Guidance and counselling in secondary schools is intended to prevent and solve the obvious physiological, psychological, social educational and vocational problems that adolescents face as they prepare for adulthood. However, it has been observed that a good number of learners do not seek guidance and counselling services. Yet they still need assistance for their developmental and academic problems. This study was therefore to examine the students’ help-seeking preferences in some selected secondary schools in Kitui District.

The study used a descriptive survey design. The target population comprised all students from selected secondary schools in Kitui District. The purposive sampling was used to select four schools to participate in the study. The stratified random sampling was used to select 200 students for the study. Data were collected by use of a questionnaire.

The study found that both male and female students preferred the parents or guardian to other helpers. However, boys in boarding schools preferred a close friend to the other helpers. It was also revealed that students would mostly prefer the teacher counsellor when faced with guilt over things they are not necessarily responsible for. When they feel useless and hopeless and lack motivation, when they find it difficult to get along with their friends and to build new friendship, when faced with dating problems and social activities with members of the opposite sex, when very shy and timid and unable to express themselves confidently in public, when experiencing poor study habits, when they don't know how to improve their academic performances, when there are lots of things that distract them from their educational goals, when selecting the optional subjects to take for KCSE, when they have difficulties in selecting a college and course of study.

The study recommended that the Ministry of Education should organise sensitization seminars for parents to educate them on their role in helping adolescents to overcome their problems and should sensitize the teacher counsellors and equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills in dealing with the adolescents in order to help them to overcome their development problems. The Ministry of Education should also organize seminars to strengthen peer counselling in boarding schools since these students would prefer to be helped by their fellow students rather than their teachers or parents/guardians. Finally, the study suggests that this research needs to be replicated in other districts as well with a larger sample in order to give a general picture for the whole country. There is also need to find out whether there are differences in help-seeking preferences of students in rural areas versus students in urban areas.