

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Access to guidance and counseling services and its influence on Students' school life and career choice

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A study was conducted to examine the influence of secondary school students' access to guidance and counseling services on school life, attitude towards studies and career choices. The study used descriptive and correlation designs with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaire from 152 students; and interview guide to 16 administrators and teachers who are directly involved in guidance and counseling services. The findings reveal that the services offered in the selected schools included: academic, health, moral, and spiritual matters. Although no trained counselor was found, the services offered proved to be moderately effective in influencing students' study life; and effective in shaping students' attitude towards studies and career choice. Out of 152 student respondents, only 10(6.6%) reported that they have not been counseled at any moment. Accessing the services showed significant correlation with students' attitude towards studies and career choice ( $p = 0.00$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Likewise, significant relationship was observed between students' attitude towards studies and career choice ( $p = 0.015$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). It was concluded that accessing guidance and counseling services has an effect in shaping students' attitude towards studies and career choice.

**Key words:** Guidance, counseling, career, attitude, Same district, access.

## INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling services are very important tools in human development especially during adolescent stage. Adolescent stage is characterized by rapid growth and change: physically, socially, spiritually, morally and intellectually. Most of adolescents are in secondary schools, that is why guidance and counseling services are seriously needed. According to Bark (2003), guidance and counseling are the assistances made available by qualified and trained persons to an individual of any age to help him to manage his own life activities, develop his own points of view, make his own decisions and carry his own burden. In addition, Braddock (2001) states that, the purpose of guidance and counseling in schools is to improve academic achievement, foster positive study attitudes and habits, increase acquisitions and application of conflict resolution skills, and decrease school dropouts.

Lack of guidance and counseling in adolescence has resulted to increase in unpleasant outcomes in the society. These include school dropouts, drug abuse, crimes, and even failure to secure jobs. Anastasi (1990) also adds that the task of educational guidance and counseling is to enable a student to adjust himself to his studies by improving his study attitude and removing subject matter difficulties.

When guidance and counseling services are missing in schools, students' adaptation becomes difficult thus leading to low performance, misbehavior and dropout. According to Odeke (1996), without sound guidance and counseling, many students loose direction and engage themselves in bad behaviors such as drug abuse and alcohol indulgence, missing classes, dropout and so on; as a result they lack both focus and direction resulting to total failure in life. In this regard, students need guidance and direction to study and choose career.

In some countries, guidance and counseling services are not a new phenomenon. In Nigeria, for instance, the services started to be incorporated into some school sys-

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tems way back in 1959. The essence of incorporating guidance and counseling into the school system was to eliminate overwhelming ignorance of many young people on their choices of career prospects and personality maladjustment among school children. Based on these and more, career officers and counselors were appointed to take the responsibilities in sensitizing students on the needs for effective career choice. Although these were untrained counselors, their efforts brought remarkable development in guidance and counseling in Nigeria that led to organized body of counselors (Oye, Obi, Mohd and Gwadabawa, 2012).

In Ethiopian higher education, "Guidance and Counseling" course was first introduced in the curriculum of Addis Ababa University in 1967 (Alemu, 2013). Since then; the course has been given to university students at the department of Psychology and the graduates have been assigned to schools and other social settings to provide guidance and counseling services. In Kenya, guidance and counseling was introduced in secondary schools following the Gachathi Report of 1976. The purpose was to help students understand themselves and to discover their abilities and limitation from their environment (Ndegwa, 2013).

Several other studies have reported different achievements following introduction of guidance and counseling services in schools. The survey conducted in Kenya after over three decades of inception of guidance and counseling services reveals that, most of the guidance teachers have a vague understanding of what really it entails or encompasses; and the students also do not fully utilize the services and do not understand its role (Ndegwa, 2013). The study further, reveals that since the introduction of the services, there has not been a change in behavior of students. Akinboye (1987) observes that a good number of adolescent and youths in many Nigerian secondary schools have incongruent patterns between their aspirations and subject combination for the school certificate examination. In addition, most Nigerian youths today engage in occupations not on the basis of reasonable choice but on the basis of fate. Cases of maladaptive behaviors like violation of school rule and regulation, bullying, truancy, drug abuse, alcohol addition, sexual abuse, rape are on the increase among school adolescents. This implies that the guidance and counseling services have not been embraced or impacted students' lives properly.

Guidance and counseling in Tanzania in different forms and with different interpretations have existed in societies for a long time before colonial era. However, there are no sufficient written sources about the origin of guidance and counseling practice in Tanzanian schools. The ever growing complexity of society in Tanzania, coupled with social problems like HIV/AIDS and the rapid development of science and technology, place heavy demands on education. The school, as an important social institution, was required to adapt quickly to changing patterns, and

help prepare citizens for tomorrow's challenges (Shayo, 2011). That is where guidance and counseling in the educational system came in to help boys and girls alike, to develop their capacities to the full. These include intellectual, social, physical and moral capacities. What we can call professional guidance and counseling in Tanzania schools begun in the year 1984 following the National October 1984 Arusha Conference, where guidance and counseling services were endorsed by the government as an integral part of the country's education system (Biswalo, 1996). To date, guidance and counseling is becoming slowly institutionalized and spread in educational institutions. Schools, for example, have to a large extent taken over the task of providing psychological support to boys and girls. However, Biswalo (1996) comments that in Tanzania policies pertinent to guidance and counseling is still lacking. The Ministry of Education, however, has somehow tried to institutionalize the services within the education system by appointing career masters and mistresses. He continued saying that the personnel are charged with the responsibility of advising heads of secondary schools concerning students job selection and student placement for further education; to try and help students understand and develop interest in appropriate jobs or further education or training; to assess the students talents and capabilities and to encourage them to pursue careers or further education best suited to them and to help students solve their personal problems which may affect their general progress in school. This, according to Shayo (2011), "is an impossible and unrealistic burden on these untrained personnel".

Another setback of the whole program is lack of framework. Much effort has been put in counseling secondary students on HIV/AIDS prevention following the scourge, and little effort is put in counseling these students on matters pertaining to their studies and career choice. A survey conducted in Tanzania shows that young people, especially students, have adequate basic knowledge on reproductive health, but there is little evidence that behavior has changed. While school interventions often improve knowledge regarding sexual reproductive health and significantly HIV/AIDS, expecting that attitudes may consequently change, there appears to be a large discrepancy between intended or reported and actual behavior change (Ministry of Education, 2001).

Furthermore, the effort the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has put on guidance and counseling in schools, counseling services have been mainly geared towards enabling students to develop the life skills needed to make informed decisions with regard to their reproductive and sexual health. For that purpose, a project called Prevention and Awareness in Schools of HIV/AIDS (PASHA) was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) in collaboration with the Swiss Tropical Institute (TGPSH, 2006). It is reported that, during the first phase of the imple-

mentation of the project, the proportion of secondary school students with basic knowledge in the area of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health has increased from 37.6% to 95%. In regions where the PASHA project is run over 79% of the schools have at least one school counselor who has undergone at least two weeks of training, 84% of the students now report that they would approach teachers, specifically the school counselors if they have problems that they are not sure on how to deal with (TGPSPH, 2006). This is an indication that when guidance and counseling services are given appropriately, students will develop positive attitude towards these services.

In order to ensure that guidance and counseling services are offered in elementary and secondary schools, MoEVT, decided to add another subject in teachers' training syllabus at diploma level. This subject aims to develop in student-teachers an understanding, specifically on psychology, guidance and counseling (MoEVT, 2009). In addition, the Government of Tanzania introduced a guideline for counselors in schools and teachers' colleges in 2007. The guideline features the core competencies needed by all guidance and counseling practitioners. Since the inception of Circular No. 11 of 2002 which demand the establishment of guidance and counseling services in schools and colleges, there is a little or no written manuscript concerning the evaluation of the programme to verify its achievement in the actual ground (Kano, 2012). Furthermore, with regard to guidance and counseling services, there is no clear evidence that the services are offered in private schools and have influenced students' school life, attitude towards studies and career choice among students in secondary school in Tanzania.

The current study was carried to answer the following questions: What are the types of guidance and counseling services offered in private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania? To what extent has accessing guidance and counseling services influenced students' school life and attitude towards studies among students in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania? To what extent has accessing guidance and counseling services influenced career choice among students in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania? Is there any relationship between students' attitude towards studies and career choice among students in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania?

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- To establish the types of guidance and counseling services offered in selected private schools in Same, Tanzania.
- To examine the extent of the influence of accessing guidance and counseling services on students' school life and attitude towards studies in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania.
- To examine the extent of the influence of accessing guidance and counseling services on career choices among students in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania.

- To establish the relationship between students' attitude towards studies and career choice among students in selected private secondary schools in Same, Tanzania.

Three hypotheses were formulated for testing:

- There is significant relationship between accessing guidance and counseling services and students' study life and attitude towards studies.
- There is significant relationship between accessing guidance and counseling services and career choices among students.
- There is a significant relationship between students' attitudes toward studies and career choice among students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Central Dependent Variables

Career guidance and counseling is an expertise or advice given to students on issues such as career exploration, career change, personal career development and other career related issues (Wikipedia, 2013). Students' career choice in this study is based on matching ability and ambition of the student, types of subjects selected inclusive.

An attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation, degree of favor or disfavor of people, objects, event, activities, ideas, or just about anything in one's environment. It can be evaluated to vary from extremely negative to extremely positive (Wikipedia, 2013). In this study students' attitude towards studies is regarded to be positive or negative, if students are studying willingly, and selecting their subject combinations as guided without being forced or pushed focusing on what they want to become in future.

School or study life is the period that an individual spends at school (Collins dictionary, 2013). In this study, school life embraces all activities a student does in relation to his or her studies.

The influence of guidance and counseling services on the three variables namely; school life, attitude towards studies and career choice can be measured descriptively as being very effective, effective, moderate or low effective.

### Design, Locale and Sample Size

The study was based on descriptive and correlational research designs with both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to ascertain how well the distribution of a set of information that was observed was matching a theoretical distribution of the study; while Pearson Product Moment Analysis was used to ascertain the relationships that existed between guidance and counseling services, students'

**Table 1.** Target population and calculated sample size.

School	Target population (N)	Sampled ratio	Sampled size (n)
Chome Sec School	33	0.62	20
Suji Sec School	172	0.62	106
Parane Sec School	42	0.62	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b>		<b>152</b>

**Table 2.** Legend for the interpretation of level influence.

Scale	Range	Interpretation
4	3.01-4.00	Very effective
3	2.01-3.00	Effective
2	1.01-2.00	Moderate
1	0.01-1.00	Low effective

attitude towards studies and career choices among students in the selected schools. The study was conducted in Same District; one out of six districts in Kilimanjaro region which is located in north-east part of Dar-es-Salaam the capital city of Tanzania. The district has over 47 registered secondary schools, seven of which are high schools out of which three were used for the purpose of this study. In Tanzania context, high school is that which offers two years of advanced secondary school after the fourth year of elementary school in the 7-4-2 school system.

The sample size of 152 respondents was determined from the targeted population (247) using Tara Yamane's formula as recommended by Israel (2009) as shown below:

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

, where N= targeted population (247), e = the desired level of confidence (95%) and n=sample size

Then proportional stratified sampling technique was employed to select respondents (Form 5 and Form 6) from each of the three church related private secondary schools (**table 1**). In addition to that, the District Education Officer (DEO), five staff members who are directly connected with counseling services were purposively selected from each school and interviewed to supplement the information given by students. Form 5 and 6 students were purposively chosen from sampled schools to participate in this study since they have stayed

long in school and their contribution was considered meaningful.

### Research Instruments, Validity and Reliability

The study used a self-administered questionnaire with closed-ended items as a primary instrument for data collection from student respondents, while an interview guide was openly discussed with the DEO, headmasters and teachers. At formal level, validity was established through checking the variable items for consistency, relevance, clarity and ambiguity of items in the instrument. Then, a pre-test was carried out to 20 students from Malindi Secondary School, a private school with similar characteristics to the targeted schools within the study area, so as to detect any challenge likely to arise from the research instrument before it was applied. The Coefficient Validity Index (CVI) result of the pre-test gave an overall Cronbach's alpha,  $\alpha = 0.738$ ; while each variable showed reliability (Chronbach's alpha) of 0.833, 0.722 and 0.682 for guidance and counselling, students' attitude towards studies and career choice items, respectively.

Although the CVI for career choice items was slightly lower than the minimum value for reliability test ( $\alpha = 0.70$ ) the questionnaire was administered as it is since the Cronbach's alpha (for all items) was greater than 0.70.

The respondents were asked to respond to the questionnaire by choosing one of the following options in a four Likert scale for each item: for positive questions - Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Disagree (DA)=2;

**Table 3.** Guidelines for interpreting Pearson's correlation coefficient (Laerd Statistics).

<b>Strength of Association</b>	<b>Coefficient, r</b>	
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Small	0.1 to 0.3	-0.1 to -0.3
Medium	0.3 to 0.5	-0.3 to -0.5
Large	0.5 to 1.0	-0.5 to -1.0

**Table 4.** Influence of guidance and counseling services on students' school life.

<b>Guidance and Counseling Services</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Encouraged me to study hard	1.52	Moderate
Developed in me positive attitude towards learning	1.40	Moderate
Helped me to approach exams without fear	1.41	Moderate
Improved my class attendance	1.45	Moderate
Developed within me ability to revise without being pushed	1.43	Moderate
Increased my concentration in studying	1.51	Moderate
Help me in choosing my subject combination	1.64	Moderate
Help me to formulate a discussion group	1.53	Moderate
Kept me in touch with friends and family members the thing which helped me to improve my study attitude	1.59	Moderate
Kept me connected to others and helped me improve my performance	1.89	Moderate
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

n = 152.

Strongly disagree (SD) = 1; and for negative questions the scores were reversed (Hakizimana, 2008).

The above scale was translated into levels of effectiveness as shown in **table 2**, while the level of significance was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (*r*) and interpreted using **table 3**. The data was analyzed by the use of Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to determine mean and Pearson's correlation, respectively.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Biographical Profiles of Respondents

The study looked into biographical characteristics of respondents and whether they had been counseled before. In regard to gender, males were dominant, 95(62.5%), as compared to females, 57(37.5%); while age wise the majority of the respondents were above 20(71.7%). These features were expected since the respondents were from form five and six and usually in African setting; males are encouraged to pursue higher education at greater rates than females. The advance in age is not surprising also as many students, especially in rural areas begin schools at the age of 7 or 8. In

Tanzania where a system of education is 7-4-2, for primary, O-level and A-level, respectively, it is likely to find majority of students at the age of 20 in A-level. In addition, majority of the respondents, 142(93.4%) reported to have been counseled before. This is an indication that guidance and counseling services existed in the studied schools, however, the type of counsel they received was not established.

### Types of Guidance and Counseling Services Offered

The first objective was to establish the type of guidance and counseling services offered in selected schools. The interview with the DEO, headmasters and teachers asserted that guidance and counseling services are offered in sampled schools, including discipline, HIV/AIDS awareness and healthful living, spiritual and academic issues. Nevertheless, in all sampled schools the teachers have been used as counselors. Some schools have been using the Assistant headmasters, discipline masters, chaplains and even any appointed teacher. The study revealed that to some extent the accessing of guidance and counseling services have made impacts on students' attitude towards studies and career choice:

**Table 5.** Influence of accessing guidance and counseling services on students' attitude towards studies.

Attitude	Mean	Interpretation
Guidance and counseling has helped me to appreciate my studies	3.70	Very High Influence
I think studies are a good thing	3.71	Very High Influence
I believe studies lead to success	3.69	Very High Influence
I do not bother about studies	3.76	Very High Influence
I like my studies	3.90	Very High Influence
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>Very High Influence</b>

n = 152.

However, most students do not follow the guidance they are given. Some would follow their own desires or the advice given by their parents. This finding is supported by the study by Ngale (2009) who reports that only 3.1% of the respondents in his study chose academic programmes based on the counselor's decision, while 87.6% and 7.8% based on personal decision and parental influence, respectively. This happens especially when there is no proper system laid down to help in offering guidance and counseling services. The Same DEO disclosed that the schools in the district do not employ trained counselors. However, the government has a future plan of employing trained counselors and that universities in Tanzania have started to offer guidance and counseling as a course in the effort of equipping teachers for both secondary and primary schools with basic guidance and counseling skills.

### Influence of Guidance and Counseling Services on Students' School Life and Attitude towards Studies

The second objective aimed at examining the extent to which accessing guidance and counseling services have influenced students' school life and attitude towards studies. The findings of the study have shown that guidance and counseling services have moderately influenced students' school life (**Table 4**). The mean of the responses ranged from 1.40 to 1.89, which is within the moderately effective range (1.01-2.00) of the legend (**Table 2**). The grand mean recorded as 1.59. This is a clear indication that many students have not realized the importance of guidance and counseling services. Lack of trained counselors and the attitude of students towards the services contribute to the effect. For students to be properly informed, they need the assistance of trained guidance and counseling personnel. On this matter, Gibson and Mitchell (2006) insist the necessity of having a trained guidance and counseling personnel to handle students' issues professionally. The school climate also is reported to influence the effectiveness of services as revealed by Sutton and Fall (1995) who say, "in schools with effective counseling programs, principals generally

provide enthusiastic support for the programs and encouragement to the counselors". The counselors and administrators must have a clear understanding of the school goals of counseling programs. Without such conditions, the counseling programs become ineffective. Odeke (1996) adds that without sound guidance and counseling services in secondary schools many students loose direction and engage themselves in bad behaviors such as drug abuse and alcohol indulgence, missing classes, school dropout and so on. As a result, they may lack both focus and direction resulting to total failure in life. In all schools under this study, the teachers have been used as counselors. Some have been using the assistant headmasters, discipline masters, chaplains and even any appointed teacher.

The findings also show that accessing guidance and counseling services has a strong influence on students' attitude towards studies. The findings (**table 5**) indicate that the influence of the services to students' attitude towards studies is very high as the mean score ranged from 3.69 to 3.90 which indicates a very high influence (legend, **Table 2**). The grand mean score rated 3.75. In practical sense, when students are appropriately guided, they will learn to value their studies consequently improve their performance. In this view Braddock (2001) confirms by saying that the purpose of guidance and counseling in schools is to improve academic achievement, foster positive study attitudes and habits, and decrease school drop outs. The responses of students, such as, "I like my studies" with the highest mean of 3.90 are the proof to Braddock's idea. Anastasi (1990) also asserts that the task of educational counseling is to enable students to adjust to his studies and to improve his study attitude towards studies. When properly guided students will learn to value better their studies and adjust accordingly.

The findings in this study also agree with the experiment by Abid (2006) who proved that guidance services have significant positive effect on student's study attitudes and study habits; and that improvement in study attitudes and study habits resulted in improvement of student's academic achievement. Furthermore, Baker and Gerler (2001) report that students who participate in a school counseling program had less inappropriate beha-

**Table 6.** Influence of accessing guidance and counseling services on students' career choice.

Career Choices	Mean	Interpretation
I don't know whom I am going to be in future	3.19	Very high
Guidance and counseling helped me to choose subjects	2.87	High
I will study more if I know what I will be in future	2.30	High
I'm thinking of many careers but I don't know the best	3.79	Very high
I am just studying because of my parents but I'm not thinking of any career	3.76	Very high
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>High</b>

n = 152.

aviors and develop more positive attitude toward school than those who did not participate in the program.

### Influence of Accessing Guidance and Counseling Services on Career Choices

The third objective examined the extent of the influence of accessing guidance and counseling services on career choices among students. Students' responses on this aspect (Table 6), show a high mean range (2.30 to 3.79), with a high grand mean score (2.92) which shows that guidance and counseling services have helped the students to know their career. The findings agree with Rao (2006) who argues that the aim of guidance and counseling services in schools is to "help" pupils choose the educational course best suited to them, and that students need to be helped and not to be forced to choose a career. However, Ngale (2009) warns that, majority of the students decide by themselves what career to pursue (perhaps by the influence from peer groups!). According to his study, Ngale reports 15.5% of the respondents to be influenced by parents, and only 9.3% to have chosen career based on professional advice from the school counselor. He also adds that family and peer pressures play an important role in determining the career choices that high school students make. Elder siblings and parents, who are generally trusted to be more knowledgeable about career issues, impose the family influence in students' career choices on them. On the other hand, Carson (1992) also warns that it is a big mistake for parents to take over the lives of their children and decide the future for them. He asserts that when parent push their children to the career that are not in line with their ability and talents they may perform poorly in their working place; yet if they could have been given the freedom of choice they would have performed wonders.

On this matter Nageswara et al. (2000) confirm that for students to develop good study habit which will lead them to a better selection for their career, they need guidance and counseling. They say that, if a student find difficult in following a certain teacher or subject, to the extent of affecting his performance, he needs to be guided. In a

related study, Lapan, Gysbers and Petroski (2001) report that in a situation where more fully implemented comprehensive guidance program, students attending middle schools report, among other things, to feel safer attending their schools, being more satisfied with the quality of education available to them in their school (attitude toward studies) and believing that their education was more relevant and important to their future (career). It is proper therefore to believe as conceptualized that, when appropriately administered, access to guidance and counseling services will influence students' attitude towards studies, which will consequently influence the career choice among students.

As stated earlier, the Same District Education Officer disclosed in an interview that the schools in the district do not employ trained counselors. However, the government has a future plan of employing trained counselors and that universities in Tanzania have started to offer guidance and counseling as a course in the effort of equipping teachers for both secondary and primary schools with basic guidance and counseling skills.

### Relationship between Accessing Guidance and Counseling Services and Students' Attitude towards Studies

On assessing the relationship between accessing guidance and counseling services and students' attitude towards studies, the findings (Table 7) showed that there is a medium relationship (legend, table 3) between accessing guidance and counseling services and students' attitude towards studies ( $r=0.354$ ;  $p=0.000$ ;  $\alpha=0.05$ ). Since  $p(0.000)$  is smaller than  $\alpha=0.05$ (2 tailed), the alternative hypothesis which states that, "there is significant relationship between accessing educational guidance and counseling services and students' study life and attitude towards studies", is confirmed. This is an indication that the services offered help the students inculcate positive attitudes towards their studies. This is in congruence with Bhatnagar and Gupta (2000) who say that the function of educational guidance and counseling is to enable a student to adjust himself to his studies by

**Table 7.** Relationship between accessing guidance and counseling services, students' attitude towards studies and career choice.

<b>Accessing G&amp;C Services</b>		
Category	Correlation (r)	P-value
Students' attitude	0.354*	0.000
Career choice	-0.317*	0.000

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)  
n = 152.

**Table 8.** Relationship between students' attitude and career choices.

<b>Students' Attitude</b>		
Category	Correlation (r)	P-value
Career choice	-0.198*	0.015

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)  
n (sample size) = 151.

improving study habit and by removing subject difficulties. Rao (2006) also asserts that educational guidance is meant for assisting the youth to review and reflect on their scholastic achievement.

#### **Relationship between Accessing Guidance and Counseling Services and career choices**

In regard to the second hypothesis the findings showed that there is a medium negative relationship (legend, Table 3) between accessing guidance and counseling services and career choices among students in selected schools ( $r=-0.317$ ;  $p=0.000$ ;  $\alpha=0.05$ ) (Table 7). Similarly, the alternative hypothesis which states, "there is significant relationship between accessing educational guidance and counseling services and career choices among students", cannot be rejected. This shows that the guidance and counseling services offered in schools have impacted students' career choice reversibly. This upholds the claims from the DEO and the Headmasters who claimed that the guidance and counseling services offered in schools in Tanzania are leaning too much on health, HIV/AIDS awareness and healthful living and have no significant influence with students' career choice. Further, the effects of parents and peer pressures have greater influence on students' career choice than the services offered in schools. This is noted also by Ngale (2009) who said that the relationship between accessing guidance and counseling and career choice among students can be aggravated by family and peer influence. This finding, however, is opposed to that of Ogoti (2012) who reports that the outcomes of guidance and counseling services in South Kisii public secondary

schools has a positive influence in social personal students roles, students career development roles and students' academic improvement roles.

#### **Relationship between students' attitude towards studies and career choice**

The fourth objective and third hypothesis aimed at examining the relationship that exists between students' attitude towards studies and career choice. The findings as shown in Table 8 indicate that there is a weak relationship (legend, Table 3) between attitude towards studies and career choice among students ( $r=-0.198$ ;  $p=0.015$ ;  $\alpha=0.05$ ); and the alternative hypothesis is true. However, the negative r-value is an indication that students' career choice' does not rely on their attitude towards studies. As it has been indicated earlier, students are not counseled by an expert, and that the parents and peer pressures also do contribute much in this aspect. This finding is supported by Nageswara et al. (2000) who state that for a student to develop good study habit which will lead him to a better selection for his career, he needs guidance and counseling. When appropriately administered, access to guidance and counseling services will influence students' attitude towards studies, which will consequently influence the career choice among students.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The study shows that accessing guidance and counseling services has an impact on students' school life. The fact

that the impact of guidance and counseling on school life and attitude towards studies was moderately perceived by students in selected schools, could be attributed to the untrained personnel who offer the services. It is imperative therefore, that school administration should see the importance of employing trained counselors and reinforcing the services. It is recommended that another study be carried out to find out how parenting styles and peer pressure affect career choice among students' in secondary schools in Tanzania. An experimental research can also be done to investigate the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services where the proper and trained officers are made available (This is not recommendation but suggestions for further studies).

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