

Adequacy of Knowledge and Skills among Counsellors in Public Secondary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Daniel M Mmbwanga¹, Prof. Haniel Nyaga Gatumu², & Prof. Gathogo Mukuria³

Abstract

The study purposed to determine whether the knowledge and skills the school counsellors had were sufficient for effective counselling duties in secondary schools. According to the International Competencies for Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioners (ICEVGP) manual, there are certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed of counsellors in order to provide quality services to clients.

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. To accomplish the objectives, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. 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.

Findings of the study indicate that majority of the school counsellors had no formal training in counselling, although some of them had done a unit in guidance and counselling during the Bachelor of Education training and others had attended workshops/seminars.

The paper is expected to contribute to the educational teacher programs in Kenya both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge about competencies required of school counsellors. Practically, the findings give insight into the inadequacies in the training of school counsellors

Key words: Knowledge and Skills; Counsellors, Adequacy; Effective counselling; Kenya.

Introduction

According to NCGE (2011), school guidance counsellors' preparation should lead not just to the attainment of expert capabilities, but also to intelligible comprehension of the counselling task and yet pre-service teacher training institutions, present very little encounter with additional specialist details. Ireland (2007), goes further to assert that although instructors can include skills and theories of counselling while teaching, the objectives, activities, procedure and job relationships of counselling and learning are very dissimilar. She further notes that during her training, the stress was strongly on subject matter and instructional techniques and that management of behaviour received little attention.

Competency in counselling refer to standards which can be evaluated (National Guidance Forum, 2007). It encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes one possesses in the counselling field, consistent with his or her record of professional preparation. Education and training of a guidance counsellor puts emphasis on competence (Wannan & McCarthy, 2005) given the potential damage to clients by insufficiently prepared practitioners.

¹ Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology, Moi University, Kenya. Email: mmbwangad60@gmail.com (corresponding author)

² Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

³ Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Student counsellors' success is dependent on their ability to use skills and develop relevant personal qualities of guidance which according to NCGE (2011) is an activity carried out throughout life aimed at developing the individual personally and professionally. The skills, knowledge and attitude of the individual counsellor depend on their experience and the training they get.

According to the International Competencies for Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioners (ICEVGP) manual, there are certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed of counsellors in order to provide quality services to clients. These capabilities are divided into key abilities that all guidance counsellors require irrespective of their job background and specialized abilities that may be necessary contingent upon kind of job environment and the category of clients receiving the services (Repetto, et al., 2003). The core competencies focus on moral conduct and proficient behaviour; advocacy and the superintendence in promoting clients' education, occupation advancement and individual issues; consciousness and recognition of clients' cultural dissimilarity; recognition of their own ability and constraints; capacity to plan, execute and assess guidance and counselling activities; acquaintance with facts on academic, instruction, occupation patterns, employment opportunities, social matters; and effective communication with associates (Repetto et al., 2003).

Review of Literature

In line with the National Guidance Forum (2007), NCGE (2011), and the ASCA (2002) guidance counsellors need to have knowledge of the theories of counselling and psychotherapy; suppositions of the operations and authority of empirical class; the main aspects behind the individual advancement; contextual and general features that influence human operations, inclusive of communal, biotic and family characteristics; ingredients influencing welfare and affliction; the type of personal and ethnic multiplicity regarding such details as age, class, race, gender, ethnicity, standard of capability, language, spiritual and religious convictions, academic attainments and sexuality; contemporary professional advancement applicable to operational environment; and the study behind effectual operations. Individual counselling, group counselling and schoolroom teaching safeguarding fair access to facilities advancing educational attainment, professional growth and individual/community advancement for every learner's cooperation with stakeholders like parents and guardians, teachers, managers and community leaders to design study environments that encourage fairness in education and success for all learners (NCGE, 2011).

School counsellors are to be equipped with sufficient skills and knowledge to be able to handle students counselling in school. This enables them to give expert knowledge which is vital when establishing a counselling relationship with the students. The school counsellor should impact student's self-management and social skills to promote success for today's diverse students (American Association of School Counsellors, 2019).

On the other hand, Goodman-Scott and Grothaus (2017) argued that school counsellors should be qualified experts who are able to establish vital psychological relationship with individual students. They note that the counsellor has evolved and have included mental health counselling, evaluation and psychometrics, career guidance, coordination, collaborations and education among others.

When students are not imparted with knowledge and skill to make decisions and problem solving, they may result to dropping out of school and high dependency and low quality of life which shows lack of sufficient knowledge and skills among the school counsellors (Todd Mckee & Caldarella, 2016). The counsellor is called upon to help the students harmonize their interest skills, and aspiration through counselling. This is because the students have experienced issues during their adolescents' years that need guidance as they transit to identifying future profession and development towards attaining optimal quality of life.

The school counsellor should be skilled and principled to use relations to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth with optimal development of personal resources among students (Kapur, 2018). The American Association of School Counsellors (2016) noted that the school counsellor should treat students with dignity, respect, acknowledge the vital role of parents/guardians and families, respect the values, beliefs and sexual orientation and gender identification and cultural background of the students.

The counsellor should be knowledgeable with the different counselling theories. The BACP (2014), notes that, the school counsellor should be competent with knowledge of the child, family development and transitions as well as knowledge and understanding of their mental health. The therapist should be able to engage and work with the youth of variety of ages, developmental levels and backgrounds as parents and career in a culturally competent manner.

In Kenya though, guidance and counselling has been implemented in Kenyan schools and there is a rapid increase in number of counsellors. Wambu and Fisher (2015) highlight the implementation of guidance and counselling program in Kenyan schools to help develop preventative strategies to address students' academic, career and personal/social needs. Despite the implementation there is need to establish whether the counsellors have sufficient skills and knowledge to handle mental health issues affecting the students in secondary schools.

Counselling skills

A school counsellor needs to be aware of, and sensitive to, the different needs and demands that a school community imposes on young people and those who have responsibility for them. They should have the ability to develop a relationship with the children and young people and demonstrate empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard (BACP, 2002). According to Falk (2009), school counsellors should have skills in both individual and group counselling based on a framework of counselling theory; ability to prioritize affairs, order and summarize a session, and relook at the procedure of counselling after some time with the client, including monitoring the progress toward set goals and assisting clients to know who they are and develop self-esteem. In addition, he/she should be able to help clients in, making choices, arriving at decisions, problem solving and planning their lives; consideration of relevant traditional resources to use with clients, identifying resources in the society that could be used for the client's needs, and the ability to maintain firmness during the client's anguish (inclusive of sorrow, fright, humiliation and vexation is ideal).

Basic counselling skills are important for the counsellor to be able to conduct a counselling session. Nova et al. (2018) noted that basic skills in conducting counselling session are defined as capacity building which is carried out through training of the counsellor. The skills include attending, initiating a question, emotional reflection, knowledge, and actions skills. The counsellor should be able to help the client to find out their own potentials and make changes in their live. Basic skills are also important for the counsellor to apply with the different theories.

The school counsellors' need ways of identifying learning opportunities and suggesting activities that could help team members to develop new technical skills. Campbell and Dahir (2018) in their study noted that the purpose of the school counselling program should be to impart specific skills and learning opportunities through academic, career and personal/social development experiences in a proactive and preventive manner for all students. The program should increase self-knowledge and how to relate effectively with others, broaden knowledge about the changing environment, help the students reach their academic potential, provide opportunities for career exploration, planning and decision making, provide an opportunity for networking with services and thus establishes an effective support system and teaches responsible behaviour (Kourkoutas, 2012).

Problem solving skills are often challenging for students. The school counsellor comes in handy to help students make decision that would help them solve problems with ease. Watkinson et al. (2018) argue that school counselling can help address discrepancies between preparation and practice by focusing on different problem-solving skills and collaborating with school administrators and teachers. School based family counselling (SBFC) is an important approach to help students overcome personal, interpersonal and family problems in order to enable them better assist their children while making suitable career choices.

The school counsellor also plays a significant role in developing students career choices as they provide information to guide students make well informed choices in personal, academic and social aspects (Amoah et al., 2015). Hence there is need for counsellors to always be prepared to collaborate to help in providing support during the exploration process on career choices.

This is because career counselling and personal counselling can be combined. According to the Kenya University and College Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) (2019) there is a career guide that can help parents and their children make informed decision on career choices. The counsellors in school can use this information together with the parents to guide students on career direction when in secondary school.

The counsellor is also mandated to demonstrate basic knowledge and respect of different in customs, communications, traditions, values and other traits among students based of race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or intellectual ability (ASCA, 2019). This can be demonstrated well when they explain how the different cultural, social and economic background may affect students' academic achievement, behaviour, relationships and overall performance in school. Runyan et al. (2019) noted that the counsellor should also be multicultural competent and give proper attention to developmental level of students when engaging them for counselling. They should also be sensitive and create awareness of the differences on the various customs of the students in the schools. They also noted that the counsellor should be culturally responsive and utilizing culturally sensitive materials, activities and languages in their presentation.

The school counsellors should encourage sharing of knowledge, information, experience and expertise among students. Knowledge sharing is important for the students to create trust with each other as well as the school counsellor. Knowledge sharing helps in building ties and relationships that contribute to personal growth among the team sharing information (Ahmad & Karim, 2019). The American School Counsellors Association (2019) notes that the school counsellor should demonstrate and articulate an understanding of knowledge on the school counselling program that align with current school improvement and student success initiatives. They should have knowledge on human development theories and developmental stages of the students to easily identify developmental issues affecting student's success. This is important to assist in the three important areas in student life, that is academic achievement, career planning and personal/social development.

The school counsellor should also avail self to help students negotiate different challenges they encounter. These challenges include provision of lifelong learning competencies, change of mind set and behaviour and help students have a drawn life plan which can help them in their academic, career and social/emotional life (ASCA, 2019). Nkechi et al. (2016) found that the teacher counsellor should create a safe environment for the students both physically and emotional to achieve their potential. Mukhamba (2016) in her study on the influence of guidance and counselling on the behaviour of students in secondary schools in Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa found that guidance and counselling had helped the change behaviour though a number of challenges still hindered its effectiveness. She recommended more training for the teacher counsellors to help minimise the challenges and to be more effective in curbing the issues affecting the students.

Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by a conceptual framework in which various factors interact and affect each other in one way or another (see Figure 1.0)

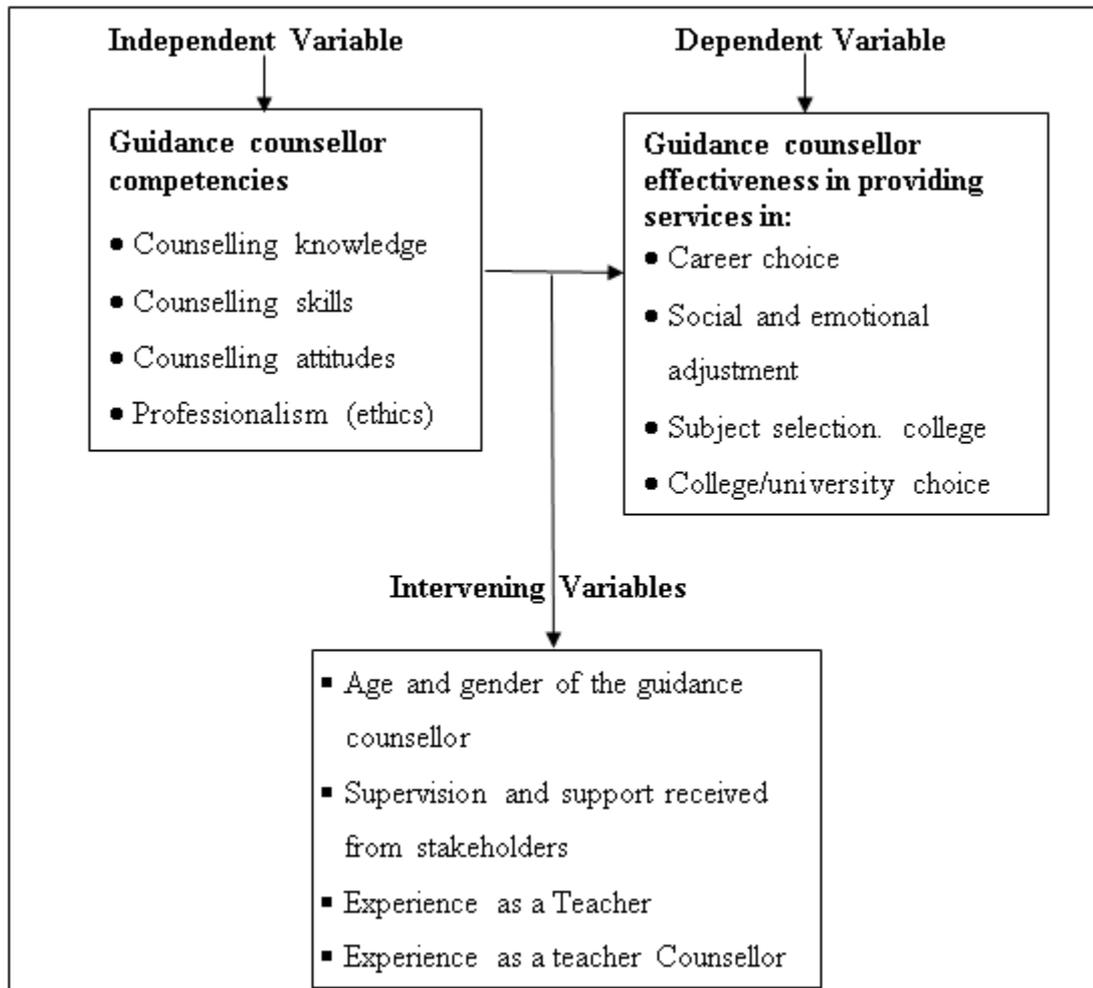


Figure 1.0.: Conceptual Framework showing Interaction between Study Variables.

Good guidance counsellor education programs bring out competent guidance counsellors who have the skills, knowledge and attitudes that determine how they deliver their services to their clients. The degree to which these services are effectively delivered by competent counsellors depends on intervening variable such as supervision of counsellor practice by an independent authority, support given by stakeholders such as counsellor associations, school administration, teachers, parents and the community, the age, gender and experience of the counsellor and their training are important.

Guidance counsellors' competencies dictate how he/she approaches career counselling, students' problems related to social and emotional adjustment in school, subject selection by students in Form two and student's college and university choices. The better versed in knowledge, skills and attitudes the counsellor is the more effective he/she will be. School administration and government policies may moderate the degree of involvement of the guidance counsellor in G&C service delivery since they may dictate the work load through re-assignments.

It is the interplay amongst these factors that the entire experiences of the guidance counsellor and support given may help him/her post improved services to the clients (students). Several studies (Ireland, 2007; Lunenburg, 2010; Pavri&Hegwer-DiVita, 2006) have cited lack of competencies and supervision/support as largely responsible for the poor provision of G&C services. In Kenya, information on guidance counsellor competencies in schools is lacking (Ameso, 2014; Nyamwange, Nyakan&Ondima, 2012; Orange, 2011) and yet such information is so crucial in the evaluation of teacher programs in teacher training colleges/universities.

Although the effect of inadequate counselling competencies on students' social, emotional, academic and career decision making is not clearly known, the moderating effect of in-service programs (Terry, et al., 2007), registered association (NACAC, 2000; NCGE, 2011) and government policies (Keats & Laitsch, 2010) is not in dispute. It is for this reason that the conceptual framework as designed was thought to be ideal since it shows how these variables interact to determine the quality of the school guidance counsellor, the focus of this study.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The researcher 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. The study used interview schedules, questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis.

In order to accomplish the objectives, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. 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.

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 were 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 schools, and 60 of the schools were for girls, 23 for boys and 300 mixed. The study population comprised of all public secondary schools within Kakamega County, school guidance counsellors, school principals (See Table 1.1). 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 1.1: 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
Total	23	60	300

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

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. Purposive sampling was used by the researcher to purposely target the group of respondents assumed to be resourceful for the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

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. 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 1.2: Sampling Matrix

Category	Type of school					
	Boys	%	Girls	%	Co-educ.	%
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
Total	5		8		29	42

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

Results

The study sought to establish the level of training the school counsellors had attained in guidance and counselling. The results were as shown below:

Table 1.3: Level of training in guidance and counselling

	School Counsellor	
	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors of Education	3	7.1
Workshops/ Seminars	3	7.1
None	36	85.7
Total	42	100.0

A majority of the school counsellors (85.7%) had had no formal training in counselling, 7.1% percent noted they had done a unit in guidance and counselling during the Bachelor of Education training and 7.1% said they had attended workshops/seminars. This implies that school counsellors had had no prior training in guidance and counselling other than a unit that was covered when doing the Bachelor of education degree training.

Table 1.4: Level of training of counsellors in guidance and counselling as reported by the principals

	School Counsellor	
	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors of Education	6	15.4
Workshops/ Seminars	7	15.7
None	29	68.9
Total	42	100.0

The principals of the schools were asked to indicate the level of training the school counsellors had. A majority of the principals (68.9%) indicated that the school counsellors had no counselling training. About 15.4 percent of the principals indicated that the school counsellors had done a unit in counselling when undergoing the bachelor of education degree. 15.7 percent said the counsellors had undergone in-service training, seminars and workshops in guidance and counselling. They assumed that this made such teachers ready and prepared to handle counselling in school. The results agree with those of Kamau, Wachira and Thinguri (2014) who found that school counsellors in secondary schools had no formal counselling training. The principals believed that the teachers qualified to be counsellors by virtue of being holders of the Bachelor of Education degree.

The results also concur with those of Wambu and Fisher (2015) who noted that the school counsellors are appointed by the principals to provide counselling services without any counselling background.

These appointments were based on personal qualities opposed to professional training although this has changed with some secondary schools having at least one trained counsellor (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). Looking at the data in table 4.10 and 4.11 above, it is evident that the principals either did not know their teachers well enough or may not have been well informed about what is required of a competent and effective school counsellor and the requisite training. This is all because there is a discrepancy between what the counsellors had to say about their own training in Guidance and counselling and what their principals reported about them.

The school counsellors were asked to indicate whether the training they had had was adequate.

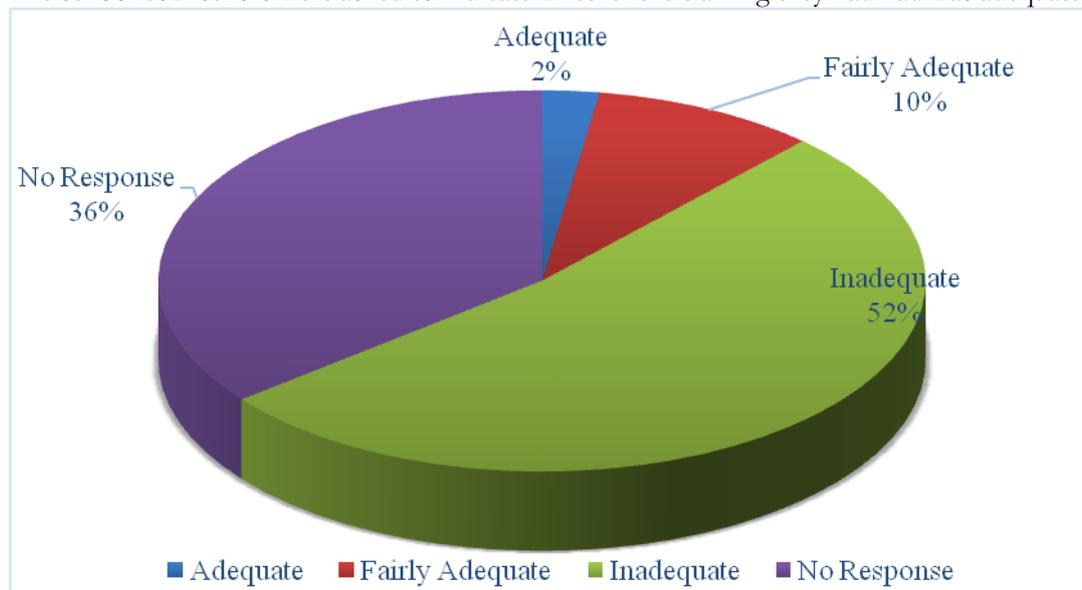


Figure 1.1: School counsellors' response on adequacy of training.

Slightly above half of the school counsellors (52%) noted that the training they had gotten was inadequate while 9.5 percent noted that it was fairly adequate and 2.4 percent noted that it was adequate. 36 percent did not respond to this question. That then means that out of those who responded; 81.5 per cent said the training received was inadequate, 14.8 per cent said it was slightly adequate and 3.7 percent said it was adequate. This was also supported by 53.3 percent of the principals who noted that the training received by the school counsellors was inadequate. This implies that the training the school counsellors got during their training in Bachelors of Education was not enough since they did only one unit which was basic introduction to counselling.

The results agree with Kamau et al. (2014) who noted that training was important for these teachers since the one unit done at the university or the seminar/workshops were not sufficient to enable one to become an effective school counsellor. Wambu and Fisher (2015) also noted that supervision of school counsellors helped them to develop skills. Supervision of these teachers was carried out by the university supervisor who after university education the school counsellor is no longer under their supervision. This may be insufficient since the supervisor may not always be at school to supervise them. Effective training is also affected by absence of field supervisors.

School counsellors are supposed to be equipped with skills and knowledge for effective counselling to take place. This study therefore sought to establish from the students how they evaluated the school counsellor's capability when it came to his/her counselling knowledge. The results were as shown in Table 4.4. below.

Table 1.5: Student’s evaluation of school counsellor skills and knowledge for effective counselling

	Not Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Generally Confident	Highly Confident
Refers students when necessary and appropriate to people outside the school who can help.	254 (54.6%)	68 (14.6%)	37 (8.0%)	53 (11.4%)	53 (11.4%)
Deals with issues of sexuality and sexual orientation in an age-appropriate manner with students.	234 (50.3%)	66 (14.2%)	42 (9.0%)	41 (8.8%)	82 (17.6%)
Considers students’ developmental stages in establishing and conducting the school counselling program.	155 (33.3%)	94 (20.3%)	92 (19.8%)	43 (9.2%)	83 (17.8%)
Counsels and effectively guides students and families from different social/economic statuses.	155 (33.3%)	92 (19.8%)	92 (19.8%)	43 (9.2%)	83 (17.8%)
Helps the students in acquiring techniques to cope with peer pressure.	149 (32.0%)	115 (24.7%)	49 (10.5%)	59 (12.3%)	93 (20.0%)
Guides the students on how to apply time and task management skills.	148 (31.8%)	104 (22.4%)	41 (8.8%)	57 (12.3%)	115 (24.7%)
Respect views and cultural background of the students	143 (30.8%)	91 (19.6%)	94 (20.2%)	50 (10.8%)	72 (15.5%)
Knows situations that impact (both negatively and positively) on student learning and achievement.	71 (15.3)	139 (29.9%)	131 (28.2)	53 (11.4%)	71 (15.3%)

Slightly above half of the students (54.6%) were not confident with school counsellor’s ability to refer students when necessary and appropriate to people outside the school who could help while 14.8 percent were slightly confident, 11.4 per cent were generally confident and 11.4 were highly confident. This is clearly shown in figure 4.2. below:

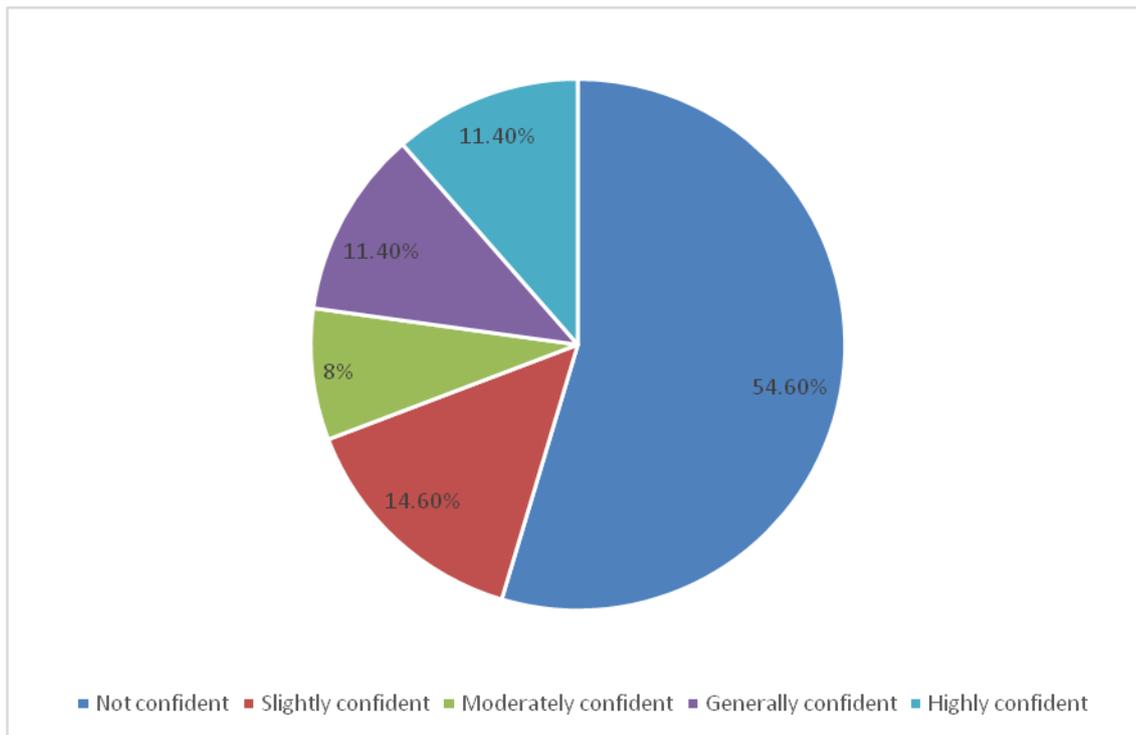


Figure 1.2: Refers students when necessary and appropriate to people outside the school who can help.

About 50.3 percent of the students were not confident with the school counsellors dealing with issues of sexuality and sexual orientation in an age-appropriate manner with students, 14.2 percent had slight confidence, 9.0 percent of the students were moderately confident, 8.8 percent were generally confident while 17.6 percent of the respondents were highly confident with the way school counsellors dealt with issues of sexuality in an age-appropriate manner with the students.

Most students (32.0%) were not confident and 24.7 percent were slightly confident in the counsellor's skills and knowledge for effective counselling in helping them in acquiring techniques to cope with peer pressure. 10.5% were moderately confident, 12.3 percent were generally confident and about 20.0 percent were highly confident.

About 30.8 percent of the students were not confident with school counsellors' knowledge and skills in respecting views and the cultural background of the students, 19.6 percent had slight confidence, 20.2 percent had moderate confidence, 10.8 percent had general confidence and 15.5 percent high confidence. 15.3 percent of the students had no confidence in the school counsellor's ability to know situations that impacted (both negatively and positively) on student learning and achievement. 29.9 percent were slightly confident, 28.2 percent were moderately confident, 11.4 percent were generally confident while 15.3 percent were highly confident.

The school counsellor rated their counselling knowledge as follows: 2.4 percent said they were not confident, 19.0 percent said they were slightly confident, 66.7 percent said they were moderately confident and 11.9 percent said they were generally confident while none of them said they were highly confident identifying the situations that affected students learning and achievement both positively and negatively.

The question about the school counsellor's ability to help students on how to apply time and task management skills, 19.1 percent of the school counsellors said they were slightly confident, 57.1 percent of them said they were moderately confident, 23.8 percent said they were generally confident and none of them said they were highly confident. 23.8 percent were slightly confident, half of the school counsellors (50%) were moderately confident, 23.8 percent were generally confident, and 2.4 percent were highly confident with the knowledge they had on how to help students to acquire techniques to cope with peer pressure.

Regarding the issue of the counsellors being able to jointly develop integrated and effective counselling plans consistent with both the abilities and circumstances of the counsellee, 14.3 percent of the counsellors said that they had no confidence, 47.8 percent said they were slightly confident, 26.2 percent said they were moderately confident, 7.1 percent said they were generally confident while 4.6 percent said that they were highly confident.

On the issue of conducting the school counselling program while incorporating students' developmental stages, about 19.0 percent of the school counsellors said they were not confident, 52.4 percent said they had slight confidence, while 19.0 percent said they had moderate confidence, and 9.6 percent said they were generally confident. None of the counsellors were highly confident.

Majority of the school counsellors had very little confidence in their own knowledge and skill in conducting their counselling based on the developmental stages of the students. This must have provided a challenge in deciding on the best approaches to use during their counselling sessions with clients at the different age levels. The results agreed with the sentiments of the students who felt that the school counsellors were not knowledgeable enough on students' developmental stages and in establishing and conducting school counselling sessions based on their different developmental stages.

The results were in good congruence with the views of The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (2016) who noted that a counsellor should develop competencies, with general therapeutic skills and knowledge that can work with both children and young people regardless of their theoretical orientation. These competencies include knowledge of child and family development and transitions, and knowledge and understanding of mental health issues. The competencies relate to knowledge of specific models of intervention and practices; an ability to work with emotions, endings and service transition an ability to work with groups and collaborative assessment effectively.

This would help the therapist to be able to foster and maintain a relationship with the client that builds a therapeutic alliance and understanding of the client's world view. Results from the school counsellors concerning their ability to respect the viewpoints and experiences of students and parents who were from a different cultural background indicated that; 23.8 percent had slight confidence, slightly above half of the school counsellors (52.4%) were moderately confident 21.4 percent had general confidence and 2.4% were highly confident.

Conclusion

As indicated from the findings, majority of the school counsellors (85.7%) had no formal training in counselling, 7.1% percent reported that they had done a unit in guidance and counselling during the Bachelor of Education training and 7.1% said they had attended workshops/seminars. This means that school counsellors had no prior training in guidance and counselling other than a unit that was covered when doing the Bachelor of education degree training. 81.5 percent of the counsellors had received inadequate training for effective counselling. This was supported by 53 percent of the principals who shared their sentiments. It was also noted that the school counsellors were not able to refer the clients to other professionals outside the school. Students had no confidence in the school counsellor's ability to deal with issues of sexuality and sexual orientation in an age-appropriate manner. They felt that school counsellors lacked the ability to give consideration to the developmental stage in establishing and conducting the school counselling program and to counsel and effectively guide students and families from different social/economic statuses. The counsellors' ability to help the students in acquiring techniques to cope with peer pressure according to the students was below average. They had no confidence in the counsellor's ability to guide the students on how to apply time and task management skills and to respect views and cultural background of the students. They felt that the school counsellors did not have the capacity to know situations that impacted (both negatively and positively) on student learning and achievement.

The counsellors too rated themselves below average in as far as their capacity to identify the situations that affected the students learning and achievement both positively and negatively. They indicated that they did not have sufficient knowledge on how to help the students on how to apply time and task management skills. School counsellors had below average levels of confidence in their capacity to help students in acquiring techniques to cope with peer pressure. They said they did not have the knowledge of conducting the school counselling program while incorporating the students' developmental stages. They found it hard to respect the viewpoints and experiences of students and parents who were from different cultural backgrounds. Counselling students from varied social/economic statuses posed a challenge to them. Their understanding of when their counselling skills and techniques were not appropriate for student from different cultures was below average. 81% said their confidence was below average in handling the subject of sexuality and sexual preferences in an age-appropriate manner with students. They indicated that they did not have the capacity to refer clients to personnel and institutions outside their institutions for counselling sessions.

The principals felt that most of the counsellors did not refer clients to other counsellors and resources outside the school as expected, and that their confidence levels in the school counsellor's ability to understand when their counselling techniques were not appropriate for students from different cultures was below average. The principals also felt that school counsellors were not sufficiently equipped to jointly develop non segregated and successful counselling programmes that agree with the capabilities and situations of the counselees. They were not sufficiently impressed with the school counsellor's way of adopting student's developmental stages during counselling and on the other hand had only slight confidence that the counsellors could relate with students from different social/economic classes. On issues of techniques taught to students on time and task management, the principals' thought the counsellors lacked the capacity to handle them.

The principals held the view that the school counsellors were not able to respect the opinions and experiences of learners and guardians from different cultural backgrounds. They also did not have sufficient confidence in the counsellors' ability to know the circumstances that affected the learners positively and negatively. They were not fully convinced that the counsellors could deal with the subject of sexuality and sexual preference with an age suitability consideration. The principals also felt that the school counsellor's ability to direct students in techniques to cope with peer pressure was below average.

Concerning sufficient skills for effective counselling, students had no confidence in the counsellor's ability to use the computer and modern technology when counselling, neither were they able to trust them to keep confidential files for students and counselees. The students also felt that the school counsellors were not able to work with external organizations to help students, they were of the view that the school counsellors did not have the capacity to analyse data to identify patterns of achievement and behaviour of the students. They had no confidence in the school counsellor's ability to keep the student's information confidential and to conduct and keep a well laid out school counselling program.

The students felt that the counsellors were not able to identify learning opportunities and suggest activities that could help team members to develop new technical skills; they also had no confidence in the school counsellors' provision of leadership and direction to students during the counselling sessions. They reported that the counsellor's ability to help students on how to use the problem-solving technique towards their academic, personal and career success and their ability to involve the guardians and parents to help students was below average.

Majority of the students, (57.7%) had no confidence in the counsellor's ability to help them make proper career choices. The students had no confidence in the school counsellor's ability to Understands what needed to be accomplished in a defined time. Most of the students (66.8%) felt that the school counsellor's ability to encourage sharing of knowledge, information, experience and expertise among team members was below average. The students also observed that their confidence in the school counsellor's ability to be free with students and deal with student individually was below par. The capacity to identify learning opportunities and suggest activities that could help the team members to develop new technical skills is an area the students thought the counsellors didn't handle well.

Recommendation

- For counselling in secondary schools to be effective, professionally trained counsellors with an educational bias should be deployed to all secondary schools.
- Collaboration between the ministry of education, the Teachers Service Commission and institutions that train counsellors should ensure that the school counsellors deployed to secondary schools have the requisite counselling knowledge and skills in tandem with international school counselling standards.
- 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.

REFERENCES

- Adeyemi, O. (2017). *Investigating the receptivity of counselling students toward receiving counselling*. [Doctoral dissertation]. Scholarcommons. <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/4029>
- Agus, S. & Handaka, I. B., (2017). *Guidance and counselling comprehensive: evaluation implementation guidance and counselling program*. Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (ASSEHR), volume 66
- Ahmad, F. & Karim, M (2019). Impacts of knowledge sharing: A review and directions for future research. *Journal of Workplace Learning, Vol. 31 Issue: 3, pp.207- 230.* <https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-07-2018-0096>
- American Counselling Association (2014). *ACA code of ethics*. ACA.
- American Counselling Association, (1987). *School counselling: A profession at risk*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Ed.). American Psychological Association.
- American School Counsellor Association (2019). *School counsellor professional standards & competencies*. ASCA. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Baker, S. B. (1994). Mandatory teaching experience for school counselors: An impediment to uniform certification standards for school counselors. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 33*(4), 314-326.

- Beidoğlu, M., Dinçyürek, S., & Akıntuğ, Y. (2015). The opinions of school counselors on the use of information and communication technologies in school counseling practices: North Cyprus schools. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 52, 466-471.
- Biggam, J. (2008). *Succeeding with master's dissertation: a step-by-step handbook*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Bolu-Steve, F. N. & Oredugba, O. O. (2017). Influence of counselling services on perceived academic performance of secondary school students in Lagos State. *International Journal of Instruction*, 10(2), 211-228. http://www.e-iji.net/dosyalar/iji_2017_2_14.pdf
- Bond, T. (2009). *Standards and ethics for counselling in action*. London: Sage.
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, (2002). *Guidelines for Counselling in Schools*. Rugby: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.
- Cooper, M. (2013). School-based counselling in UK secondary schools: A review and critical evaluation. Published, June. www.counsellingminded.com
- Coy, D. R. (2004). *Developmental guidance and counselling in today's schools*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Secondary Schools.
- Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.
- Dahlberg, L. & McCaig, C. (Eds.) (2010). *Practical research and evaluation: A start-to-finish guide for practitioners*. Sage Publications.
- Debono, M., Camilleri, S., Galea, J. & Gravina, D. (2007). Career guidance policy for schools. *Report of the Secondary Education Commission: Mudaliar Commission Report*. www.education.gov.mt/career_guidance.htm
- Demirci, C. (2017). The Effect of Active Learning Approach on Attitudes of 7th Grade Students. *International Journal of Instruction*, 10(4), 129-144. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2017.1048a>
- Dwiyanti, W. (2017). The Stages of sharing knowledge among students in learning environment: A review of literature. *International Journal of Education and Research Vol. 5 No. 8*.
- Ertelt, B. J., & Frey, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Diagnosis of interests and motivation in vocational contexts. Manual for vocational pedagogical diagnostics* (249-272). Weinheim: Beltz.
- Gonzalez, L. M., Borders, L. D., Hines, E. M., & Villalba, J. A. (2017). Parental Involvement in children's Education: Consideration for school counsellors working with Latino Immigrant Families. *Journal of Professional School Counselling* 12(3)
- Goodman-Scott, E., & Grothaus, T. (2017). School counselors' roles in ramp and pbis: A phenomenological investigation (Part two). *Professional School Counseling*, 21(1), 130-141. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-21.1.130
- Graham-Migel, J. (2002). Comprehensive guidance and counselling programs: The Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea experience. *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, 36, 6-13.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2002). *Comprehensive School Guidance Programs in the Future: Staying the Course*. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>
- Hakizimana E., (2008). Perceived effects of guidance service on students' study habits and attitudes in private secondary school in Gasabo District, Rwanda *MSc Counselling Psychology Thesis*.
- Hale, L. G. (2012). Teacher knowledge of school counsellor responsibilities. *Counsellor Education, Master's Theses*. 126. http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/edc_theses/126
- Hanimoglu, E. (2018). The perceptions of students about the role of school counsellors on career selection. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 7(4), 763-774. doi: 10.12973/eu-jer.7.4.763
- Haskins, N. H. (2012). The school counselor's role with students at-risk for substance abuse. *Vistas: Ideas and research you can use*. https://www.counseling.org/resources/library/VISTAS/vistas12/Article_59.pdf
- Ingram, S. & Robson, M. (2014). *The Handbook of Counselling Children and Young People*. https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/therapeutic_skills.pdf
- Ireland, J., (2007). Becoming a Therapeutic Teacher: A Personal Journey. *Australian e-Journal of Theology* 9. Published, March