

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER COUNSELLORS' HOURS OF  
EXPOSURE TO TRAINING IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING AND  
PROFESSIONALISM IN SERVICE DELIVERY IN PUBLIC  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

By

**Marypiah W.G. Kuria<sup>1</sup>**  
[marypiahk@gmail.com](mailto:marypiahk@gmail.com)

**Prof. James Matee Muola<sup>2</sup>**  
School of Education,  
Machakos University College  
P.O. Box 136 – 90100

**Machakos**  
[mateemuola2000@yahoo.com](mailto:mateemuola2000@yahoo.com)

**Dr. Musau Kithuka<sup>3</sup>**  
Laikipia University,  
P.O. Box 1100-20300  
Nyahururu  
[Musaukit@gmail.com](mailto:Musaukit@gmail.com)

**Dr. Jonathan Muema Mwanja<sup>4</sup>**  
South Eastern Kenya University  
P.O. Box 170-90200  
[muemamwanja@yahoo.com](mailto:muemamwanja@yahoo.com)

## ABSTRACT

Guidance and counselling has been recommended and popularized by the government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Different Government of Kenya (GoK) reports have made recommendations aimed at enhancing guidance and counselling. In 1971 the Ministry of Education established a Guidance and Counselling section at the ministry headquarters. Teacher counsellors are trained in different institutions such as, public and private universities, middle level colleges and religious organizations. Each institution develops its own curriculum. Some schools provide in-service training for their teacher counsellors while others do not. This results in differences in hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling contents. The relationship between the teacher counsellors' hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling and professionalism in guidance and counselling has not been investigated. The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between hours of teacher counsellors exposure to training in guidance and counselling and professionalism in the provision of services in secondary schools. The study involved a sample of 25% of the accessible population from randomly selected secondary schools in Nairobi County in Kenya. The researcher used the *ex-post facto* research design. A questionnaire was used to collect data from teacher counsellors. A guidance and counselling room observation checklist was completed by the Head of Department (HOD) guidance and counselling. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was used to analyse the data descriptively. To test the null hypotheses, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used at 5% alpha level. A significant positive relationships between number of hours of exposure and (a) application of counselling skills and techniques, (b) management of counselling resources and (c) observation of ethics ( $r = 0.702, 0.813$  and  $0.342$  respectively) was reported. It was recommended that there was need to have teachers who are adequately trained in the management of resources, application of counselling skills, and observation of counselling ethics in guidance and counselling.

**Key words: Guidance, counselling, hours of training, professionalism.**

## INTRODUCTION

The education of school counsellors around the world varies based on the laws and cultures of countries and the historical influences of their educational and credentialing systems. In Canada, school counsellors must be certified teachers with additional school counselling training. In China, there is no national certification or licensure system for school counsellors. In the Philippines, school counsellors must be licensed with a master's degree in counselling. Taiwan instituted school counsellor licensure for public schools (2006) through advocacy from the Chinese Guidance and Counselling Association. In the USA, a school counsellor is a certified educator with a master's degree in school counselling (usually from a Counsellor Education graduate program). School counselling in Nigeria began in 1959 and exists only in some high schools. School counsellors often have teaching and other responsibilities that take time away from their school counselling tasks. The Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) was formed in 1976 to promote the profession, but there was yet no code of ethics. However, a certification/licensure board has been formed.

Guidance and Counselling is an important service to all and especially the adolescents as they transit from childhood to adulthood. The Ominde Report (Government of Kenya, 1964) recommended that children be given courses of education and training best suited to their needs and

that guidance be provided on careers as an opening for employment. In 1971, a Guidance and Counselling unit of the ministry of education was established to deal with problems of psychological maladjustments of pupils in schools and to run seminars for teachers on guidance and counselling.

The Gachathi Report (GoK, 1976) recommended that all teachers participate in guidance and counselling as one of their normal teaching duties. This report also recommended that guidance and counselling be integrated with other topics such as career, ethics, human relations, family life and sex education. It also observed that the totality of growth and development of the youth depend on professional guidance and counselling services. Guidance is expected to help students develop positive attitudes towards the services offered and the person offering the services. Poorly offered guidance and counselling services discourage the students and create a negative attitude among the clients towards guidance and counselling.

There is a difference in the number of hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling from different institutions. The curriculum of teacher training in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree in Kenyan Universities has a component of guidance and counselling and it is expected that every trained teacher can give guidance and counselling services to learners (GoK, 1976). The total number of hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling differ from one institute to the other. Training in guidance and counselling is done in public and private universities. Also many private middle level colleges offer guidance and counselling training. Each university and private college develops its own curriculum. This results in variations in the number of hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and also the content taught is not in harmony. In some schools, teacher counsellors are sponsored to attend seminars, workshops and supervision. The Government of Kenya has popularized the guidance and counselling programme in all public secondary schools. In the teacher training programs both at diploma and university levels, the teachers are given at least one unit on guidance and counselling. In post graduate training, more units are covered on guidance and counselling. Some teacher counsellors make personal efforts to advance their training in guidance and counselling. This result to a difference in the number of hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling whose effect on professionalism in service delivery is not well documented. This study investigated the relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and professionalism in delivery of guidance and counselling service.

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

- i. There is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and application of counselling skills in schools.
- ii. There is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and the management of the counselling resources
- iii. There is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and the observation of counselling ethics.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature identifies training in counselling as an essential aspect for effective service delivery. Neary (2014) found that professional training generated a perceived enhancement in professional identity through exposure to theory, policy and opportunities for reflection, thus contributing to more confidence and feeling of empowerment. In another study by Henriksen, Richard, Jr.; Van Wiesner, Kinsworthy, and Sarah (2008), 51% of the respondents expressed the need for training semester hours to be increased from 48 to 60 per semester for community counselors. This is an indication that the hours of exposure to training may enhance competence in service delivery.

According to Jung (1961, 71) learning to become a professional counselor requires academic preparation and training. Competency in counselling is an important component in guidance counsellor education/training programmes (Wannan & McCarthy, 2005). Training is expected to improve competency in application of counselling skills, the management of the counselling resources and the observation of counselling ethics.

Teacher counsellors need adequate resources to deliver professional guidance and counselling services in schools (Mutie & Ndambuki, 1999). Among these resources are, time, human resource, counselling room, relevant books and materials for guidance and counselling purposes. A trained-counsellor should demonstrate some degree of professionalism in managing all the available resources. Among the human resources at the disposal of teacher counsellors are peer counsellors who have an advantage of being in the same age bracket with their fellow students, and therefore relate easily with each other without the effect of age-gap as in the case between teacher counsellor and students (Lutomia & Sikolia, 2002). It is easier for information to reach the students and especially information that is sensitive to adolescents. The training that peer counsellors require is usually brief, intensely practical and geared towards empathy, genuineness and other traits that lead to professional counselling services. Peer counsellors depend on their teacher counsellors for their training and supervision.

A study carried out by Wango (2006) in secondary schools revealed that 74% of the sampled schools had peer counsellors who had either been trained or oriented into counselling. Slightly over a half (52.7%) of the students would appear to understand who is a peer counsellor. The most common answer given was that a peer counsellor is a peer or age-mate who advises people and who have good behaviour.

Holding meetings to consult on various issues is one way that a guidance and counselling team can coordinate the programme. The study by Wango (2006) found that slightly over a half (58.1%) of teacher counsellors held meetings with the guidance and counselling team. A few (40.5%) teachers admitted that meetings were held by the guidance and counselling team. This was especially so as one in four (25.5%) of the teacher counsellor could not tell the number of meetings held in the school term. In the current study, it was expected that teachers with more training will tend to hold more meetings with the counselling team and clients. The study by Wango revealed that most

schools invited guest speakers on average once a term. Although fewer of the teacher counsellors admitted it, one in five teacher counsellors said guest speakers were never invited.

According to Muite and Ndambuki (1999), ideally, the guidance and counselling rooms should be large, equipped with facilities where reading materials can be maintained and displayed. In the study carried out by Wango (2006) it was revealed that 72% of the teacher counsellors had designated counselling rooms while 28% did not have. Counselling was expected to be done in the staffroom or in any other available room. This does not provide confidentiality which is an ethical requirement. The study also found that the counselling rooms were used for other purposes. Appropriateness of the counselling room in terms of facilities and location were found to be inadequate.

Visual and audio materials (such as books, charts, posters, magazines, and video and cassette tapes) are useful in communicating different messages. The study by Wango (2006) found that in most schools the resource materials were available. However, some schools (25%) had none while others had no money allocated for guidance and counselling purposes. Lack of adequate material and financial resources hinders professional implementation of the school guidance and counselling programme.

In a study done by Kananu (2002) it was found that although schools had adequate resources and the materials needed to facilitate the guidance and counselling process both teacher counsellors and students rarely used them. In the same study, all the heads of guidance and counselling departments agreed that the use of the resources makes a difference in offering the counselling services. Lack of allocation of counselling time on the school programme and poor-coordination was listed among the major hindrances to the usage of the available resources. Professionalism in guidance and counselling services is directly related to availability and management of resources including time.

The Ministry of Education recommends that time be set aside for guidance and counselling services with the head of department taking not more than 24 lessons a week. The study by Wango (2006) found out that the teacher counsellor with the least number of lessons in a week had nine lessons while the highest had 28 lessons. Three of the teachers had 27 lessons and one had 26 lessons. Nineteen teacher counsellors had 20-24 lessons while 13 had 15-19 lessons. Only six teachers had below 14 lessons.

From the study done by Wango (2006), it was reported that according to 48.8% head teachers, 41.9% teacher counsellors, and 26.7% teachers no time was set aside for guidance and counselling. In schools where time was allocated in the school programme, the set time was not adhered to. Keeping to time is an ethical requirement.

In the study by Kananu (2002), head teachers reported that implementation of the guidance and counselling programme is not easy because the teacher counsellors are assigned other responsibilities. The other responsibilities leave little time for guidance and counselling. Exposure to training is likely to make teacher counsellors appreciate and create time for clients because they feel obliged to be professional in service delivery.

According to Mutie and Ndambuki (1999), counselling skills and techniques are essential but they are not by themselves sufficient for establishing and maintaining professional therapeutic relationships. Observation of counselling ethics is essential for the success of the guidance and counselling programme. The study by Wango (2006) indicated that only a few (9.3%) teacher counsellors were aware of or had a code of conduct for professional counsellors.

According to a study done by Mmbone (2008), 53% of students reported that they lacked confidence in the teacher counsellors and hence they did not seek guidance and counselling services. Lack of confidence would be an indication of poor delivery of guidance and counselling services

Referring students for specialized attention with relevant professionals is part of the professionalism of the teacher counsellor and a sign of good ethical practice. During a study on policy adherence conducted by Mutunga (2003), it was found that according to 26.6% of teacher counsellors, 37.2% of head teachers and 20.9% of teachers there was a standardized procedure for students' referral in the studied schools. Majority (74.4%) of the teacher counsellors said there was none. Most of the teacher counsellors (65.1%) indicated that they had not referred any student for specialized attention while 34.9% had made referrals.

According to a study conducted in Machakos District by Mutunga (2003) majority (75%) of teacher counsellors were aware of in-service counselling courses but only a few (35%) had attended an in-service counselling course. The study found out that the hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling services were inadequate for provision of professional

Continuous training is a basic component of practitioner competence. In a study done by Kachekeka (2005) on factors that hinder the effective implementation of guidance and counselling programmes it was found that out of the 21 teacher counsellor who took part in the study, 12 (66.7%) had not attended any in-service training; four (19.1%) had attended for one week; three (14.3%) had attended for more than one week. One teacher counsellor had attended for one month and one had attended for more than three months. The duration indicated seemed to be short for teacher counsellors to acquire necessary knowledge and skills for use in delivery of professional guidance and counselling services to student. In the same study, some of the teacher counsellors felt that the in-service training was adequate while others felt that it was not. The foregoing literature has tried to provide evidence that training in counselling whether in-service or pre-service is likely to improve competency in application of counselling skills, the management of the counselling resources and the observation of counselling ethics. The present study was expected to either support or negate findings reported in earlier studies.

This study was informed by behavioural theories which are of the opinion that behaviour is learnt and hence it is possible to be modified. In classical conditioning behaviour can be learnt by manipulating the environment to produce desired behaviour. In operant conditioning, rewards and punishment make an individual behave in a certain way. Teacher counsellors need to be rewarded in some way as they devote their time and energy to guidance and counselling services. Rewarding can be in form of sponsorship for higher training, in-service training or any other form of professional reward. Social learning theory by Bandura (1977) postulates that people are capable of learning vicariously by observing the behaviour of others as well as its consequences and by

imitating that behaviour. This implies that training is continuous and not just confined in the formal training institutions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The researchers used the *ex-post facto* research design mainly because they wanted to explore the existing relationship between the variables without any manipulations. The researchers did not have direct control of the independent variable because its manifestation had occurred already in the form of hours of exposure to training and could not be inherently manipulated.

### **Participants**

This study was conducted on 100 teacher counsellors selected through systematic random sampling from public secondary schools in Nairobi County. This comprised about 25% of the targeted population. The respondents were trained and practicing teacher counsellors whose training is a minimum of diploma in education with at least a unit in guidance and counselling as prescribed in the training programme.

### **Instrumentation**

In this study, the research instruments used were a questionnaire and guidance and counselling room observation checklist. The instruments were developed by the researchers guided by the objectives of the study. Information on the application of counselling skills, management of counselling resources, techniques and ethics were added using these instruments. Guidance and counselling room observation checklist was completed by the HoD guidance and counselling to help in objectively evaluating the counselling room. The questionnaire items were both closed ended and open-ended.

The questionnaire had a reliability coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.821 established through Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) method. To ensure validity of the instruments, the researchers tried to ascertain that the items captured information related to all the objectives of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to analyse the data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The first hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and application of counselling skills in schools. The Pearson's Moment Correlation Coefficient test revealed a significant positive relationship between hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and application of counselling skills in schools ( $r = 0.702$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding is in line with Kananu's (2002) study which reported a positive relationship between training and application of counselling skills. She found that teacher counsellors who had not received training were aware of the techniques theoretically or they heard of them in the seminars or have just read about them in books. Although they were aware of the required skills or technique in counselling they did not

know how to apply or put them into practice. Failure to use the necessary counselling skills and techniques influences the professionalism of the teacher counsellors.

**The second hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and the management of the counselling resources. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson's moment correlation coefficient (r). The findings obtained revealed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.813$ ,  $n = 100$ ,  $P < .05$ ) between the two variables (hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling and management of counselling resources). Given that the calculated value of  $r$  (0.812) was greater than the critical value of  $r$  (0.195) at the 0.05 probability level, the null hypothesis was rejected. This meant that there was a relationship between teacher counsellors' hours of exposure to training in Guidance and Counselling and the management of the counselling resources. These findings are in agreement with Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) who argued that teacher counsellors need adequate resources to deliver professional guidance and counselling services in schools. Among these resources are, time, human resource, counselling room, relevant books and materials for guidance and counselling purposes. A trained counsellor should demonstrate some degree of professionalism in managing all the available resources.**

The respondents indicated that they had counselling teams in their respective schools ranging between 3 to 26 members (teacher counsellors) per team. This could be understood to imply that teachers who are well professionally trained are more skilled in mobilizing human among other resources that are necessary in the counselling process. The findings from the respondents indicated that just about half of the (53%) counselling teams met once a term, 17 (17%) met twice a term while 14 (14%) indicated that they met when there was an issue to be discussed.

The study found that majority (99%) of the schools had peer counsellors who had undergone orientation to do peer counselling. These findings agree with a study carried out by Wango (2006) in secondary schools which revealed that 74% of schools had peer counsellors who had either been trained or oriented into counselling. In Wango's study, slightly over half (52.7%) of the students appeared to understand who is a peer counsellor.

In the current study, 46% of the respondents met with the peer counsellors every week, 49% met once a term while 5% indicated that they did not meet. The frequency of meetings and interactions with the peer counselling team is an indication of seriousness in the counselling process in respective schools.

Ninety percent (90%) of the respondents indicated that there were no specific times allocated for individual counselling in the school programme. Those who indicated that they did not have specific time for individual counselling met when need arose, when the teacher was free, during long break and during lunch break or after four o'clock.

Seven percent (7%) of the teacher counsellors felt that they managed the counselling programme very effectively, 77% managed it effectively while 11% were not sure. Majority of the schools had guidance and counselling rooms which were also used for other purposes as indicated by 48%.



Other uses of the room indicated prayers, teacher's office, teacher's workroom or use as Head of Department's office.

The study found that in some of the schools the counselling office was not conveniently located for purposes of privacy. Most of them were located near the administration block (59%), near the classrooms (52%) while most of the others stood on their own as indicated by 65% of the respondents.

Data analysis on the physical status of the guidance and counselling rooms revealed that the organization was either good or fair. For example 48% and 45% of the respondents indicated that the cleanliness of the room was good and fair respectively, 47% and 41% of them indicated that ventilation and lightning of the room was good and fair respectively. Majority of them (59% and 63%) however indicated that the rooms were well organized and arranged and had bookshelves respectively.

The findings showed that majority (52%) of the guidance and counselling teachers had maintained appraisal records, 67% of them maintained case notes. Others (64%) indicated that they maintained academic performance, discipline records, and referral records.

The third hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the hours of teacher counsellors' exposure to training in guidance and counselling and the observation of counselling ethics. It was tested using Pearson's moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). The results indicated a positive significant correlation ( $r = 0.342$ ,  $n = 100$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) between the hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling and observation of counselling ethics. The null hypothesis was rejected because the calculated value of  $r$  (0.342) was greater than the critical value of  $r$  (0.195) at the 0.05 probability level. It was therefore concluded that hours of exposure to training in guidance and counselling is significantly associated with observation of counselling ethics.

The respondents indicated that each programme had its own time allocation in cases where counselling rooms were used for other purposes and that teachers usually organised themselves on matters of space. The teachers also indicated that they used other available rooms for counselling duties.

The teachers were also asked to indicate how often they observed some basic counselling principles. The findings are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**  
**Teachers' Responses on Observation of Counselling Principles**

Counselling principle	Very often	Often	Rarely	Never
	%	%	%	%
Autonomy	30	52	52	5
Maleficence	41	18	26	15
Beneficence	82	18	00	00
Justice	87	13	00	00
Fidelity	62	35	3	00
Veracity	38	50	12	00
<b>Average</b>	<b>56.7</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>

The data on how teachers applied counselling principles indicated that on average, 31% observed the counselling principles quite often, 56.7% observed often while 15.5% rarely observed the principles. A small percentage (3.3%) did not apply the principles at all.

The results indicated that 94% of the teacher counsellors kept counselling records for students. Data showed that most of the data (88%) on students counselling were kept by the teacher counsellor.

Majority (99%) of the respondents indicated that the counselling cases were kept confidential. Majority of the respondents (66%) also indicated that there were codes of ethics concerning confidentiality in guidance and counselling in the school. The department's rules ensured confidentiality. The teacher counsellors ensured confidentiality by self discipline, keeping names of the counsees' secret and by using codes instead of names. Asked whether they had referred students to specialized counselling, they indicated that they had done so.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that exposure to more hours of pre-service and in-service training in guidance and counselling improves management of counselling resources and enhances the application of counseling skills and observation of counselling ethics. It was recommended that there is need to have teachers who are adequately trained in the management of resources in guidance and counselling, application of counselling skills, and observation of counselling ethics. It was also recommended that teacher training institutions should review their curricula to put more emphasis on guidance and counselling which may be crucial in enhancing discipline and academic performance. Future studies can focus on other factors that may affect professionalism in counselling such as the level of training, gender, age, and students' attitude.

**REFERENCES**

- American Counselling Association (1995). *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Alexandria: VA.
- American School Counsellor Association, (1998). *Ethical Standards for Counsellor*. Alexandria: VA.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Winston.
- GoK (2001). *Report of the Task Force on Students Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools*. Nairobi: Government Press.
- (1988). *Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- (1979). *The Kenya Development Plan 1979-1983*. Nairobi: Government Printer: Kenya.
- (1964). *Report of the Kenya Education Commission (Ominde report)*. Nairobi: English Press.  
Available on; [Http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School\\_counsellor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_counsellor).
- Jung, C. G. (1961). *Psychological Reflections*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Kacheka, V. Soita (2005). *A study of Factors that Hinder the Effective Counselling Programme in Public Secondary Schools*. Unpublished Med Thesis Kenyatta University.
- Kananu, F. K. (2002). *Perception of the Teacher counsellors Role in the Implementation of the Secondary School Curriculum*. Unpublished M.Ed Thesis Kenyatta University.
- Kinai, T. K. (2006). *Guidance practice in schools*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University.
- Lutomia, G. A. & Sikolia, L.W. (2002). *Guidance and Counselling in Schools and Colleges*. Nairobi: Uzima Press.
- Makinde, O. (1984). *Fundamentals of Guidance and Counselling*. London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- Mmbone, J. (2008). *Factors Affecting Guidance and Counselling in Secondary Schools*. Unpublished, Thesis Kenyatta University.
- Muite, K. & Ndambuki, P. (1999). *Guidance and Counselling for Schools and Colleges*. Nairobi: Oxford Press.
- Mutunga, J. M. (2003). *Investigation into the Effectiveness of G & C in Secondary School after the Ban of Corporal Punishment*. Unpublished thesis Egerton University.
- Neary, S. (2014). *Reclaiming professional identity through postgraduate professional*

development: careers practitioners reclaiming their professional selves. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*. V. 42, 2, 2014. pp. 199-210

Wannan, J. & McCarthy, J. (2005). *Improving lifelong guidance policies and systems: Using common European reference tools*. Luxembourg: CEDEFOP.

Wango, G. (2006). *Policy and Practice in G & C in Kenyan Secondary Schools*. Unpublished Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. University of Birmingham United Kingdom.