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**CONTRIBUTION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN BEHAVIOUR CHANGE  
AMONG JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN PUBLIC JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS IN  
ELDORET, UASIN GISHU COUNTY**



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## ABSTRACT

Juvenile delinquency is a complex social problem that significantly impacts all members and processes of a social structure. Delinquent behaviours are antisocial behaviours of children under 18 years that are beyond parental control and therefore subject to legal action, thus referred to as juvenile delinquents (JD). A UNICEF report indicates that the global number of children deprived of liberty as a result of conflict with the law is estimated to be not less than one million. In Kenya, the Children's Department of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development is in charge of protection and care of juvenile delinquents and offenders as well as the care of orphans. The department faces difficulties due to the rapid increase in the numbers of child delinquents and offenders. In December 2011, Eldoret Juvenile Remand Home alone had 160 juveniles which is its full capacity. The purpose of this study was to examine Guidance and Counseling (GC) in behaviour change of JD and recommend measures that would increase effectiveness of GC. Specific objectives of the study were to determine the types of juvenile delinquents in public juvenile institutions in Eldoret Uasin Gishu County, to establish the contributing factor that lead to juvenile delinquency to determine the counseling services offered in public juvenile institutions in Eldoret and to establish the challenges faced by counselors in changing behaviors among juveniles in public juvenile institutions in Eldoret. Research design that was used in this study was descriptive survey. A sample size of 152 respondents comprising of 140 JD, 5 welfare officers, 4 probation officers, 1 counselor and 2 administrators in public juvenile institutions in Eldoret participated in this study. Saturated sampling was used for the respondents due to their inadequate numbers. Research instruments used in this study were questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis. A Pilot study was done to ascertain validity and reliability of the instruments and a reliability coefficient of 0.644 was attained. Descriptive statistical tools were used for data analysis. The study identified three distinct types of delinquents namely; un-socialized runaway delinquents, un-socialized aggressive delinquents and socialized cooperative delinquents. It was established that poverty, family background, peer influence and media were the main contributing factors to delinquency. The findings also revealed that there were significant differences in delinquent behaviour among juveniles before and after undergoing counseling. The study concluded that despite the many positive attributes of guidance and counseling services offered in juvenile institutions, many challenges exist both in terms of infrastructure and personnel that hinder delivery of these services. The study recommended that the bill of rights be enforced by the government particularly in the fundamental area of child growth and development so that parents and the society at large are held responsible. Finally, the study contributes to existing knowledge and forms the basis for further research on this area.