

## The Impact of Post College Training, Supervision and Professional Support on School Counseling in Public Secondary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Daniel M Mmbwanga<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Haniel Nyaga Gatumu<sup>2</sup>, & Prof. Gathogo Mukuria<sup>3</sup>,

### Abstract

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Guidance and counselling services prepare individuals for ownership of their resolutions in life, develop their capacity to grasp and handle the outcomes of their choices. The capacity to deliver such reasoned decisions must be developed by the assistance of an expert, the school counsellor. However, evidence indicates that inadequate training and preparation make these crucial personnel ill-prepared for the tasks ahead. This study investigated the impact of post college training, supervision and professional support on school counseling in public secondary schools in Kakamega county, Kenya. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. Stratified sampling, proportionate sampling, purposive sampling and random sampling techniques were employed in this investigation. The study population comprised of students, counsellors and principals. Questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science version 23 and presented in form of frequency tables, graphs, pie charts and measures of central tendency. The findings of this study had both theoretical and practical implications for the educational teacher programs in Kenya. Theoretically, the study contributed to the advancement of knowledge about competencies required of school counsellors. Practically, the findings gave insight into the inadequacies in the training of school counsellors.

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**Key words:** impact, training, supervision, support, school counselling.

### Introduction

School counsellors should be committed to continuous professional growth and development through in-service training activities. Orege (2011) reported that among secondary schools in Nairobi County, only 10 of the 19 teachers and 13 of the same respondents had attended an in-service course and workshop/seminar in career guidance counselling. Teachers learn more in their in-service training after becoming a teacher than they did within their pre-service preparatory programs in regard to meeting students' needs (Schnitzer, et al., 2007). In the US, NACAC provides professional educational experiences for its members involved in assisting students in their educational development (NACAC, 2000).

One specific need that has been identified is for a formalized training program for guidance and counselling teachers. In the US, standards for school counselling preparation programs have been set by the Council for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP] (Christensen, et al., 2007). Some scholars have also suggested that guidance counsellors should become specifically career-focused school counsellors and that their other duties should be eliminated (Von Villas, 1995). For effectiveness, the ratio of students in schools to school counsellor should be considered with a ratio of 1:350 being recommended (Lunenborg, 2010; Schmidl, 2001).

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<sup>1</sup> Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology, Moi University, Kenya. Email: [mmbwangad60@gmail.com](mailto:mmbwangad60@gmail.com) (corresponding author)

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

<sup>3</sup> Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Another suggestion to increasing access to preparation for working guidance counsellors at the universities is the establishment of cooperative programs that allow students to obtain appropriate training and preparation in professional counselling without having to give up employment (Keats & Laitsch, 2010). In addition, the knowledge, skills and information guidance counsellors require should be injected into all allied disciplines and training encounters. Apprenticeship or internship practice of all prospective guidance counsellors should incorporate real experiences when handling clients, a step that should result in improved services to students (NACAC, 2000).

A study on assessment of guidance and counselling service centre in Higher education institution found out that the goal for guidance and counselling was to enhance the development of competencies, coping skills and climax or behaviour change for a better and successful life (Getachew, 2020). He notes that the success can only be achieved when students are able to regulate their social and emotional state. This can only be possible when there is a developmental framework to reduce the risk and detrimental behaviours such as substance abuse, promiscuous sex, violence, depression and attempted suicide that deter success in life. The students are helped to build moral capacities based on rational decision making, social tolerance environment, adaptable student force and quality of life.

### Theoretical Framework

This research was guided by the social cognitive, career theory's performance model (Lent, 2013). The social cognitive, career theory is concerned with the level of people's achievements as evidenced by their consistent behaviour when performing their career activities. As shown in figure 1.1, emphasis is made on the relationship between the ability, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals in determining performance outcomes. Ability (as reflected by one's achievement, their aptitude or past performance indicators) is seen to have an effect on performance directly and indirectly, by way of its effect on self-efficacy and results expected. Self-esteem and outcome expectations, in turn, affect the level of goals that people set for themselves. Stronger self-efficacy beliefs and favourable outcome expectations promote setting of ambitious targets that end up energizing and keeping the performance behaviour in tandem with SCCT's triadic reciprocal view of interaction. Figure 2.1 depicts a feedback loop between performance attainments.

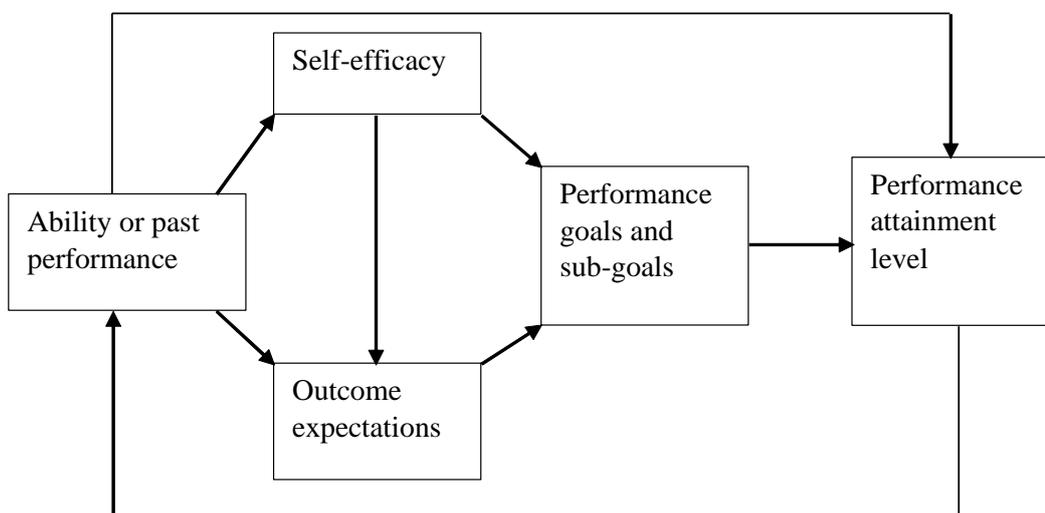


Figure 1: Model of task performance

This theory is applicable to the study of the competence and effectiveness of guidance counsellors in public secondary schools in Kakamega County in Kenya. The effectiveness of the counsellors is dependent on the confidence they get as a result of their ability and past performance. Competent guidance counsellors with confidence in their ability, will exhibit high levels of self-efficacy and outcome expectations hence the ability to set high achievable goals leading to good performance as guidance counsellors.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Kerlinger (2004), a descriptive survey makes conclusions about aspects whose exhibition has already taken place and hence the investigator has no straight authority over the independent variables.

The research focused on data of variables that have already occurred such as training of teacher counsellors and their competencies, supervision and support, and post-college training options available to them in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. This was critical to the investigation since it enabled the investigator to establish the existing state of teacher counsellors' competencies and how they impacted on the delivery of guidance and counselling services to the students in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. Interview schedules, questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis were used.

In order to accomplish the objectives, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The use of qualitative methods, enables study respondents to give responses that show their particular stand points, language and furnish richer description that supplement the facts obtained by quantitative techniques. The use of qualitative and quantitative is one of the triangulation methods noted by Denzin (2013) and Lock, P. (2011). The data that accrued from the research was analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23. This package is a powerful data management tool that gives an in-depth statistical analysis in graphical form, it enabled data editing, gleaning, coding, tabulation and making of statistical inferences. Tabulation and graphical presentations were based on computed percentages and averages. Coefficients of correlation and other descriptive statistics (Yadutta& Ngan, 2006) were used to summarize the data. Correlation and regression analysis were employed to analyse the hypothesis. Correlation coefficient was used as a descriptive statistic to describe the relationship between the two variables. It was also used for prediction and estimation of a variable from a known variable. This led to the calculation of the correlation coefficient. Pearson's product moment coefficient of correlation was used.

### Study Area

This research was conducted in Kakamega County. Kakamega County is one of the most populous counties in Kenya with the highest number of secondary schools in the country. There are 383 secondary schools well spread across the county (Ministry of Education/UNICEF Report, 2014). The county was best suited for the investigation because the schools were in a wide variety of categories and were found in a variety of settings; urban, peri urban and rural. Out of the 383 secondary schools 276 were boarding, 67 both day and boarding, 40 day, and 60 of the schools were for girls, 23 for boys and 300 mixed.

### Study Population

The study population comprised of all public secondary schools within Kakamega County, school guidance counsellors, school principals of those schools and the County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (CQASO). There were 383 public secondary schools consisting of 23 for boys, 60 for girls and 300 co-educational secondary schools (See Table 3.1). The students, Heads of Departments (HoDs), G&C who served as guidance counsellors together with the respective school principals were also part of the study population.

**Table 1: Number of public secondary schools in Kakamega County**

Type of school	Boys' schools	Girls' schools	Co-educational
National schools	1	1	–
Extra County schools	3	2	-
County schools	5	21	17
Sub-County schools	14	36	283
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>300</b>

*Source:* (CDE'S Kakamega Annual Report, 2014)

### Sampling Techniques

Stratified random sampling, proportionate sampling, purposive sampling and random sampling techniques were used in this study. First, schools were stratified on the basis of whether they were boys' schools, girls' schools or co-educational schools, or whether they were National, Extra County, County, and Sub-County. Thereafter, proportionate sampling was used select students in respect to their numerical superiority. This ensured that the sample was representative enough of the entire population. Once this was accomplished, random sampling technique was employed to select the student participants. Purposive sampling was used by the researcher to purposely target the group of respondents assumed to be resourceful for the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This involved the selection of 'information-rich persons; students who were the recipients of G&C services, HODs G&C who were charged with the delivery of G&C services, Principals of schools under whom HODs G&C worked, all known to encounter the phenomenon being investigated (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

On this account, only Form 3 and 4 students were sampled because they had been in school long enough and could give their informed opinion on the effectiveness of the guidance counsellor on matters related to emotional and social issues, subject and career selection, and college/university choices. In addition, only HODs, G&Cs and school principals were purposely selected.

Finally, once this step was completed, simple random sampling was employed to choose 10% of the students for the study. To obtain the required number of students, pieces of paper written on 'YES' or 'NO' were given to form 3 and 4 students from the sampled schools to pick. Only those who picked 'YES' were allowed to participate in the study. This method ensured that all possible population characteristics were captured and that all the students targeted had equivalent opportunities of being chosen.

### Sample Size

Patton (1980) argues that the sample size selected is contingent upon what one desires to find out, the motive of the investigation, what is at stake, what was helpful, what was reliable and how the time and resources at hand could be used. According to Kerlinger (2004) and Kombo and Tromp (2006), a sample size of between 10 percent and 30 percent was representative enough for a study population. Kakamega County has a total of 383 public secondary schools. Using the 10 parameters, a sample size of 42 public secondary schools was selected with representation from each school type and category.

**Table 2: Sampling Matrix**

Category	Type of school		Girls	%	Co-educ.	%
	Boys	%				
National	1	100	1	100	0	0
Extra County	1	33	1	50	0	0
County	1	20	2	10	2	12
Sub-County	2	14	4	11	27	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>42</b>

*Source:* (CDE'S Kakamega Annual Report, 2014)

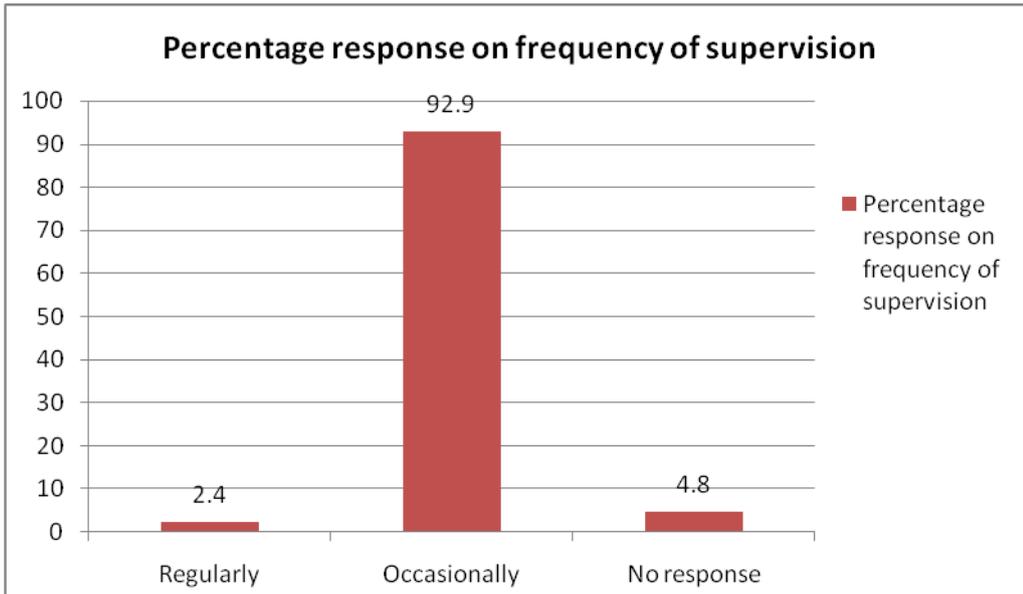
### Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

The study utilised both descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher sought to determine how much post college training, support and supervision by recognized authorities is carried out on counsellors in secondary schools.

School counsellors are supposed to commit to continuous professional growth and development as well as supervision. Coleman et al. (2012) noted that availability of shared body of knowledge is important for professional development. The study sought from the counsellors and the principals how often the school counselor was supervised. The results from the counsellors are as shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Counsellors' response on how often Supervision was undertaken**

	Frequency	Percent
Regularly	1	2.4
Occasionally	39	92.9
No Response	2	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Figure 2: Counsellors’ response on how often Supervision was undertaken.**

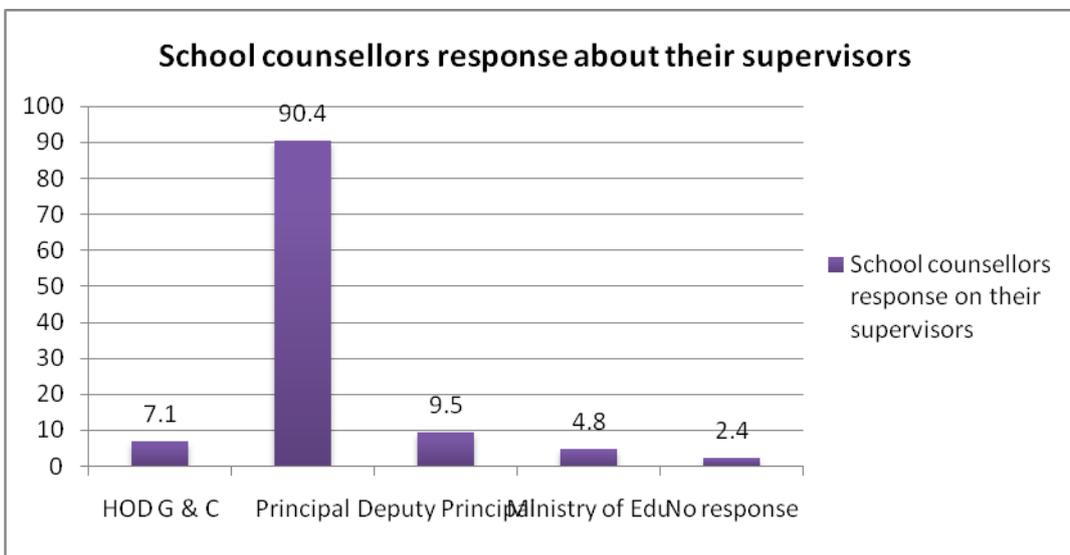
Majority of the counsellors, (92.9%), reported to have been supervised occasionally while 2.4 were supervised regularly. The results agree with those of Wambu and Wickman (2015) who noted that school counselling is a new phenomenon. They found that school counselling is like an ancillary support service hence teacher counsellors or guidance and counselling teachers are referred to as school counsellors.

The study then sought to know from the school counsellors who supervised them. The results are as shown in Table 4. below.

**Table 4.: School Counsellors Response on their supervisors during counselling activities**

	Frequency	Percent
HOD Guidance and Counselling	3	7.1
Principal	38	90.4
Deputy principal	4	9.5
Ministry of Education officers	2	4.8
No response	1	2.4

N=42



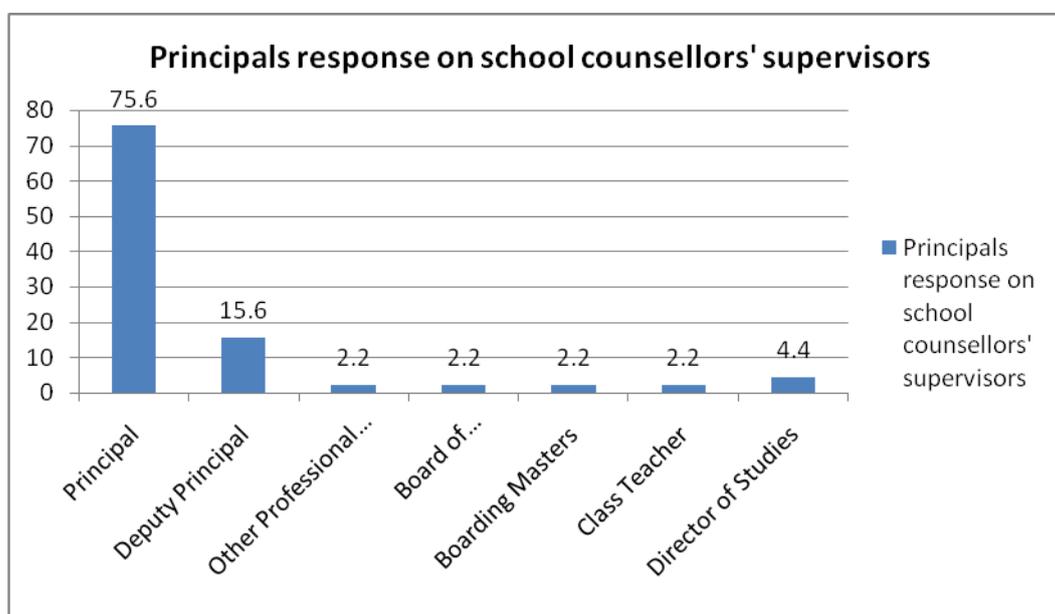
**Figure 3: School Counsellors Response on their supervisors during counselling activities.**

Majority of the school counsellors (90.4%) indicated that they were supervised by the school principal while 9.5 percent were supervised by the Head of department guidance and counselling and 4.8 percent were supervised by officers from the Ministry of Education. This implies that the school counsellors had little training hence they did not understand about supervision but they reported to the school principal on counselling activities within the school. The results agreed with Wambu and Wlickman (2015) who noted that Kenya school counsellors had training gaps and gaps in their supervision. They recommended for training to ensure that the counsellor needs and by extension students' needs are met during training. The study sought to know from the school principal the personnel who supervised the school counsellors and how often the school counsellors were supervised. The results from the principals were as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Principals' response on school counsellors' supervisors**

	Frequency	Percent
Principal	34	75.6
Deputy principal	7	15.6
Other professional counsellors	1	2.2
Board of Management	1	2.2
Boarding masters	1	2.2
Class teacher	1	2.2
Director of studies	2	4.4

N= 45



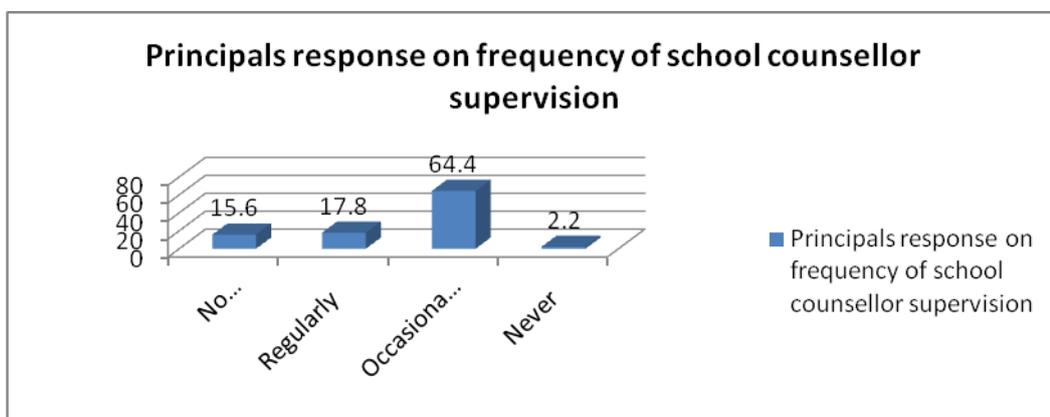
**Figure 4: Principals' response on school counsellors' supervisors.**

Slightly above three quarters (75.6%) of the principals noted that school counsellors were supervised by the school principal while 15.6 percent indicated that they were supervised by the deputy principals, 4.4 percent indicated that they were supervised by the director of studies and 2.2 percent indicated other professional counsellors, board of management, boarding masters and class teacher. This implies that some principals did not know who was supposed to supervise the school counsellors. The researcher observes that the Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of Education should have sensitized the principals on the school counsellor's supervision and ensured that they were aware of who should supervise the school counsellor.

The study then sought to know how often the school counsellors were supervised. The results are as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Principals response on how often school counsellor supervision was undertaken**

	Frequency	Percent
No Response	7	15.6
Regularly	8	17.8
Occasionally	29	64.4
Never	1	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Figure 5: Principals response on how often school counsellor supervision was undertaken.**

About 64.4 percent of the principals noted that school counsellor’s supervision was undertaken occasionally while 17.8 percent indicated that it was undertaken regularly and 2.2 percent indicated it was never undertaken. This implies that supervision of the school counsellors was not given much attention since counselling was seen as ancillary service within the school.

The study then sought to understand from the school counsellors the evidence of professional growth. The results were as shown in Table 7. below.

**Table 7: Counsellors Responses on Professional Growth**

	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Generally Confident	Highly Confident
Diligently take part in local and national associations which enhances the advancement and development of school counselling	12 (28.6%)	2 (4.8%)	4 (9.6%)	28 (61.9%)
Assist the advancement of the profession through sharing skills, ideas and expertise with colleagues	15 (35.7%)	2 (4.8%)	4 (9.6%)	21 (50.0%)

28.6 percent of the school counsellors had slight confidence, 4.8 percent had moderate confidence, 9.6 percent had general confidence and Majority of the school counsellors (61.9%) had high confidence in the fact that they diligently took part in local and national associations which enhanced the advancement and development of school counselling. The results agree with those of the Wambu and Wlickman (2015) who noted that school counsellors were enrolling for short courses programs by the colleges where they receive training that would help them in school counselling.

**Support for the school counsellors**

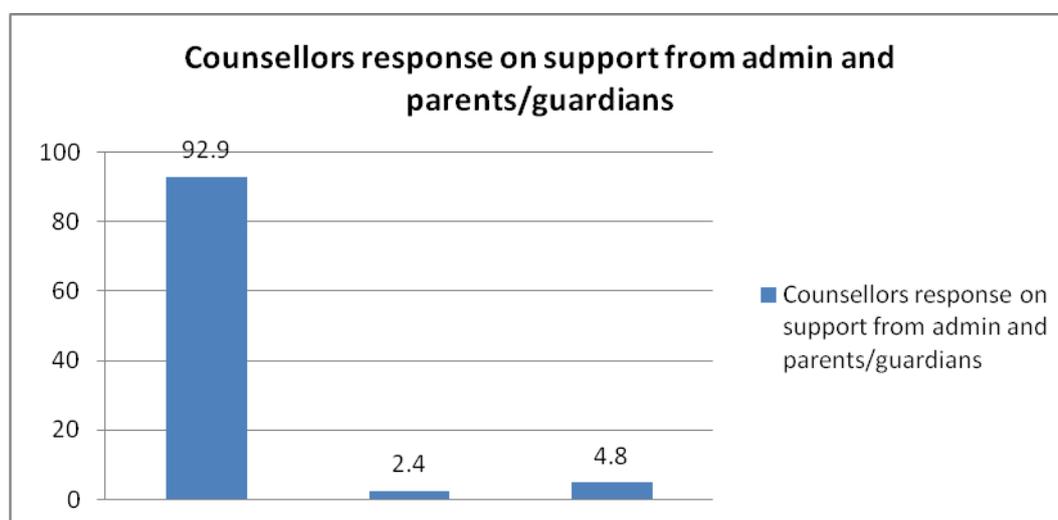
Wambu& Fisher (2015) found that the school counsellors lacked support from the school principals, school board members, teachers, parents, students and the school community at large. This signifies that the school counsellors could not succeed in their roles if they worked in isolation. They recommended that for the school counsellors to be effective they needed support from all stakeholders.

They also needed to be provided with resources and material that would help in service delivery. The school also needed to set aside moneys that could help run the counselling department. There was also need for office space for the department within the school. This would make it possible for the school counsellors to be accessible.

The study sought to establish the support given to the counsellors by the school administrators and parents/ guardians in the execution of their duties. The results are as shown in the following Table 8. below.

**Table 8: Counsellors’ response on support received from the school administration and parents/guardians in the execution of their duties**

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10	39	92.9
10-20	1	2.4
No Response	2	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Figure 6: Counsellors’ response on support received from the school administration and parents/guardians in the execution of their duties.**

Majority of the counsellors (92.9%) rating was less than 10 while 2.4 percent had received support of 10-20 on the support given by the school administration and parents/guardians in the execution of their duties. They noted the type of support given included administrative, counselling support from professional counsellors, facilitate external speakers, mentoring program involving teachers and moral support.

The study sought to test the following Hypothesis

HO: School counsellors in secondary schools do not receive adequate post college training, supervision and support from recognized authorities.

HA: School counsellors in secondary schools receive adequate post college training supervision and support from recognized authorities.

The chi-square was used to test the relationship between the variable. The chi-square is a non-parametric test of significance in the SPSS computer software which is used to describe a set of scores and measurements. It is tested at a significance level of 0.05. The chi-square was preferred because it is used for both quantitative and qualitative data. The chi-square test works by testing a distribution actually observed in the field, against some other distribution determined by the null hypothesis to evaluate whether the difference between the observed and expected frequencies under a set of theoretical assumptions is statistically significant. If a relationship were not dependent, then the distribution observed and expected would be even.

**Table 9: School Counsellors on the support received, who supervised them and how often supervision was undertaken**

Support	Supervis or	Principals	Count	Supervision			Total
				Regularly	Occasionally	Never	
less than 10					29	1	30
			%		96.7%	3.3%	100.0%

		Deputy Principal	Count		2	0	2
			%		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Head of Department	Count		3	0	3
			%		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Both	Count		3	1	4
			%		75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>39</b>	
		<b>%</b>		<b>94.9%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
10-20	Supervisor	Principals	Count		1		1
			%		100.0%		100.0%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
		<b>%</b>		<b>100.0%</b>		<b>100.0%</b>	
more than 20	Supervisor	Principals	Count	1			1
			%	100.0%			100.0%
		Deputy Principal	Count	1			1
			%	100.0%			100.0%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>2</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			<b>100.0%</b>		
Total	Supervisor	Principals	Count	1	30	1	32
			%	3.1%	93.8%	3.1%	100.0%
		Deputy Principal	Count	1	2	0	3
			%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	100.0%
		Head of Department	Count	0	3	0	3
			%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Both	Count	0	3	1	4
			%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>42</b>
			<b>%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>90.5%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Chi-Square Tests

Table 10: Chi-Square Tests

		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Support received less than 10	Pearson Chi-Square	3.716 <sup>b</sup>	3	.294
	Likelihood Ratio	2.510	3	.473
	Linear-by-Linear Association	1.964	1	.161
	N of Valid Cases	39		
10-20	Pearson Chi-Square	. <sup>c</sup>		
	N of Valid Cases	1		
more than 20	Pearson Chi-Square	. <sup>d</sup>		
	N of Valid Cases	2		
Total	Pearson Chi-Square	9.924 <sup>a</sup>	6	.128
	Likelihood Ratio	5.910	6	.433
	Linear-by-Linear Association	1.012	1	.314
	N of Valid Cases	42		

a. 11 cells (91.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

b. 7 cells (87.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .10.

c. No statistics are computed because Supervisor and q25.How often is this supervision undertaken are constant.

d. No statistics are computed because q25.How often is this supervision undertaken is a constant.

It is clear from Table 10. that among the school counsellors who were supervised by the principal were a majority with supervision taking place occasionally. This was still the case for those supervised by the head of department and the deputy principals as well. This implies that school counsellor supervision was not taken seriously or the counsellors did not know where to go for supervision. The Chi-Square results show that the p-

value was  $0.294 > 0.05$  level of significance hence rejecting the research hypothesis that the school counsellors in secondary schools receive adequate post college training supervision and support from recognized authorities. This means Null Hypothesis is accepted, that is the school counsellors in secondary schools do not receive adequate post college training, supervision and support from recognized authorities.

### Discussion

Majority of the counsellors (92.9%) reported to have been supervised occasionally while 2.4 were supervised regularly. Supervision is an important tool in management that works to ensure quality services and efficiency in performance and production of the desired results, services or products. Any lapse in supervision can easily compromise the services offered. The scenario painted by the results clearly shows the need for more to be done to improve the quality and rate of supervision carried out when it comes to counselling services in secondary schools. From the reports it was clear that the supervision of school counsellors was carried out mainly by school principals who had very little knowledge about counselling. A good example is in the response the principals gave to the question about whether the counsellors had received any formal training in counselling. School counselling is a professional task that needs to be carried out by highly trained professionals fully equipped with the knowledge and skills and attitudes to ably carry out the duty.

Counselling being a professional assignment, only more highly qualified counsellors can ably supervise school counsellors. The results of this study agree with those of Wambu and Wickman (2015) who noted that school counselling is a new phenomenon. They found that school counselling is like an ancillary support service hence teacher counsellors or guidance and counselling teachers are referred to as school counsellors. These results also support the recommendations of a policy document (Kenya Education Sector Support Program [KESSP], 2005) detailing the government's plan for education, and guidance and counselling as one of the areas requiring support.

### Conclusion

On the objective to determine how much post college training, support and supervision by recognized authorities is carried out on counsellors in secondary schools. From the study findings, it was evident that regular supervision wasn't carried out on the counsellors as they carried out their duties. There were no professionals available to supervise the counsellors to ensure high quality and professional counselling services in schools. There was need for professional in-service training and workshops to enhance the counselling services in schools.

### Recommendations

- The ministry of education should enforce a quality assurance policy and program to help plan, implement, monitor, and supervise the counselling services offered in secondary schools.
- Regular well-organized workshops and seminars should be put in place to keep the well-trained school counsellors abreast with current trends, theories and innovations in guidance and counselling in secondary schools. The programs should be well structured and be officially implemented by the ministry of education.
- School counselling centres should be established at the county headquarters to be manned by trained and professional school counsellors. The centres would act as a hub to serve as referral centres for schools and coordinate the counselling services in the county.
- Heads of schools should be given regular in services courses and workshops to help them understand what school counselling entails.

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest concerning the authorship and publication of this article.

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