increases educational costs, but also leads to a waste of human resources, teacher-counsellors' and learners' time. To corroborate these assertions, UNICEF (2011) carried out a study in Kuala Lumpur which revealed that dropout rates are highest in regions with lowest average incomes and lowest enrolment rates.

In south Asia, for example, 40% drop out before completing primary school; in Africa 26% drop out; in South Asia up to 22% of the pupils drop out; in the Middle East 7%, in East Asia 6% and in the developed countries up to 2% of the pupils drop out. Africa has been relatively good at getting children into primary school, but poor at inducing them to complete their primary education. This problem of dropouts affects many African countries. They spend large amounts of money teaching children who do not stay in school long enough to acquire any qualification. In a study by Watkins (2010), for example, it was discovered that fewer than one third of the boys and one tenth of the girls aged between 6 and 11 start school and one quarter of those who do start drop out during the first two grades. Girls are more likely to drop out in early stages than the boys are. The average time spent in school by those who drop out is 2.7 years.

In Mozambique, the situation was found to be even worse because fewer than half of those who enter grade one reach grade five. A progress report on Africa by Mingat, Jeepeng and

Soucat (2013) indicates that, in Senegal 65% of each age cohort enters grade 1 and 40% of the entrants reach the end of the cycle, whereas in Chad the figures are 83% and 19% respectively. In Kenya, cases of school dropout amongst pupils are high. For instance, in the year 2010, school dropout rate in Kenya stood at 2.1% for boys and 2.0% for girls.

This is clearly depicted by Kirangari (2014) in her study carried out in Kandara District which indicated that young men who dropped out of school enticed young girls with money earned from fishing and made them to also drop from school. The study by Kirangari(2014) further indicates that the dropout rate of male pupils in primary schools was higher than that of the females. Murang'a East Sub-county is no exception with many dropout cases in public primary schools being on the rise and has attracted the concern of educators, policy makers and scholars among others. However, much still needs to be done to assess the levels of dropout amongst pupils in public primary schools, hence the need for this study.

### **2.3 The Concept of Counselling**

Counselling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided teacher-counselors with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in their present age of complex scientific and technological development (Oguzie, 2014). The UNESCO module on counselling (2000) also posited that Guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors. Counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions.

There is agreement among experts that there are three major components of counselling. These are educational guidance, vocational guidance and personal social guidance (UNESCO,



2000). Under these three major areas, there are several counselling services such as appraisal, information, placement, orientation, evaluation, referral, and follow-up (Denga, 2011). Each of these major components of counselling along with their services address children's needs, challenges and problems. The goal of counselling services is to enable each learner in institutions of learning to derive optimal educational benefits so as to actualize his/her potentialities. The highlights of the National Policy on Education in Nigeria (2012) states "in view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality adjustments among school children, career officers and counselors will be appointed in post-primary institutions and tertiary levels. Unfortunately, the practice of these services in our institutions of learning is nothing to write home about. The programme is not encouraging at the primary school level and even at the university level. Ngeno and Magut (2014) argued that if the society is not to be plaque by a band/group of disgruntled, frustrated and unrealistic individuals, it is desirable that adequate counselling and career information be provided, to enable the school and society arrive at a realistic vocational choice for their children/wards with due realization of their potentialities.

Ayomide (2016) defined attitude as an individual perception and reaction to a task which is expected to be carried out or executed in a group, institution, school setting or an organization. Attitude can be said to be positive or high when individual response to the task or programme is favorable and when they show commitment to their duties. It can be negative or low when the children express a nonchalant response, with regard to what is expected of them in the given situation. Previous studies such as those of Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010), Mukhtar, Hapzi and Rusmini (2017) and Denga (2011) have shown that head teachers and teacher-counsellors constitute the greatest obstacle to the success of counselling services in schools.

The report showed a negative attitude of school authorities to guidance services and to counselors in particular. Eyo et al., (2010) also attributed the negative attitude to the ignorance of head teachers and teacher-counsellors about the relevance of guidance services in schools. Eyo et al., (2010) explained that the counselor is being seen as a new comer to the school system who is still being regarded with some sense of suspicion and caution and distancing. According to Eyo et al., (2010), some of the head teachers and teacher-counsellors regarded the services of the counselors as an unnecessary frill. Mukhtaret al.,(2017) believed that head teachers and teacher-counsellors misconceived the counselor's status, which often creates conflict between them and in most cases teacher counselors and primary managers who believe in the need for counselors in the school may see no reason why there should be full time counselors in schools. Denga (2011) stressed that the primary managers who know little about counselling will not in any way appreciate the need for the counselor to be relieved of heavy teaching load and other co-curricular duties. Such primary managers will stifle the counselors' work by withholding budgetary allocation for guidance services.

Eyo et al., (2010) stated that some head teachers are rigid and traditional and would not welcome new ideas. Eyo et al., (2010) said even when head teachers are aware that modern schools require the practice of the counselor, they may deliberately bark at the idea of implementing the guidance services in the school practice for the erroneous argument that historically, the school has operated successfully without formal guidance. Eyo et al., (2010) established that teacher-counsellors' perception/attitude towards vocational guidance services was significantly negative. Research carried out by Denga (2011) has discovered both positive and negative attitudes of children towards counselling services including influence of sex and school geographical location.

Denga (2011) in the study of primary children's attitude toward counselling services discovered no significant differences in sex, and grade level, but a positive/favorable overall attitude toward their guidance offices. It was inferred that the needs and expectations of the majority of the children were being met by the counselling services. Eyo et al., (2010) in their study on the attitude of secondary school students towards counselling services in Yakurr local government area of Cross River State, came out with the findings that students attitude towards counselling services was negative and that sex of the student and the geographical location of the school had no significant influence on students attitudes toward counselling services. Denga (2011), who studied the attitude of 2000 children towards the counselor from the then 19 states of the federation of Nigeria, obtained the result that showed a 100 percent need for counselling and the readiness of the children to go to the counselor for counselling.

#### **2.4 Peer Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Peer counselling is a well-documented concept of counselling. As Stoops et al.,(2011) point out, it is a personal method of change and is based on the idea that most people prefer to seek out their peers for help when experiencing challenges, frustrations, concerns and general problems. Stoops et al., (2011) have documented that transition from home to primary schools is sometimes a stressful and emotional experience for junior learners, requiring a structured support network. In other words, when pupils join primary schools for the first time, some of them experience emotional stress due to a change in the environment as well as behavioral and developmental gaps (Francis, 2012). As Patterson (2012) states, peer counselling is when pupils offer counselling services to their peers in order to improve their desire to stay in school.

Effective school counselors do not offer needs assessment, orientation, information and counselling services on their own. They made maximum use of peer helpers. To lend credence to these assertions, in a study carried out in Philadelphia, Leithwood and Sun (2012) established that during the peer counselling or mentoring sessions, individual pupils offer their junior colleagues an opportunity for self-knowledge and self-development through individual or group interventions. Understanding and knowledge of oneself and the environment gained through counselling and mentoring leads to personal development and good decision-making. To corroborate these assertions, Smylie, Conley and Marks (2002), in a study conducted in Chicago, noted that senior pupils act as mentors who provide their young colleagues with a pool of knowledge that could be tapped on to help polish their disciplinary, behavioral and some particular key skills that were said to be pertinent in career development through continued stay at school. Smylie et al., (2002) reported that senior pupils help their junior colleagues get involved searching or seeking out for good performers and requesting them to be mentors in given careers. This points to the fact that any junior pupil looking for a mentor is expected to seek out for positive and pleasing behavior patterns and personality, besides a mere successful track record. Peer mentoring and counselling give pupils an opportunity to work on their issues and concerns without fear and intimidation.

Smylie et al., (2002) discovered that peer supervision increased in the peer counselors' empathy, respect, genuineness as well as concreteness. Through such skills, a pupil peer counselor is aligned to build a rapport with the peer they are counselling, making it easier to make an impact, and for the client to make sound decisions concerning dropping out of school or not. This is consistent with the assertions of Bell (2002) who rated peer counselling as an outstanding tool that equips pupil peer counselors with counselling skills and techniques which makes it easier for them to reach their peers but also aid the pupil peer counselors

themselves with desirable skills which endear to school. Bell (2002) further noted that pupil peer concept provides a practical and economical means to meet the increasing needs of pupils in need of individual help.

Bell (2002) acknowledges the fact that school management which engages pupils as peer counselors help their pupils perform better, adopt healthy behavior patterns, understand and accept themselves as well as the meaning of life relating it to their school career interests and satisfaction derived from school attendance. This implies that through peer counselling, a pupil can define their career interest and make necessary career and other general decisions not to drop out of school. In Sub-Saharan Africa, research has indicated that primary schools have embraced the concept of peer counselling as an effective professional counselling designed to reduce instances of school dropout amongst pupils (World Bank, 2008). For example, in Botswana, after this realization, the University of Botswana introduced the peer counselling program spearheaded by pupils in 2003 which has produced positive results as reflected in the shared experiences of such pupils. The University of Botswana Careers and Counselling Centre, peer counselling program, trains and equips pupils with skills to enable them to help their peers (Marks &Printy, 2003). It allows pupils to work on issues of their concern with the accepting support of their peers. Peer counselors unlike professional counselors are available to help their peers anytime and their counselling sessions are informal discussions and conversations which are not threatening. The importance of peer counselling in a primary school setting has long been realized by a number of scholars.

Research noted that peer counselling enables pupils to appreciate each other as well as understand the importance of education and focus without thinking of dropping out (Marks &Printy, 2003). In other words, peer counselling believes that peers have the ability to reach out and change each other since they understand one another better. Cognizant of these

viewpoints, Duma (2014), in a study conducted in KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa, posited that, to this end pupils are expected to build their own databases of prospective pupil counselors and design an action plan for connection. They are to certify first on what they want to learn from the prospective mentors, before contacting them.

These findings further affirm the fact that pupil mentorship was therefore a one good road to decisiveness on career development with pupils. The pupil mentors offer assistance to junior colleagues in settling into the new schedule and lifestyle of primary school life. In Kenya, peer counselors play a critical role in counseling new pupils and as a strategy for reducing cases of school dropouts (RoK, 2012). A study conducted in Machakos Central Division by Muli (2011) revealed that peer counselors develop friendships through their participation in peer counseling programs and usually derive satisfaction from helping a younger pupil, and possibly shaping his or her life in a positive way through continued school attendance. Murang'a East Sub-county is not an exception with peer counselors being the in-thing in most primary schools where members of peer counselors act as peer mentors to new pupils, the peer mentees, in a particular subject, behavior pattern or lifestyle (Muli, 2011). For example, in an empirical study conducted in Murang'a East Sub-county, Kindiki (2009) asserted that establishment of peer counselors was driven by the need of enhancing effective teaching and learning and an even more, the urgent need to reduce indiscipline cases and above all, reduce cases of school dropouts amongst pupils.

Kindiki (2009) noted that pupil leaders are a tremendous help to the school and play a particularly important role in mentoring younger pupils. They coordinate co-curricular activities, dealing with minor cases which may lead to dropout from school amongst their peers and taking responsibility of pupils' welfare. They also carry out supervision of learning activities after school for junior pupils and checking attendants. These findings affirm the fact

that the position of pupil leadership forms a valuable part of a pupil's personal development opening their mind to new levels of responsibility and participation in a very positive way.

However, Kindiki (2009) failed to articulate how different peer mentoring activities undertaken by peer counselors have improved school attendance. In other words, Kindiki (2009) as did other empirical researchers failed to indicate how peer counselors mentoring programmes have impacted on dropout rates amongst pupils in public primary schools. In the same vein, it is not clear which particular peer counseling skills students of peer counselors ought to possess in order to mentor their colleagues.

## **2.5 Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Group counselling is a counselling session that takes place between the professionally trained counselor and a group of people. Number of this group should not be more than seven, or at least ten, in order to have a cohesive group and an effective well controlled counselling session. Eddy (2011) asserts that members of the groups are clients/counselees whose tasks or problems that are meant for resolution are similar. Cognizant of these assertions, Kauchak (2011) posit that, during group counselling, a free atmosphere is allowed and freedom of speech is encouraged. The counselees are free to express themselves individually as counselling progresses so that problems to be resolved would be open for all to consider and benefit from.

All counselees express their feelings and the counselor during group counselling is to help remove the marks covering the problem (Kauchak, 2011). The counselor helps open up the problem with the professional competence and knowledge he possesses. The counselor is not just a member of the group; he is to direct the affairs and situations. In a study carried out in Malaysia, Othman and Bakar (2013) established that group work provides an excellent

opportunity for school counselors to reach many learners at once. School counselors, in recent years, are turning more to group counselling in working with pupils (Othman & Bakar, 2013). In other words, planned, purposeful, and effective counselling is available to greater number of pupils through group work.

Similar views were expressed by Myrick (2013), in a study conducted in Mexico, revealed that group interventions have been shown to be successful in schools, and serve as a means of improving school attendance. Myrick (2013) established that group interventions are believed to be as successful as individual counselling, much more cost effective as a treatment of choice in successful interventions to improve social acceptance and behavior of learners in schools. Group members learn from each other aspects about their relationships through interpersonal learning (Myrick, 2013). Pupils learn through peer references, not through an adult or other source, making the learning more salient and rewarding. In the same vein, Denga (2011) also reported that, in Venezuela, the primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control. Denga (2011) further noted that groups offer learners the opportunity for social learning in managing or avoiding situational precursors that limit academic success. Besides, pupils also have opportunities to receive social support, gain the experience of being cared for, valued, included, and guided by their peers. These findings point to the fact that group counselling contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions and thus remain in school.

In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, group counselling is a strategy for improving pupils' school attendance, though its effectiveness is yet to be fully explored. A study carried out in Nigeria by Eyo et al., (2010) revealed that many counselors prefer group counselling



when handling learner with dropout issues. Eyo et al., (2010) established that, in group counselling, pupils help each other learn ways to handle life stressors, provide opportunities for feedback and support each other's growth and development. During group counselling, Eyo et al., (2010) assert that group members can challenge each other and offer encouragement to make small and progressive changes to move from harmful thoughts and behaviors to productive healthy functioning.

This implies that, during group counselling, pupils can effectively explore options and feelings and problem solve in a safe atmosphere. In other words, pupils can address invalid or inaccurate assumptions about their lives and make initial steps toward change and also feel a sense of universality while learning that other pupils or teacher-counsellors may share problems similar to their own. Similar views were expressed by Schmidt (2011), in a study carried out in KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa, which revealed that careful listening and rational discussion promote personal growth and understanding of others. Schmidt (2011) noted that, in group counselling, pupils can provide each other with unlimited support and suggestions. In Kenya and Murang'a East Sub-county in particular, group counselling is a common phenomenon amongst teacher-counsellors in primary schools. According to Muola and Ileri (2010), groups offer a safe place to communicate concerns while trusting relationships develop. Muola and Ileri (2010) report that safe group conditions offer opportunities to be honest, and open while confronting fears and anxieties.

To corroborate these assertions, a study conducted in Murang'a County by Celestine (2012) found that group counselling through group work offers pupils a new-found sense of self-efficacy. During group interactions, members learn personal responsibility (Celestine, 2012). In group counselling, Celestine (2012) noted that primary school pupils gain a sense of empowerment, learn to embrace control in life and learn that their school attendance and

progress is a direct response to personal responsibility. This implies that, in a world where at-risk youth are blamed for mistakes and poor choices, group counselling services offer opportunity to embrace powerful decisions that lead to positive behaviors and emotional empowerment amongst pupils.

However, much still needs to be done since Celestine (2012) as did other empirical studies have not articulated how different dynamics and characteristics influence dropout among pupils in primary schools.

## **2.6 Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour, that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Described in this way, Botvin, Eng and Williams (2010) posit that skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. However, analysis of the life skills' field suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart of skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of children and adolescents.

According to Botvin et al.,(2010), these include; decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress. In keeping with these assertions, Norwich (2010) conducted a study in the United Kingdom which revealed that the teaching of life skills to pupils appears in a wide variety of educational programmes with demonstrable effectiveness, including programmes for the improvement of their behavior patterns like school attendance. Norwich (2010) further established that teaching life skills to learners as

generic skills in relation to everyday life could form the foundation of life skills education for the promotion of mental well-being, and healthy interaction and behaviour.

This is indicative of the fact that teaching skills in this way, as part of broad-based life skills' programmes in schools, is an effective approach for primary school dropout prevention. In Czech Republic, Patterson (2012) argued that, in promoting the teaching of life skills is promoting the teaching of abilities that are often taken for granted. However, Patterson (2012) underscores the fact that there is growing recognition that with changes in many cultures and lifestyles, many young people are not sufficiently equipped with life skills to help them deal with the increased demands and stresses they experience.

Young people seem to lack the support required to acquire and reinforce life skills. It may be that traditional mechanisms for passing on life skills are no longer adequate considering the influences that shape young people's development. This is attributed to the fact that young children are growing up in situations of cultural and ethnic diversity. Also, the rapid rate of social change, witnessed in many countries, makes the lives of young people, their expectations, values, and opportunities very different from that of their parents.

In Canada, Reavie(2015) reports that wide range of motives for teaching life skills to children and adolescents include school attendance and promotion of mental well-being and cooperative learning. In the same vein, a study carried out in United Kingdom elementary schools by Heide, Rona and Ruth (2018) revealed that life skills appear in programmes such as communication and empathy skills for medical students and counselors, problem solving and critical thinking for business managers, and coping with emotions and stressors for people with mental health problems. Given the wide-ranging relevance of life skills, Heide et al., (2018) suggested that an optimal strategy for the introduction of life skills teaching would be to make it available to all children and adolescents in schools. This points to the fact that life

skills teaching to young children in schools promotes the learning of abilities that contribute to improved school attendance.

In many countries in Africa, Eyo et al., (2010) asserts that, in life skills education, children are actively involved in a dynamic teaching and learning process. The methods used to facilitate this active involvement include working in small groups and pairs, brainstorming, role play, games and debates. A study carried out in South Africa by Young, Kagee and Bantjes (2016) revealed that a life skills' lesson may start with a teacher exploring with the pupils what their ideas or knowledge are about a particular situation in which a life skill can be used. According to Young et al., (2016), children may be asked to discuss the issues raised in more detail in small groups or with a partner. They may then engage in short role play scenarios or take part in activities that allow them to practice the skills in different situations - actual practice of skills is a vital component of life skills education. Young et al., (2016) also noted that the teacher will assign homework to encourage the children to further discuss and practice the skills with their families and friends. Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya are no exceptions and life skills programmes have been embraced as strategies which can reduce cases of school dropout amongst pupils. For example, a study conducted in by Edna and Mabula (2015) in Tanzania revealed that investment in life skills counselling and education programmes is worthwhile considering that the potential gains of life skills education are so far reaching. Edna and Mabula (2015) noted that, apart from the impact on child health, there may be other benefits for the school as an institution.

Edna and Mabula (2015) further noted that the methods used can help to improve teacher and pupil relationships and life skills lessons are associated with fewer reports of learners dropping out of school. There are also cases of improved school attendance, less bullying, fewer referrals to specialist support services and better relationships between children and

their parents. The scenario is the same in primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county where schools which have embraced life skills education have had their learners manifest reduced incidences of dropouts. However, much still needs to be done since empirical studies have not interrogated how different concepts learnt in life skills specifically influence the extent to which pupils drop out of public primary schools.

## **2.7 Mentorship Programmes and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Mentoring is generally regarded as a learning process where helpful, personal and reciprocal relationships are built with a view to focusing on achievement and emotional support. The persons under mentorship (mentees) acquire skills and values through conversations with more experienced mentors who share knowledge and skills that can be incorporated into their thinking, practice and their value systems. According to Thompson (2012), teacher-counsellors provide emotional support by helping the pupils cope with feelings of isolation, anger and frustration which could arise from their day to-day academic and social interactions and experiences. To lend credence to these assertions, a study carried out in Germany by Grossman and Tierney (2010) established that mentorship programmes could be at the level of seniors whose experiences help mentees chart pathways for their own lives relying heavily on their more experienced superiors.

Persons in such organisations who have taken on a voluntary mentoring role or have been mentored perceived it to be a rewarding and educational experience that provides intrinsic satisfaction (Grossman & Tierney, 2010). In this case, newcomers are paired with more experienced people (mentors) in order to obtain information, good examples and employees as they advance. It is claimed that new employees who are paired with a mentor are twice likely to remain in their job than those who do not receive mentorship. In school context, mentoring involves a situation in which senior pupils provide different forms of support to

junior pupils. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), mentoring focuses on diverse needs of learners ranging from psychological, spiritual, professional, economic and educational needs. The major issues and components for mentoring are on study skills, peer pressure not to do drugs, premarital sex, not skipping classes, but to stick to the issues which include adherence to school dress code, being respectful and gentle (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Some Irish institutes of higher education appoint mentors as support aids for pupils. For example, Waterford Institute of Technology has implemented a mentoring programme within the Department of Tourism and Languages for its culinary arts pupils (Herrera, Sipe, McClanahan, Arbretton & Pepper, 2012).

However, it is widely accepted that there is a dearth of research conducted on the outcomes of formal mentoring relationships and the factors that make facilitated mentoring successful. These findings point to the fact that mentoring entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee. Herrera et al., (2012) further assert that the imparting of knowledge is also important in mentorship, but this occurs through a relationship of trust that is established between the mentor and mentee. Even though a mentor might use teaching and coaching as part of their mentorship style, they have no authority over their mentee. In other words, a mentor will also encourage independence in their mentee and guide them towards academic or professional goals. In Austria, Lewis and Sugai (2017) posit that a mentorship programme benefits pupils in several ways.

For example, a mentor can help them identify and set career goals, as well as guide them towards achieving these which greatly enhances pupils' career prospects by reducing cases of school dropouts (Lewis & Sugai, 2017). This implies that the relationships between, the mentor and mentee give the mentee a sense of being connected to the community where they

may otherwise feel lost. School mentors may be chosen because they are academically successful and because they may possess good communication, social and leadership skills. As a consequence, mentors serve as role models for the pupils, guiding them towards academic and social success. Mentors provide support, advice, encouragement and even friendship to pupils.

Mentors also stand to benefit from the mentor/mentee relationship. Mentors develop friendship through their participation in mentoring programs and usually derive satisfaction from helping younger pupils in shaping their life in a positive way. In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, mentorship's programmes are a common occurrence and are served with psychosocial, spiritual, professional and educational goals (Langdon, Flint, Kromer, Ryde& Karl, 2011). However, in many primary schools in Africa, mentorship programmes have not been fully offered to support pupils in programme completion, confidence building and transitioning to further education or the peer mentoring in primary schools are done in aid of younger pupils from home to primary schools. According to Langdon et al., (2011), pupils are mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems. In Ghana, Emmanuel, Kwame, Paul and Peter (2015) assert that mentorship programmes in schools are designed to create a mindset geared towards work readiness training and instilling in pupils the vital skills they need to get ahead in their careers. Assisting skill development such as communication, teamwork, leadership and interpersonal relationships outside of what is learned during the core curriculum, and how to apply it to a career plan, is yet another duty that can be assumed by the mentor (Emmanuel et al., 2015).

In the Kenyan scene, pupil mentoring helps schools to meet academic and social goals and reduce the number of school dropouts. The academic goals revolve around academic

excellence, being retained in school, ensuring progression and adhering to social codes and general etiquette (Wambua, 2017). Online resources support peer mentoring on the understanding that school-based programmes on mentoring engage young people at their very levels and focusing on their aspirations so that they are facilitated to acquire skills, attitudes to cope with life hurdles effectively.

Mentorship in primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county is critical to the attainment of educational goals by reducing the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools (Kirangari, 2014). This is especially true regarding the role played by mentorship in which a more experienced member of the organization, that is, school maintains a relationship with a less experienced, often new member to the school and provides information support and guidance so as to enhance pupils' school attendance.

However, Kirangari(2014), just like other reviewed studies, has not articulated the influence of different mentorship programmes on dropout amongst pupils in public primary schools.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by two theories. These included; the behavioral theory and Tinto's retention theory.

### **2.8.1 The Behavioral Theory**

This study was guided by The Behavioral Theory by Skinner (1974). According to this theory, the most common way of modifying behavior includes a reward system that is pre-determined by the therapist and client which makes the client want to change. In the conventional learning situation, it applies largely to issues of class- and pupil management, and to psychomotor skill development, rather than to learning cognitive content. It applies at the micro-level: awarding pupils high marks for good work is only behaviour modification in



the broadest and weakest sense, whereas attention and praise at the second-by-second level are much more likely to follow its principles. In behavior modification, the same techniques are applied in order to effect change on the way a person acts or responds to the environment.

Changing complex behaviors, hence, requires complex behavioral modification. The concept of shaping comes into play here. Shaping refers to the reinforcement of behaviors that approximate or come close to the desired new behavior. The steps involved are often called successive approximations because they successively approximate or get closer and closer to the desired behavior. In this study context, this theory is applicable in that it underscores the fact that inducing positive change in an individual pupils' disciplinary behavior through such techniques as positive and negative reinforcement or punishment for poor behavior is critical.

### **2.8.2 Tinto's Retention Theory**

This study was also guided by Tinto's Retention Theory and central idea to it is that of integration. It claims that whether a learner persists or drops out is quite strongly predicted by their degree of academic integration, and social integration. These evolve over time, as integration and commitment interact, with dropouts depending on commitment at the time of the decision. Tinto (1993) has categorized learner retention theories into three types: psychological, environmental, and interactional. Psychological dimension focuses on individual personality attributes and view learner attrition as reflecting some shortcoming and/or weakness in the individual. Environmental dimension focuses on the social, economic, and organizational forces impacting on learner retention (Tinto, 1993).

Societal component emphasizes the importance of social forces that are external to the higher education institution on learner retention such as social status, race, prestige, and opportunity (Tinto, 1993). As a result, they are insensitive to individual and institution specific forces that

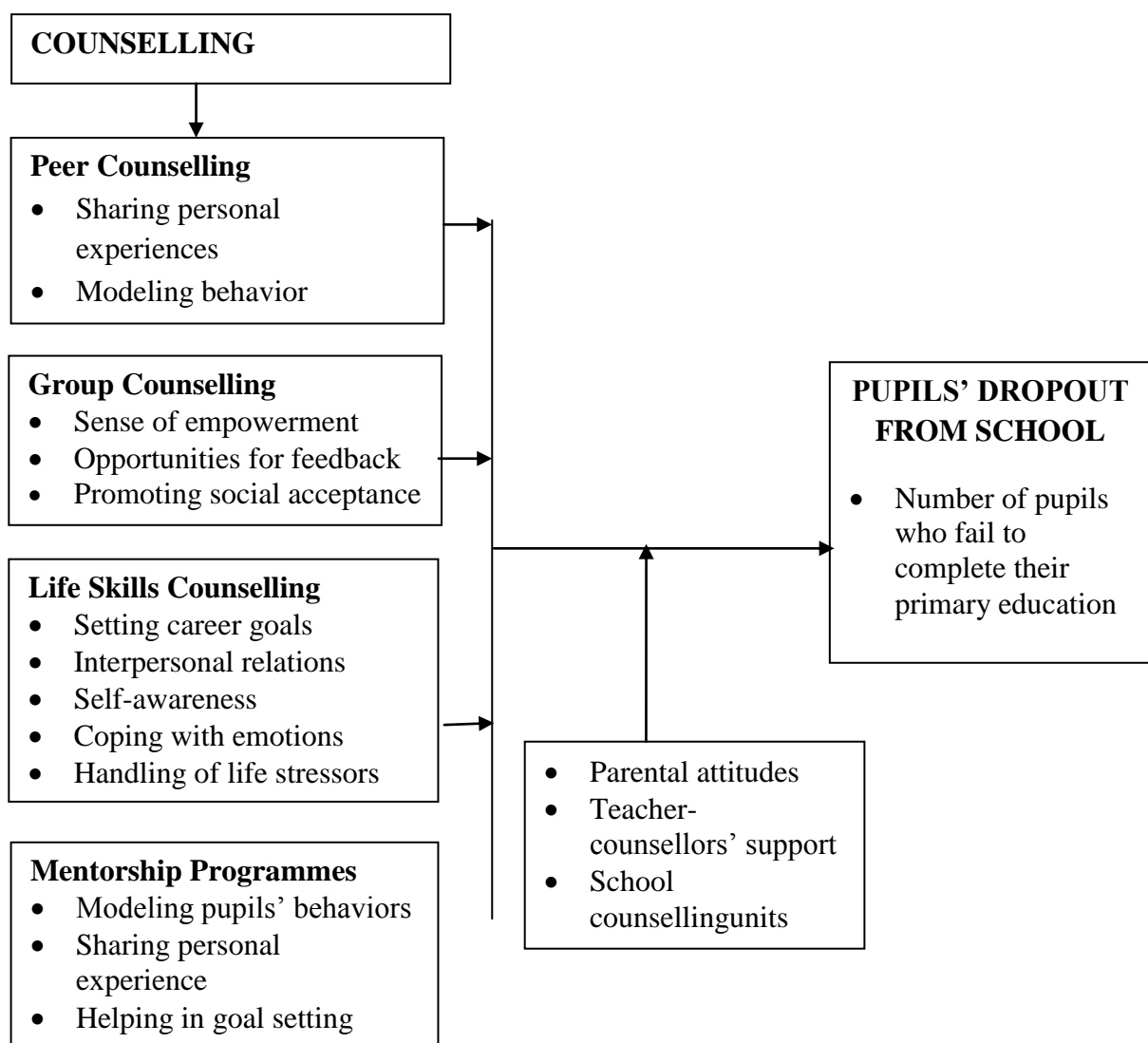
affect learner retention decisions. Economic dimension emphasizes the importance of individual finances and financial aid in learner retention (Tinto, 1993). Thus, in the context of this study, learner access to educational opportunities depend largely on a myriad of contextual factors such as parental characteristics and school dynamics such as availability of teachers and infrastructure.

## 2.9 The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was based on counselling reflected through peer counselling, group counselling, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes which constituted independent variable whereas pupils' dropout from school constituted the dependent variable. The intervening variables included; parental attitudes, teacher-counsellors' support and management styles as in Figure 2.1.

### Independent variables

### Dependent variable





## **Intervening Variables**

### **Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study**

#### **2.10 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps**

The study has been reviewed based on the empirical literature review, the concept of pupils' dropout from school, the concept of counselling and the influence of peer counselling, group counselling, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes and pupils' dropout from primary schools. The review has revealed that counselling plays critical roles in mitigating the cases of dropout from school amongst pupils. However, the review revealed numerous research and knowledge gaps. For example, on peer counselling and pupils' dropout from school, studies have failed to articulate how different peer counseling activities undertaken by peer counselors have reduced cases of dropout from primary schools. In the same vein, it is not clear which particular skills members of peer counselors ought to possess in order to mentor their colleagues.

On group counselling and pupils' dropout from school, studies have noted that primary school pupils gain a sense of empowerment, learn to embrace control in life and learn that their dropout from school is a setback to their career development. However, much still needs to be done since empirical studies have not articulated how different group counselling dynamics influence dropout amongst pupils in public primary schools. On life skills counselling, studies have noted that primary schools which have embraced life skills education have had fewer cases of learner dropout. However, much still needs to be done since empirical studies have

not interrogated how different concepts learnt in life skills specifically influence the extent to which pupils drop out from school.

On mentorship programmes, studies have underscored the fact that mentorship in primary schools is critical to the attainment of educational goals. However, reviewed studies, have not articulated the influence of different mentorship activities on dropout among pupils in public primary schools.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to carry out the study. It focuses on the research design, location of the study, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, research instruments, piloting of research instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis, logistical and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study was applied mixed methods approach. In other words, the study applied both quantitative and qualitative methods. Thus, this study employed concurrent triangulation technique which is a single-phased method in which quantitative and qualitative research designs are used simultaneously in collecting and analyzing information from respondents. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed using ex-post facto design and qualitative data were collected and analyzed using phenomenological design. The two designs are suitable for this study because the variables under study (counseling and pupils' dropout from school) are already manifested in the respondents and therefore, they were studied retrospectively.

### 3.3 Location of Study

The study was carried out in Murang'a East Sub-county in Murang'a County. The sub-county has an approximate population of 88, 219 persons and covers an area of 351.3 km<sup>2</sup>, that is, a population density of 252 persons per km<sup>2</sup> (KNBS, 2009). Murang'a East Sub-county (Appendix VII) has been selected for this study because dropout from school among pupils in public primary schools is still a problem and is worsening each day. In Murang'a East Sub-county, the number of primary school pupils who dropout from schools is alarmingly high with such dropout rates standing at 29.7% (, 2012).

However, few empirical studies have attempted to interrogate the extent to which counselling influences dropout amongst pupils in public primary schools; hence the focus on Murang'a East Sub-county as the location of study.

### 3.4 Target Population

The study targeted 60 head teachers and 120 teacher-counsellors which totaled 180 respondents as shown in Table 3.1

**Table 3.1**

*Target Population*

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Target Population</b>
Head teachers	60
Teacher-counsellors	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>

### 3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The researcher used Yamane's Formula for sample size determination to calculate the sample size for this study. The procedure is as shown below:

$$N_0 = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where,  $N_0$  = desired sample size at 95% confidence interval

$N$  = Target Population

$e$  = Confidence level of 5% (decimal equivalent is 0.05)

Thus, desired sample will be:

$$N_0 = \frac{180}{1 + 180(0.05)^2}$$

$$N_0 = 124$$

Stratified sampling was used to create four different strata based on the number of zones in Murang'a East Sub-county.

From each zone, three head teachers and 28 teacher-counsellors were selected using purposive sampling considering schools which have had cases of high dropout rates. This procedure enabled the researcher to realize a sample of 12 head teachers and 112 teacher-counselors as shown in Table 3.2

**Table 3.2**

*Sampling Grid*

Categories	Target Population	Sample Size
Head teachers	60	12
Teacher-counselors	120	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>124</b>

**Source: Researcher (2019)**

### 3.6 Research Instruments

Data were collected using two tools: questionnaire for teacher-counsellors and interview guide for head teachers.

#### 3.6.1 Questionnaire for Teacher-counsellors

The researcher applied a questionnaire with close-ended test items to collect quantitative data from teacher-counsellors. This is because according to Morse (2000), a questionnaire is a

research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents and is often designed for statistical analysis of the response. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section consisted of information on respondents' demographic profiles, while the second part contained 5-point Likert Scale type of questions based on the research objectives.

### **3.6.2 Interview Guide for Head teachers**

A structured interview guide with open-ended items was used to gather qualitative information from head teachers. The information collected was used to corroborate the information collected from teacher-counsellors using questionnaires.

### **3.7 Piloting of Research Instruments**

Piloting of research instruments was conducted amongst 13 respondents from a sample of public primary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county since according to Kothari (2005), pilot sample should constitute 10% of the study sample (10.0% of 124). The purpose of piloting was to check on suitability and the clarity of the questions on the instruments designed, relevance of the information being sought and the appropriateness of the language used. The results of the pilot study were used to pretest the research instruments in order to validate and ascertain their reliability. It also anticipates the problems or challenges the respondents encounter such as interpretation while filling the questionnaires and time management for the data collection. In addition, the interview schedules were given trial runs to ensure that questions are clearly worded and draw appropriate range of responses which assist the researcher to identify areas of revision. The respondents in the piloting were not included during the actual data collection.

### **3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instruments**

The researcher ensured that the instruments are valid. Validity of research instruments in this study was verified by research experts in counselling psychology including the supervisor to certify the content validity to address the objectives in the study. Items that were not adequate in terms of generating the required information were dropped and others suggested that were appropriate in generating the information. The researcher examined the research instruments for appropriateness of items so as to identify any ambiguous and unclear items. Such items were restated to ensure that the respondents clearly understood them.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of the Research Instruments**

In order to improve the reliability of the instruments, the researcher, with the help of her supervisor, critically assessed the consistency of the responses on the pilot questionnaires to make a judgment on their reliability.

Test re-test technique was used to establish reliability of the items. In this case, the items were administered twice to a group of respondents. Correlation between the two sets of scores were carried out and correlation coefficient obtained using Cronbach Alpha Method. If a reliability coefficient of 0.70 is obtained, then it indicated high internal reliability and the instrument will be used in the study.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from The School of Postgraduate Studies of Kenya Methodist University and Authorization Letter and Research Permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher sought an authorization letter from The County Commissioner and County Director of Education, Murang'a. These letters introduced the researcher to different sampled public primary schools to carry out the study in Murang'a East Sub-county. After obtaining the requisite letters of



authorization and permits, the researcher embarked on data collection process. After obtaining the necessary permits and letters of authorization, the researcher pre-visited every primary school which were sampled to seek for permission and book appointments from the participants to carry out the research and familiarize herself with the participants before the actual study.

Data were collected in two concurrent stages. First, the teacher-counsellors were given the questionnaires to fill with the help of a research assistant who were trained on the content of the questionnaires. At the same time, interviews among head teachers were conducted by the researcher. The researcher spent up to one hour with each respondent. During the interview, the researcher took short notes. After completion, the researcher collected the duly filled questionnaires and interview notes for analysis.

### **3.9 Data Analysis Procedures**

Data analysis began by identifying common themes. The relevant information was broken into phrases or sentences, which reflected a single, specific thought. The responses to the close-ended items were assigned codes and labels. Frequency counts of the responses were obtained to generate information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that are under investigation. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms whereas the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-Version 23) to explore whether there was relationship between counselling and pupils' dropout from school. The quantitative findings of the study were presented using tables.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations in research involve outlining the content of research and what was required of participants, how informed consent was obtained and confidentiality ensured.

#### **3.10.1 Confidentiality and Privacy**

The researcher undertook to keep private any information given by the respondents that touches on their persons or their private life. The respondents were assured that no identifying information about him or her would be revealed in written or other communication. Concerning confidentiality, the respondents were assured that the information provided would only be used for the stated purpose and that the information would not be passed to a third party.

#### **3.10.2 Anonymity**

The researcher ensured and assured the respondent that his or her individual identity would not be revealed whatsoever. Besides, no identifying information about the individual or the institution would be revealed in written or other communication.

#### **3.10.3 Informed Consent**

The nature and the purpose of the research were explained to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher explained to the respondents the procedure to be followed during the data collection so that they could participate willingly.

#### **3.10.4 Storage of Data Collected**

The raw data collected were filed for easy reference. Once the data were analyzed, computer print-outs were filed while softcopies were stored in storage devices such as CDs and flash discs.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. For clarity and chronology, it is arranged according to the four research questions that the study sought to answer. In the first section, however, background information about the respondents is presented, because it might be pertinent in interpreting the data that they provided.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

In this study, 112 questionnaires were administered to the teacher-counselors. In return, 172 questionnaires were filled and returned by the teacher-counselors. The researcher also interviewed 14 head teachers which yielded response rates shown in Table 4:3

**Table 4.3: Response Rates**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Sampled Respondents</b>	<b>Those Who Participated</b>	<b>Achieved Return Rate (%)</b>
Head teachers	12	10	83.3
Teacher-counselors	112	108	96.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>95.2</b>

Table 4.3 shows that head teachers and teacher-counselors registered a response rate of 95.2% which lends credence to the assertions of Creswell (2009) that a response rate above 75.0% adequate for generalization of the study outcomes to the target population.

### 4.3 Demographic Information

The research instruments solicited demographic information of the respondents. These included; gender and level of education of the respondents.

#### 4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

Information about the distribution of the respondents by gender was collected and the results are presented in Table 4.4

**Table 4.4: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Head teachers		Teacher-counselors	
	f	%	f	%
Male	6	60.0	21	19.5
Female	4	40.0	87	80.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field Data (2019)**

Table 4.4 indicates that majority (60.0%) of the head teachers were male whereas (40.0%) were female. However, majority (80.5%) of the teacher-counselors were female whereas their male counterparts constituted 19.5%. This information indicates that there was gender parity in the study and that the influence of counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools concerns both male and female head teachers and teacher-counselors.

#### 4.3.2 Respondents' Level of Education

The research instruments also elicited information on level of education of the respondents since this variable could influence their ability to provide reliable information about the research questions. The results are shown in Table 4:5

**Table 4.5: Level of Education of Head teachers and Teacher-counselors**

Educational Qualifications	Head teachers		Teacher-counselors	
	f	%	f	%

Certificate	0	0.0	65	60.2
Diploma	6	60.0	27	25.0
Bachelors'	3	30.0	10	9.3
Postgraduate	1	10.0	6	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field Data (2019)**

Table 4.5 shows that majority (60.0%) of the head teachers had Diplomas, 30.0% had Bachelors' Degrees whereas only 10.0% had postgraduate qualifications. However, majority (60.2%) of the teacher-counselors had certificate qualifications, a quarter (25.0%) had Diploma, 9.3% had Bachelors' Degrees whereas a paltry 5.5% had postgraduate qualifications. Hence, this information attest to the fact that level of education is an important characteristic in making the respondents understand the influence of counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools. In the same token, this information indicates that the respondents met the minimum requirements to be head teachers and teacher-counselors and were thus, expected to be competent to respond to the research questions.

**4.4:Peer Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study sought to establish the extent to which teacher-counselors adopt peer counselling in public primary schools to reduce dropout among pupils. Descriptive data was collected from teacher-counselors and the results are shown in Table 4.6

**Table 4.6: Teacher-counselors' Views on the Relationship between Peer Counseling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
	%	%	%	%	%
Teacher-counselors rarely adopt peer counselling to enable pupils in primary schools share their personal	75.0	11.5	4.5	7.5	1.5

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experiences as a way of reducing school dropout					
Peer counselling has not enabled pupils to model each other's behavior as a way of reducing cases of school dropout	88.5	2.5	1.5	4.5	3.0
Teacher-counselors rarely use peer counselling when handling pupils' disciplinary cases as a way of preventing them from leaving school	83.5	5.5	2.5	4.5	4.0

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Table 4.6 reveals that majority (75.0%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors rarely adopt peer counselling to enable pupils in primary schools share their personal experiences as a way of reducing cases of school dropouts as did 1.5% who agreed. However, only a paltry 4.5% were undecided, 7.5% disagreed whereas 1.5% strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in Chicago in which Smylie, Conley and Marks (2002) established that senior pupils act as mentors who provide their young colleagues with a pool of knowledge that could be tapped on, to help polish their disciplinary, behavioral and some particular key skills that were said to be pertinent in career development.

According to Smylie et al., (2002), senior pupils help their junior colleagues get involved searching or seeking out for good performers and requesting them to be mentors in given careers. This indicates that peer counselling has not been fully adopted in public primary schools as a strategy for reducing dropout among pupils in public primary schools. In other words, any junior pupil looking for a mentor is expected to seek out for positive and pleasing behavior patterns and personality, besides a mere successful track record. Thus, peer mentoring and counselling give pupils an opportunity to work on their issues and concerns without fear and intimidation.

Majority (88.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that peer counselling has not enabled pupils to model each other's behavior as a way of reducing cases of school dropout. 2.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. At the same time, 1.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 4.5% of teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 3.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the assertions of Bell (2002) who rated peer counselling as an outstanding tool that equips pupil peer counselors with counselling skills and techniques which makes it easier for them to reach their peers but also aid the pupil peer counselors themselves with life skills. Bell (2002) further noted that pupil peer concept provides a practical and economical means to meet the increasing needs of pupils in need of individual help. Bell (2002) acknowledges the fact that school management which engages pupils as peer counselors help their pupils perform better, adopt healthy behavior patterns, understand and accept themselves as well as the meaning of life relating it to their school career interests and satisfaction. These findings point to the fact that, through peer counselling, a pupil can define their career interest and make necessary career and other general decisions.

Furthermore, majority (83.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors rarely use peer counselling when handling pupils' disciplinary cases as a way of preventing them from leaving school. A paltry 5.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. At the same time, 2.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 4.5% disagreed whereas 4.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the findings of a study carried out in Mathioya Sub-county in which Kindiki (2009) established that establishment of peer counselors was driven by the need of enhancing effective teaching and learning and an even more, the urgent need to tame school unrest within schools in Kenya.

According to Kindiki (2009), pupil leaders are a tremendous help to the school and play a particularly important role in mentoring younger pupils. They coordinate co-curricular activities, dealing with minor cases of discipline and taking responsibility of pupils' welfare. They also carry out supervision of learning activities after school for junior pupils and checking attendants. Thus, the position of pupil leadership forms a valuable part of a pupil's personal development opening their mind to new levels of responsibility and participation in a very positive way. These findings are consistent with the findings of study conducted in Machakos Central Division in which Muli (2011) established that peer counselors develop friendships through their participation in mentoring programs and usually derive satisfaction from helping a younger pupil, and possibly shaping his or her life in a positive way. These findings also corroborate the theoretical perspectives of Skinner (1974) that, in behavior modification, the same techniques are applied in order to effect change on the way a person acts or responds to the environment. According to Skinner (1974), changing complex behaviors, hence, requires complex behavioral modification. The concept of shaping comes into play here. Shaping refers to the reinforcement of behaviors that approximate or come close to the desired new behavior. This indicates that pupil mentorship is therefore a one good road to decisiveness on career development with pupils.

To verify the possibility of the relationship between peer counselling and dropout among pupils in public primary schools, data was collected on the extent to which teacher-counselors adopt peer counselling activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools in a year and the results are shown in Table 4:7

**Table 4.7: Results of the Extent of Engagement in Peer Counselling Activities and the Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools**

<b>Extent of Engagement in Peer Counselling Activities</b>	<b>Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools in a Year</b>
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11	17
14	14
29	11
31	7
43	4
49	2

Table 4.7 indicates that, in public primary schools where teacher-counselors engage in peer counselling activities to a less extent, have many pupils drop out of school in any given year. These findings further corroborate the findings of Kindiki (2009) who established that establishment of peer counselors was driven by the need of enhancing effective teaching and learning and an even more, the urgent need to tame cases of school dropout among pupils. These results were subjected to Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis and results are shown in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis Showing Relationship between the Extent of Engagement in Peer Counselling Activities and Number of Pupils Who Drop out of Primary Schools**

		Extent of Engagement in Peer Counselling Activities	Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools
Extent of Engagement in Peer Counselling Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	-.979**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools	N	6	6
	Pearson Correlation	-.979**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	6	6

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 4.8, the results are presented in a matrix form such that the correlations are replicated. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship between the extent to engagement in peer counselling activities and the number of pupils who

drop out of public primary schools. The test generated correlation coefficients of  $r = -0.979$  with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.000 which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis,  $H_{01}$ , is rejected. This is indicative of the fact that peer counselors develop friendships through their participation in mentoring programs and usually derive satisfaction from helping a younger pupil, and possibly shaping his or her life in a positive way. This indicates that pupil mentorship is therefore a one good road to decisiveness on career development with pupils. The researcher also interviewed head teachers who also responded in favor of the view that teacher-counselors rarely adopt peer counselling to enable pupils in primary schools share their personal experiences as a way of improving their adherence to rules and regulations. On further probing, one headteacher, HT1, observed,

*“Many teacher-counselors in my school have not opted for peer counselling among pupils. This is attributed to the fact that most of them lack idea of peer counselling and critical activities which need to be undertaken by the learners. This has not really helped in reducing dropout among pupils”.*

Just like quantitative findings, these views are in consonance with the viewpoints held by Smylieet al., (2002) who noted that senior pupils act as mentors who provide their young colleagues with a pool of knowledge that could be tapped on, to help polish their disciplinary, behavioral and some particular key skills that were said to be pertinent in career development. These views further indicate that peer counselling has not been fully adopted in public primary schools as a strategy for reducing dropout among pupils in public primary schools. The head teachers further noted,

*“Teacher-counselors rarely create an opportunity for learners to share their personal experiences as a way of reducing cases of school dropout”.*

These views lend credence to the views expressed by Bell (2002) who rated peer counselling as an outstanding tool that equips pupil peer counselors with counselling skills and techniques which makes it easier for them to reach their peers but also aid the pupil peer counselors themselves with life skills. The interviewees concurred with the viewpoints of Bell (2002) who noted that pupil peer concept provides a practical and economical means to meet the increasing needs of pupils in need of individual help. Hence, from these mixed findings, school management which engages pupils as peer counselors help their pupils perform better, adopt healthy behavior patterns, understand and accept themselves as well as the meaning of life relating it to their school career interests and satisfaction.

#### 4.5 Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools

The study sought to assess the extent to which teacher-counselors use group counselling to reduce cases of school dropout among pupils in public primary schools. Descriptive data was collected from teacher-counselors, organized into specific thoughts and results are shown in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9: Teacher-counselors' Views on the Relationship between Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Teacher-counselors rarely use group counselling to enable primary school pupils empower each other in order to learn how to attend school regularly	80.5	8.5	1.5	5.5	4.0
Group counselling enables primary school pupils learn how to handle life stressors from each other which reduces their desire to drop out of school	69.5	12.0	2.0	10.0	6.5
Teacher-counselors use group counselling since it allows primary school pupils to provide and receive immediate	50.5	4.5	5.5	30.5	9.5

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feedback of their problems, thus, reducing instances of school dropout

Using group counselling has helped promote social acceptance amongst primary school pupils thus, reducing cases of school dropout	70.5	10.5	1.5	12.5	5.0
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Table 4.9 reveals that majority (80.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors rarely use group counselling to enable primary school pupils empower each other in order to learn how to attend school regularly as did 8.5% who agreed. However, only a paltry 1.5% were undecided, 5.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 4.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed.

These findings are consistent with the findings of a study carried out in Venezuela in which Denga (2011) reported that the primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control. According to Denga (2011), groups offer learners the opportunity for social learning in managing or avoiding situational precursors that limit academic success. This implies that pupils also have opportunities to receive social support, gain the experience of being cared for, valued, included, and guided by their peers. In other words, group counselling and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions. These findings further lend credence to the assertions of Celestine (2012) that, during group interactions, members learn personal responsibility.

Celestine (2012) posits that primary school pupils gain a sense of empowerment, learn to embrace control in life and learn that their discipline and progress is a direct response to personal responsibility. This implies that, in a world where at-risk youth are blamed for

mistakes and poor choices, group counselling services offer opportunity to embrace powerful decisions that lead to positive behaviors and emotional empowerment amongst pupils. The study also revealed that majority (69.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that group counselling enables primary school pupils learn how to handle life stressors from each other which reduces their desire to drop out of school.

On the same breath, 12.0% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 2.0% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 10.0% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 6.5% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in Nigeria in which Eyo et al., (2010) revealed that many counselors prefer group counselling when handling learner with disciplinary issues.

Eyo et al., (2010) established that, in group counselling, pupils help each other learn ways to handle life stressors, provide opportunities for feedback and support each other's growth and development. During group counselling, Eyo et al., (2010) assert that group members can challenge each other and offer encouragement to make small, and progressive changes to move from harmful thoughts and behaviors to productive healthy functioning. This implies that, during group counselling, pupils can effectively explore options and feelings, and problem solve in a safe atmosphere. In other words, pupils can address invalid or inaccurate assumptions about their lives and make initial steps toward change and also feel a sense of universality while learning that other pupils or teacher-counselors may share problems similar to their own.

The study also found that majority (50.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors use group counselling since it allows primary school pupils to provide and receive immediate feedback of their problems, thus, reducing instances of school dropout. At the same time, 4.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 5.5% of teacher-

counselors were undecided, 30.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 9.5% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. The study also found that majority (70.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that using group counselling has helped promote social acceptance amongst primary school pupils thus, reducing cases of school dropout. At the same time, 10.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 1.5% of teacher-counselors were undecided, 12.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 5.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed.

These findings lend credence to the assertions of Kauchak (2011) that, during group counselling, a free atmosphere is allowed and freedom of speech is encouraged. The counselees are free to express themselves individually as counselling progresses so that problems to be resolved would be open for all to consider and benefit from.

According to Kauchak (2011), all counselees express their feelings and the counselor during group counselling is to help remove the marks covering the problem. The counselor helps open up the problem with the professional competence and knowledge he possesses. These findings further support the findings of a study carried out in Mexico in which Myrick (2013) revealed that group interventions have been shown to be successful in schools, and serve as a means of improving academic performance and attendance. Myrick (2013) established that group interventions are believed to be as successful as individual counselling, much more cost effective as a treatment of choice in successful interventions to improve social acceptance and behavior of learners in schools.

These findings further support the assertions of Skinner (1974) that group counseling applies at the micro-level: awarding pupils high marks for good work is only behaviour modification in the broadest and weakest sense, whereas attention and praise at the second-by-second level are much more likely to follow its principles. This points to the fact that group counselling

and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions. To verify the possibility of the relationship between group counselling and dropout among pupils in public primary schools, data was collected on the extent to which teacher-counselors engage in group counselling activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools and results are shown in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Results of the Extent of Engagement in Group Counselling Activities and the Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools**

<b>Extent of Engagement in Group Counselling Activities</b>	<b>Number of pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools in a Year</b>
10	17
13	14
26	11
34	7
46	4
50	2

Table 4.10 indicates that, in public primary schools where teacher-counselors engage in group counselling activities to a less extent, have many pupils drop out of schools in a year. These findings further lend credence to the findings of Denga (2011) who noted that the primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control. This implies that, in a world where at-risk youth are blamed for mistakes and poor choices, group counselling services offer opportunity to embrace powerful decisions that lead to positive behaviors and emotional empowerment amongst pupils. These results were subjected to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis and results are shown in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis Showing Relationship between the Extent of Engagement in Group Counselling Activities and Number of Pupils who drop out of Primary Schools**

		Extent of Engagement in Group Counselling Activities	Number of pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools
Extent of Engagement in Group Counselling Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	-.991**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	6	6
Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools	Pearson Correlation	-.991**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	6	6

From Table 11, the results are presented in a matrix form such that the correlations are replicated. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship between the extent to engagement in group counselling activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools. The test generated correlation coefficients of  $r = -0.991$  with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.000 which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis,  $H_{02}$ , is rejected. This affirms the fact that the primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control. In other words, pupils also have opportunities to receive social support, gain the experience of being cared for, valued, included, and guided by their peers.



Group counselling and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions. Thus, in a world where at-risk youth are blamed for mistakes and poor choices, group counselling services offer opportunity to embrace powerful decisions that lead to positive behaviors and emotional empowerment amongst pupils. During the interviews, the head teachers noted that teacher-counselors rarely use group counselling to enable primary school pupils empower each other in order to learn how to attend school regularly. One head teacher, HT2, admitted,

*“I have not witnessed a situation where teacher-counselors assemble pupils in their classes for group activities which entail advising each other on how conduct themselves while at school. This has made it difficult to understand the challenges which pupils face as far as their behavior patterns are concerned”.*

These views further lend credence to the assertions of Denga (2011) that the primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control.

The head teachers further concurred with the viewpoints of Denga (2011) that groups offer learners the opportunity for social learning in managing or avoiding situational precursors that limit academic success. Just like in quantitative findings, these views attest to the fact that group counselling and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions. The head teachers also reported that many teacher-counselors rarely adopt group counselling as a strategy to enable pupils to learn how to handle life stressors from each other which enhances their adherence to rules and regulations, improve hard work, reduce absenteeism, reduce teenage pregnancies, violence and bullying of colleagues. These views further lend credence to the views expressed by Eyo et al., (2010) that many counselors prefer group counselling when handling learner with disciplinary issues.

According to Eyo et al., (2010), in group counselling, pupils help each other learn ways to handle life stressors, provide opportunities for feedback and support each other's growth and development. These views further point to the fact that group members can challenge each other and offer encouragement to make small, and progressive changes to move from harmful thoughts and behaviors to productive healthy functioning. Hence, during group counselling, pupils can effectively explore options and feelings, and problem solve in a safe atmosphere. In other words, pupils can address invalid or inaccurate assumptions about their lives and make initial steps toward change and also feel a sense of universality while learning that other pupils or teacher-counselors may share problems similar to their own. The head teachers further concurred,

*“In instances where teacher-counselors have used group counselling, it has promoted social acceptance amongst primary school pupils thus, reducing cases of school dropout”.*

Just like in quantitative findings, these views corroborate the views expressed by Kauchak (2011) that, during group counselling, a free atmosphere is allowed and freedom of speech is encouraged. This implies that all counselees express their feelings and the counselor during group counselling is to help remove the marks covering the problem. The counselor helps open up the problem with the professional competence and knowledge he possesses. Thus, group interventions are believed to be as successful as individual counselling, much more cost effective as a treatment of choice in successful interventions to improve social acceptance and behavior of learners in schools. Besides, group counselling and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions.

#### **4.6 Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study further sought to establish the relationship between life skills counselling and dropout among pupils in public primary schools. Descriptive data was collected from teacher-counselors and the results are indicated in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Teacher-counselors’ Views on the Relationship between Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to reduce cases of school dropout	59.5	15.5	4.5	11.5	9.0
Advising primary school pupils on how to relate with each other has improved their ability to attend school regularly	61.5	14.5	4.0	11.5	8.5
Teacher-counselors use life skills counselling since it allows primary school pupils to provide and receive immediate feedback of their problems, thus, improved their school attendance	50.5	21.5	3.5	10.5	14.0
During life skills counselling, teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils how to cope with emotions as a way of motivating them to attend school regularly	59.5	20.5	4.5	11.5	4.0

Table 4.12 reveals that a fair majority (59.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to reduce cases of school dropout. 15.5% of the teacher-counselors indicated agreed. However, only a paltry 4.5% of the teacher-counselors were

undecided, 11.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 9.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the findings of a study carried out in Austria in which Lewis and Sugai (2017) established that life skills counselling benefits pupils in several ways. For example, a mentor can help them identify and set career goals, as well as guide them towards achieving these which greatly enhances pupils' career prospects (Lewis & Sugai, 2017).

This implies that the relationships between, the mentor and mentee give the mentee a sense of being connected to the community where they may otherwise feel lost. School mentors may be chosen because they are academically successful and because they may possess good communication, social and leadership skills. The study revealed that a fair majority (61.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that advising primary school pupils on how to relate with each other has improved their ability to attend school regularly. 14.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 4.0% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 11.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 8.5% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed.

The study revealed that a fair majority (50.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors use life skills counselling since it allows primary school pupils to provide and receive immediate feedback of their problems, thus, improved their school attendance. 21.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 3.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 10.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 14.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the assertions of Botvinet al., (2010) that life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour, that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

According to Botvinet al., (2010), skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. However, analysis of the life skills field suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart of skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of children and adolescents. According to Botvinet al., (2010), these include; decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress. This is indicative of the fact that teaching of life skills to pupils appears in a wide variety of educational programmes with demonstrable effectiveness, including programmes for the improvement of their behavior patterns. In addition, teaching life skills to learners as generic skills in relation to everyday life could form the foundation of life skills education for the promotion of mental well-being, and healthy interaction and behaviour. More problem specific skills such as assertively dealing with peer pressures to use drugs, to have unprotected sex, or to become involved in vandalism, could be built on this foundation. This is indicative of the fact that teaching skills in this way, as part of broad-based life skills programmes in schools, is an effective approach for primary prevention education.

The study revealed that a fair majority (59.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that, during life skills counselling, teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils how to cope with emotions as a way of motivating them to attend school regularly. 20.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 4.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 11.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 4.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings further support the assertions of Eyo et al., (2010) that, in life skills education, children are actively involved in a dynamic teaching and learning process. The

methods used to facilitate this active involvement include working in small groups and pairs, brainstorming, role play, games and debates.

These findings also corroborate the findings of a study carried out in South Africa in which Young et al., (2016) revealed that a life skills lesson may start with a teacher-counselor exploring with the pupils what their ideas or knowledge are about a particular situation in which a life skill can be used. According to Young et al., (2016), children may be asked to discuss the issues raised in more detail in small groups or with a partner. They may then engage in short role play scenarios or take part in activities that allow them to practice the skills in different situations - actual practice of skills is a vital component of life skills education.

Young et al., (2016) also noted that the teacher-counselor will assign homework to encourage the children to further discuss and practice the skills with their families and friends. Thus, these findings indicate that methods used can help to improve teacher-counselor and pupil relationships and life skills lessons are associated with fewer reports of classroom behaviour problems. There are also cases of improved school attendance, less bullying, fewer referrals to specialist support services and better relationships between children and their parents. To verify the possibility of the relationship between life skills counselling and dropout among pupils in public primary schools, data was collected on the extent to which teacher-counselors engage in life skills activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools and the results are shown in Table 4.13

**Table 4.13: Results of the Extent of Engagement in Life Skills Counselling Activities and the Number of Pupils who drop out of Public Primary Schools**

<b>Extent of Engagement in Life Skills Counselling Activities</b>	<b>Number of pupils who drop out of Public Primary Schools in a Year</b>
13	17

15	14
24	11
28	7
30	4
47	2

Table 4.13 indicates that, in public primary schools where teacher-counselors engage in life skills counselling activities to a less extent, have many pupils drop out of schools in any given year. These findings further support the assertions of Eyo et al., (2010) that, in life skills education, children are actively involved in a dynamic teaching and learning process. These results were subjected to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis and results are shown in Table 4.14

**Table 4.14: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis Showing Relationship between the Extent of Engagement in Life Skills Counselling Activities and Number of pupils who Drop out of Primary Schools**

		Extent of Engagement in Life Skills Counselling Activities	Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools
Extent of Engagement in Life Skills Counselling Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	-.931**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
Number of Pupils who drop out of Public Primary Schools	N	6	6
	Pearson Correlation	-.931**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	6	6

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 4.14, the results are presented in a matrix form such that the correlations are replicated. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship between the extent to engagement in life skills counselling activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools. The test generated correlation coefficients of  $r = -0.931$  with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.007 which was less than the

predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.007 < 0.05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis,  $H_{03}$ , is rejected. This affirms the fact that a life skills lesson may start with a teacher-counselor exploring with the pupils what their ideas or knowledge are about a particular situation in which a life skill can be used. Hence, children may be asked to discuss the issues raised in more detail in small groups or with a partner. During the interviews, head teachers responded in favor of the view that teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to learn how to adhere to attend school regularly. One head teacher, HT3, noted,

*“In my school, life skills counselling is often undertaken. In our case, the life skills counselling is even slotted in the school time table to be undertaken along other subjects. It is usually taught once a week and this has seen a reduction in cases of school dropout amongst pupils in my school”.*

Just like quantitative findings, these views further corroborate the views expressed by Lewis and Sugai (2017) established that life skills counselling benefits pupils in several ways. In the same token, these views also support the viewpoints of Botvinet al., (2010) that life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour, that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. On the question of immediate feedback, the head teachers also noted that, in cases of where effective life skills counselling is undertaken, it allows primary school pupils to provide and receive immediate feedback of their problems, thus, reducing cases of dropout among pupils in public primary schools. Thus, these views affirm the fact that life skills teaching to young children in schools promotes the learning of abilities that contribute to positive health behaviour, positive interpersonal relationships and mental well-being. In other words, life skills counselling helps to improve teacher-counselor and pupil relationships and life skills lessons are associated with fewer reports of classroom behaviour problems.



#### 4.7 Mentorship Programmes and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools

The study intended to establish the extent to which mentorship programmes influence dropout among pupils in public primary schools. Descriptive data was collected from teacher-counselors and the results are shown in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Teacher-counselors' Views of Teacher-counselors on the Influence of Mentorship Programmes on Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Teacher-counselors' mentorship programmes rarely focus on modeling primary school pupils' behaviors as a way of reducing cases of school dropout	78.0	11.0	2.5	5.5	3.0
Teacher-counselors rarely share their personal life experiences with primary school pupils during mentorship to enable them attend school regularly and register better grades	74.5	19.5	1.5	3.2	1.3
During mentorship programmes, teacher-counselors rarely help primary school pupils set goals which enable them attend school on a regular basis	59.5	17.5	4.5	10.0	8.5
In primary schools, mentorship programmes are rarely undertaken as a way of reducing cases of dropout among pupils	55.5	22.5	5.5	10.0	6.5

Table 4.15 reveals that a fair majority (78.0%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors' mentorship programmes rarely focus on modeling primary school pupils' behaviors as a way of reducing cases of school dropout. 11.0% of the teacher-

counselors agreed. However, only a paltry 2.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 5.5% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 3.0% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the assertions of Emmanuel et al.,(2015) that mentorship programmes in schools are designed to create a mindset geared towards work readiness training and instilling in pupils the vital skills they need to get ahead in their careers. This means that assisting skill development such as communication, teamwork, leadership and interpersonal relationships outside of what is learned during the core curriculum, and how to apply it to a career plan, is yet another duty that can be assumed by the mentor. The study also revealed that majority (74.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that teacher-counselors rarely share their personal life experiences with primary school pupils during mentorship to enable them attend school regularly and register better grades. On the same breath, 19.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. However, 1.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 3.2% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 1.3% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the assertions of Kirangari (2014) that online resources support peer mentoring on the understanding that school-based programmes on mentoring engage young people at their very levels and focusing on their aspirations so that they are facilitated to acquire skills, attitudes to cope with life hurdles effectively.

The study also revealed that majority (59.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that, during mentorship programmes, teacher-counselors rarely help primary school pupils set goals which enable them attend school on a regular basis. A small proportion of 17.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. On the same breath, 4.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 10.0% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 8.5% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed. These findings further lend credence to the assertions of Lewis

and Sugai (2017) that a mentorship programme benefits pupils in several ways. This implies that the relationships between, the mentor and mentee give the mentee a sense of being connected to the community where they may otherwise feel lost.

School mentors may be chosen because they are academically successful and because they may possess good communication, social and leadership skills. As a consequence, mentors serve as role models for the pupils, guiding them towards academic and social success. Mentors provide support, advice, encouragement and even friendship to pupils.

Mentors also stand to benefit from the mentor/mentee relationship. Mentors develop friendship through their participation in mentoring programs and usually derive satisfaction from helping younger pupils in shaping their life in a positive way. The study also revealed that majority (55.5%) of the teacher-counselors strongly agreed with the view that, in primary schools, mentorship programmes are rarely undertaken as a way of reducing cases of dropout among pupils. A small proportion of 22.5% of the teacher-counselors agreed. On the same breath, 5.5% of the teacher-counselors were undecided, 10.0% of the teacher-counselors disagreed whereas 6.5% of the teacher-counselors strongly disagreed.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Langdon et al., (2011) that pupils are mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems. This implies that mentoring entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee. Imparting of knowledge is also important in mentorship, but this occurs through a relationship of trust that is established between the mentor and mentee.

To verify the possibility of the relationship between mentorship programmes and dropout among pupils in public primary schools, data was collected on the extent of teacher-counselors’ engagement in mentorship activities and the number of pupils who drop out of schools and results are shown in Table 4.16.

**Table 4.16: Results of the Extent of Engagement in Mentorship Activities and the Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools**

<b>Extent of Engagement in Mentorship Activities</b>	<b>Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools in a Year</b>
10	17
13	14
17	11
22	7
27	4
36	2

Table 4.16 indicates that, in public primary schools where teacher-counselors engage in mentorship activities to a less extent, many pupils drop out of school in any given year. These findings corroborate the assertions of Langdon et al., (2011) that pupils are mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems. This implies that mentoring entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee. Imparting of knowledge is also important in mentorship, but this occurs through a relationship of trust that is established between the mentor and mentee. These results were subjected to Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis and results are shown in Table 4.17.

**Table 4.17: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis Showing Relationship between the Extent of Engagement in Mentorship Activities and Number of Pupils who Drop out of Primary Schools**

		Extent of Engagement in Mentorship Activities	Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools
Extent of Engagement in Mentorship Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	-.970**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	6	6
Number of Pupils who Drop out of Public Primary Schools	Pearson Correlation	-.970**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	6	6

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 4.17, the results are presented in a matrix form such that the correlations are replicated. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship between the extent to engagement in mentorship activities and the number of pupils who drop out of public primary schools. The test generated correlation coefficients of  $r = -0.970$  with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.001 which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.001 < 0.05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis,  $H_{04}$ , is rejected. This affirms that pupils are mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems.

This implies that mentoring entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee. Imparting of

knowledge is also important in mentorship, but this occurs through a relationship of trust that is established between the mentor and mentee. During the interviews, the head teachers also noted that teacher-counselors' mentorship programmes rarely focus on modeling primary school pupils' behaviors as a way of improving their school attendance on a regular basis. Head teacher, HT4, noted,

*“Teacher-counselors rarely mentor their pupils through modeling. This has really affected the way pupils attend school”.*

Just like quantitative findings, these views further lend credence to the views expressed by Emmanuel et al.,(2015) that mentorship programmes in schools are designed to create a mindset geared towards work readiness training and instilling in pupils the vital skills they need to get ahead in their careers. The interviewees also noted that teacher-counselors rarely share their personal life experiences with primary school pupils during mentorship to enable them to manifest good behavior patterns such as adherence to school rules and regulations, hard work, absenteeism and peer interactions. These views further support the views of Kirangari(2014) that online resources support peer mentoring on the understanding that school-based programmes on mentoring engage young people at their very levels and focusing on their aspirations so that they are facilitated to acquire skills, attitudes to cope with life hurdles. In one school, head teacher, HT5, observed,

*“In my school, during mentorship programmes, teacher-counselors rarely help primary school pupils set goals which enable them to attend school regularly”.*

These views support the views expressed by Lewis and Sugai (2017) that a mentorship programme benefits pupils in several ways. Just like quantitative data, these views point to the fact that relationships between, the mentor and mentee give the mentee a sense of being connected to the community where they may otherwise feel lost. This indicates that pupils are

mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems. Mentoring entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee. Imparting of knowledge is also important in mentorship, but this occurs through a relationship of trust that is established between the mentor and mentee.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents summary of main research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research as discussed under the research objectives.

#### **5.2 Summary of Research Findings**

This section provides detailed summary of the research findings based on the objectives of the study which included; influence of peer counselling, group counselling, life skills counselling and mentorship programmes on dropout among pupils in public primary schools.

##### **5.2.1 Peer Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study established that peer counselling is rarely adopted by teacher-counselors in public primary schools as a way of reducing cases of dropout among pupils amongst pupils. From the study, many teacher-counselors in public primary schools have not opted for peer counselling among pupils which has not really helped in reducing dropout among pupils. This implies that peer counselling has not been fully adopted in public primary schools as a strategy for reducing dropout among pupils in public primary schools. That is, peer counselling as an outstanding tool that equips pupil peer counselors with counselling skills and techniques which makes it easier for them to reach their peers, but also aid the pupil peer counselors themselves with life skills. Thus, these findings point to the fact that schools which

engage pupils as peer counselors help their pupils attend school regularly, adopt healthy behavior patterns, understand and accept themselves as well as the meaning of life relating it to their school career interests and satisfaction.

### **5.2.2 Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study established that group counselling is very important in reducing cases of dropout among pupils in public primary schools. However, in many public primary schools, this is a rare occurrence. In other words, teacher-counselors rarely use group counselling activities to help pupils empower each other in order to learn how to attend school regularly and reduce absenteeism. This implies that primary goal of groups is to help pupils feel a sense of empowerment through these curative factors and to encourage learners to recognize that interpersonal problems are within their control. In other words, group counselling and guidance, when effectively applied, contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions. Besides, during group counselling, a free atmosphere is allowed and freedom of speech is encouraged. Thus, group counselling and guidance contribute to pupils' ability to adapt, tolerate diversity of ideas and behaviors, and self-regulate personal thoughts, feelings and actions.

### **5.2.3 Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study established that life skills counselling is an activity which is undertaken in public primary schools. However, its effectiveness in reducing cases of dropout among pupils is wanting. From this study, teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to learn to attend school regularly and reduce absenteeism and improve peer interactions. This implies that life skills counselling



benefits pupils in several ways. Hence, the fact that life skills teaching to young children in schools promotes the learning of abilities that contribute to positive health behaviour, positive interpersonal relationships and mental well-being. In other words, life skills counselling helps to improve teacher-counselor and pupil relationships and life skills lessons are associated with fewer cases of dropout among pupils.

#### **5.2.4 Mentorship Programmes and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

The study established that mentorship programmes are rarely undertaken in many public primary schools as a strategy for reducing cases of dropout among pupils. It is evident that teacher-counselors rarely mentor their pupils through modeling and this affected the way pupils conduct themselves. This implies that any mentorship programme in schools are designed to create a mindset geared towards work readiness training and instilling in pupils the vital skills they need to get ahead in their careers. This further points to the fact that pupils are mainly assisted with study skills, peer pressure such as pressure to use drugs or have sex, issues with attendance and behaviour and typical family problems. Thus, these findings affirm that mentoring is key in reducing cases of dropout among pupils since it entails flow of values from mentor to mentee and has the potential to benefit and learn from the relationship as much as the mentee.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

Drawing from the above findings, it is evident that cases of dropout among pupils are very high in public primary schools. Many pupils in public primary schools manifest increased cases of absenteeism leading to eventual dropout from school. From the study findings, it is also evident that peer counselling is rarely adopted by teacher-counselors in public primary schools as a way of reducing cases of dropout among pupils. Many teacher-counselors in public primary schools have not opted for peer counselling among pupils which has not really

helped in reducing dropout among pupils. From the study, group counselling is very important in reducing cases of pupils' dropout among pupils in public primary schools. However, in many public primary schools, this is a rare occurrence. In other words, teacher-counselors rarely use group counselling activities to pupils empower each other in order to learn the essence of school attendance and minimized dropout in schools. It is also evident that life skills counselling is an activity which is undertaken in public primary schools. However, its effectiveness in reducing cases of dropout among pupils is wanting. From this study, teacher-counselors advise primary school pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to learn to come to school regularly and more so improve peer interactions. From the study findings, mentorship programmes are rarely undertaken in many public primary schools as a strategy for reducing cases of dropout among pupils. It is evident that teacher-counselors rarely mentor their pupils through modeling and this affected the way pupils conduct themselves.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Practice**

The study makes the following recommendations:

- i. On peer counseling and dropout among pupils, the study recommends that teacher-counselors should partner with counsellors to train learners as peer counsellors which may enable them acquire basic skills to enable them help their colleagues with challenges of dropouts.
- ii. On group counseling and dropout among pupils, the study recommends that teacher-counselors should learn to adopt group counselling since it can enable pupils to learn from each other's experiences and share their personal challenges and how such challenges, which may lead to dropout from school, can be overcome.

- iii. On life skills counselling and dropout among pupils, the study recommends that teacher-counselors should ensure that life skills' lessons are well utilized and content should be geared towards enabling pupils to develop good behavior patterns.
- iv. On mentorship programmes and dropout among pupils, the study recommends that teacher-counselors should be good role models to their pupils. Teacher-counselors should manifest behavior patterns which help them reinforce a desirable behavior amongst primary school pupils.
- v. Head teachers should create conducive environment within primary schools which can facilitate the setting up of guidance and counseling units.
- vi. The Ministry of Education should ensure that every primary school has a trained teacher-counselor who is solely tasked to conduct counseling and modify pupils' behavior patterns as a strategy for improved school attendance.
- vii. The Ministry of Education should also provide necessary materials and facilities such as counselling units in public primary schools.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

- i. A study should be carried out to assess the influence of teacher-counselors' attitude towards counselling on dropout among pupils in public primary schools.
- ii. A study should be carried out to assess the effectiveness of head teachers' counselling practices on dropout among pupils in public primary schools.
- iii. A study should be carried out to examine the extent to which teacher-counselors' behavior patterns influence dropout among pupils in public primary schools.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2015.1128401>



## APPENDIX I

### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

April, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

I am a student undertaking a course in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Kenya Methodist University. I am required to submit, as part of my research work assessment, a research project on “**Influence of Counselling on Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools, Murang’a East Sub-county, Murang’a County, Kenya**”. To achieve this, you have been selected to participate in the study. I kindly request the sampled respondents to, fully, participate in the study. This information will be used purely for academic purpose and your name will not be mentioned in the report. Findings of the study, shall upon request, be availed to you.

Your assistance and cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Marion Ngure

**APPENDIX II**

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student undertaking a degree course in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Kenya Methodist University, carrying out a research on **Influence of Counselling on Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools, Murang'a East Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya**. For this study, I will request you to give me some time as you will be asked some questions. I will maintain your privacy and confidentiality about your information. Your name will not be written on any of the materials, and only the researcher will have access to your information. The research will not benefit you personally. Your participation is totally voluntary, and you may change your mind and withdraw at any time before and during the study. We will not pay or give any facilities for this participation. If you want to take part to participate in this research, please sign the form below.

**Participant:**

-----  
Name of Participant

-----  
Signature

-----  
Date

**Researcher:**

-----  
Name of Researcher

-----  
Signature

-----  
Date

### APPENDIX III

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER-COUNSELLORS

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student undertaking a course in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Kenya Methodist University. I am required to submit, as part of my research work assessment, a research project on “**Influence of Counselling on Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools, Murang’a East Sub-county, Murang’a County, Kenya**”. The information you provide will be confidential and entirely used for purposes of this study.

##### **Section A: Demographic Information**

*Instruction: Please tick against your most appropriate answer and fill the spaces provided.*

1. Gender: Male  Female
2. Highest Level of Educational Attainment  
Certificate  Diploma  Degree  Post-graduate

##### **Section B: Pupils’ School Dropout Levels**

1. How would you rate the levels of school dropout amongst your pupils?  
High  Low

##### **Section C: Peer Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

1. Please, rate the extent to which you engage pupils in peer counselling activities in your primary school  
Great Extent (40-49)   
Fair Extent (30-39)   
Less Extent (20-29)   
No Extent (10-19)

Not Sure (1-9) [ ]

- Please, in a scale of 1 to 5 (10 to 50 marks) rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on peer counselling in your primary school.

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

No.	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I always adopt peer counselling to enable pupils in my school share their personal experiences as a way of reducing school dropout					
2	Peer counselling has not enabled my pupils to model each other's behavior as a way of reducing cases of school dropout					
3	I use peer counselling when handling pupils' disciplinary cases as a way of preventing them from leaving school					

#### Section D: Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools

- Please, rate the extent to which you engage pupils in group counselling activities in your primary school

Great Extent (40-49) [ ]

Fair Extent (30-39) [ ]

Less Extent (20-29) [ ]

No Extent (10-19) [ ]

Not Sure (1-9) [ ]

- Please, please indicate in a scale of 1 to 5 (10 to 50 marks) how much each of the following statements reflects how you agree with the following statements on group counselling in your primary school.

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

No.	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I always use group counselling to enable my pupils					

	empower each other in order to learn how to adhere to attend school regularly					
2	Group counselling enables my pupils learn how to handle life stressors from each other which reduces their desire to drop out of school					
3	I use group counselling since it allows my pupils to provide and receive immediate feedback of their problems, thus, reducing instances of school dropout					
4	Using group counselling has helped promote social acceptance amongst my pupils thus, reducing cases of school dropout					

**Section E: Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

1. Please, rate the extent to which you engage pupils in life skills counselling activities in your primary school

Great Extent (40-49) [ ]

Fair Extent (30-39) [ ]

Less Extent (20-29) [ ]

No Extent (10-19) [ ]

Not Sure (1-9) [ ]

2. Please, using the 1 to 5 (10 to 50 marks) life skills counselling scale below, rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on life skills counselling in your primary school.

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

No.	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I advise my pupils on how to set career goals during life skills counselling in order to reduce cases of school dropout					
2	Advising my pupils on how to relate with each other has improved their ability to attend school regularly					
3	Life skills counselling has created self-awareness					

	amongst my pupils and has thus improved their school attendance					
4	During life skills counselling, I advise my pupils how to cope with emotions as a way of motivating them to attend school regularly					

**Section F: Mentorship Programmes and Dropout among Pupils in Schools**

1. Please, rate the extent to which you engage pupils in mentorship activities in your primary school

Great Extent (40-49) [ ]

Fair Extent (30-39) [ ]

Less Extent (20-29) [ ]

No Extent (10-19) [ ]

Not Sure (1-9) [ ]

2. Please, using 1 to 5 (10 to 50 marks) mentorship programmes scale below, rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on mentorship programmes in your school.

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

No.	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	My mentorship programmes focus on modeling my pupils' behaviors as a way of reducing cases of school dropout					
2	I share my personal life experiences with my pupils during mentorship to enable them attend school and register better grades					
3	During mentorship programmes, I help my pupils set goals which enable them to attend school on a regular basis					
4	In my primary school, mentorship programmes have not reduced levels of dropout from school amongst my pupils					

Thank you,  
Marion Ngure

**APPENDIX IV**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS**

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student undertaking a course in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Kenya Methodist University. I am required to submit, as part of my research work assessment, a research project on **“Influence of Counselling on Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools, Murang’a East Sub-county, Murang’a County, Kenya”**. The information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and entirely used for purposes of this study.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

- 1. Gender:.....
- 2. State your level of education.....

**Section B: Peer Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools**

- 1. How would you rate level of your pupils’ dropout from school?  
.....  
.....
- 2. To what extent do your teachers engage pupils in peer counselling activities in your primary school?  
.....  
.....

3. How has peer counselling influenced pupils' dropout from school in your primary school?

.....  
.....

**Section C: Group Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools**

1. To what extent do your teachers engage pupils in group counselling activities in your primary school?

.....  
.....

2. Which activities do pupils undertake during counselling in your primary school?

.....  
.....

3. What is the influence of group counselling on pupils' dropout from school in your primary school?

.....  
.....

**Section D: Life Skills Counselling and Dropout among Pupils in Public Primary Schools**

1. To what extent do your teachers engage pupils in life skills counselling activities in your primary school?

.....  
.....

2. What do teacher-counsellors in your school teach pupils during life skills counselling sessions?



- .....
- .....
3. To what extent has life skills counselling conducted by teacher-counsellors influenced dropout from school of pupils in your primary school?

.....

.....

**Section E: Mentorship Programmes and Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools**

1. To what extent do your teachers engage pupils in mentorship programmes in your primary school?

- .....
- .....
2. Which thematic areas do teacher-counsellors in your school undertake while conducting mentorship to pupils?

- .....
- .....
3. How has teacher-counsellors' mentorship programmes influenced dropout from school of pupils in your primary schools?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

Marion Ngure

**APPENDIX V**  
**INTRODUCTORY AND ETHICAL LETTER FROM KENYA METHODIST**  
**UNIVERSITY**



## KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

P. O. Box 267 Meru - 60200, Kenya  
Tel: 254-064-30301/31229/30367/31171

Fax: 254-64-30162  
Email: info@kemu.ac.ke

21<sup>st</sup> August, 2017

Commission Secretary,  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations,  
P.O. Box 30623-00100,  
NAIROBI.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: MARION W. NGURE (MCO-3-4267-3/2014)

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student of Kenya Methodist University, Department of Theology, Religious Studies and Counseling, undertaking Master of Arts in Counseling degree. She is conducting a research study titled "Factors that Contribute to Primary School Dropout in Murang'a East and the Counseling Implications."

We confirm that the thesis proposal has been reviewed and approved by KeMU Scientific Ethical Review Committee (SERC).

In this regard, we are requesting your office to issue a permit to enable her collect data for her Research.

Any assistance accorded to her will be appreciated.

Thank you,

Dr. John Muchiri, Ph.D.  
Director, Postgraduate Studies  
Encl.



### APPENDIX VI

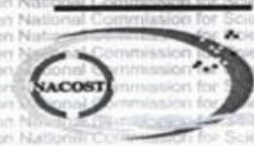
### AUTHORIZATION LETTER FROM NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, NACOSTI

**CONDITIONS**

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
6. This License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this License including its cancellation without prior notice.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT**

Serial No. A 15792

CONDITIONS: see back page

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**

**MS. MARION WAMBUI NGURE OF KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY, 0-1200 Muranga, has been permitted to conduct research in Muranga County**

**on the topic: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUT IN MURANGA EAST AND THE COUNSELING IMPLICATIONS**

**for the period ending: 18th September, 2018**

**Applicant's Signature**

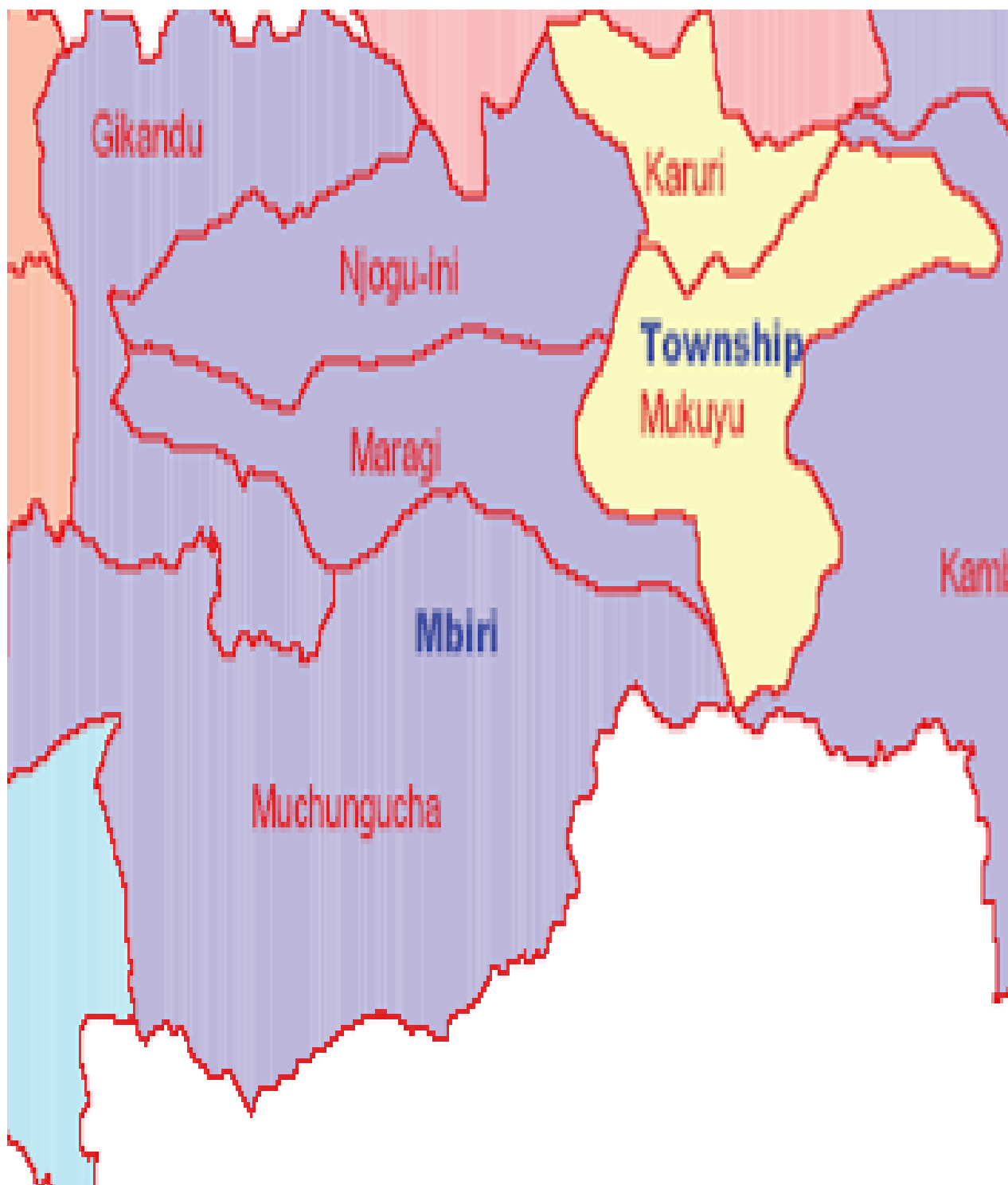
**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/99615/19180**  
**Date Of Issue : 19th September, 2017**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1000**



**Director General**  
**National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation**

**APPENDIX VII**

**THE MAP OF MURANG'A EAST CONSTITUENCY**



Source: IEBC (2012)