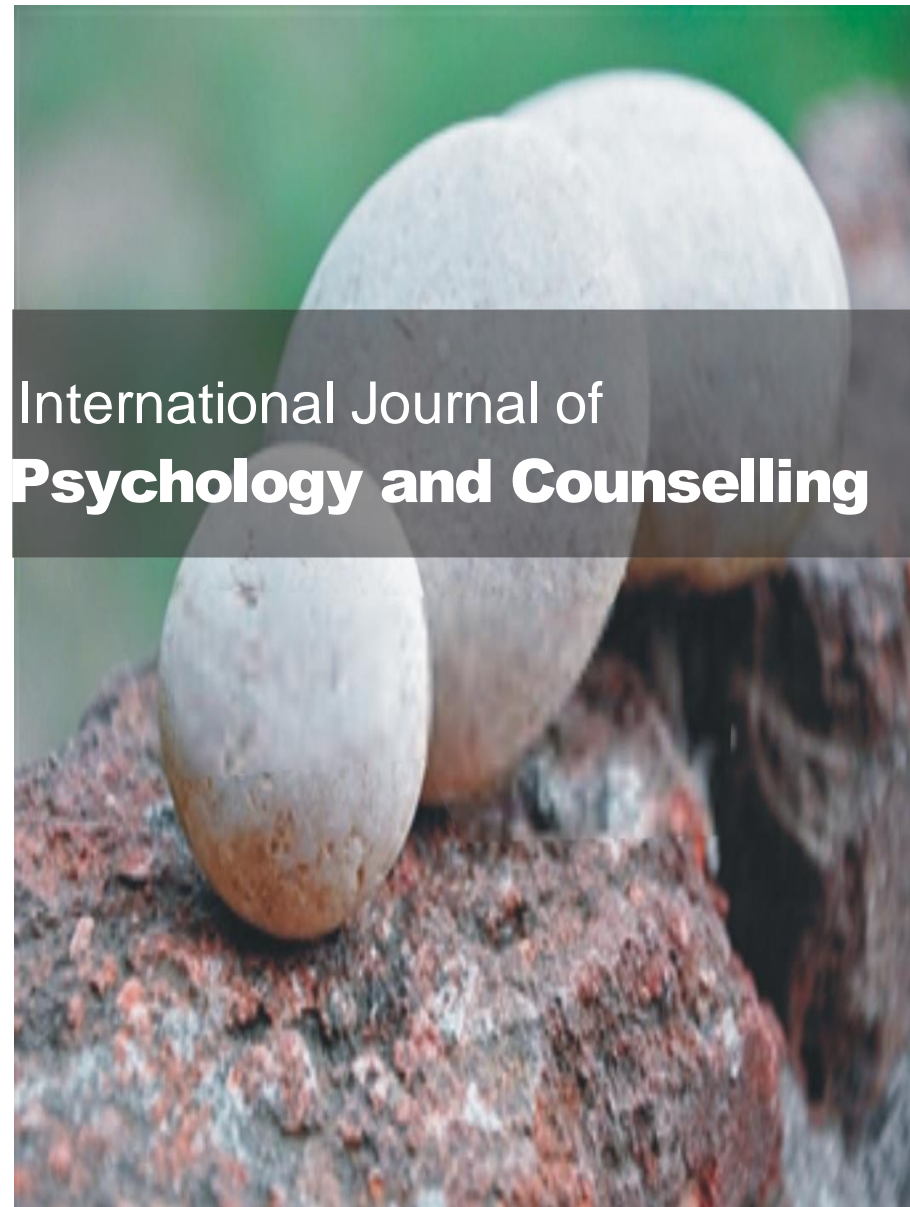


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*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Attributions for the culture of silence among victims of domestic violence: A case of married men in Kenya**

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**The study examines attributions for the culture of silence among ever-married male victims of domestic violence in Kenya. This study targets ever-married men who had attained post-secondary education and working in public service. The study adopted a case study design that allows a combination of descriptive and explanatory strategies. The public institution was purposively selected from where 120 respondents were randomly selected from an accessible population of 220. Data were gathered using semi-structured questionnaires and focused group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively, while content analysis was used to generate themes. The results are consistent with previous studies that show that physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, and economic violence are prevalent. Further, regardless of the severity of the violence, most males prefer not to report it. The main attributions for the culture of silence were shame, humiliation, stigma, and isolation. As a result, male victims suffer concomitant psychosocial problems. Given the rising number of domestic violence victims, there is a need to provide psychosocial support by creating safe spaces for male victims to mitigate irreparable psychological damages and stabilize the families.**

**Key words:** Domestic violence, male victims, culture of silence.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship (Drijber et al., 2012). The American Psychological Association (APA, 2001) defines domestic violence as ongoing patterns of behavior, attitudes, and beliefs in which a partner in an intimate relationship attempts to maintain power and control over the other through psychological, physical, and or sexual coercion.

Domestic violence is a global problem that cuts across culture, class, ethnicity, and age, and it is one of the most severe human rights problems (WHO, 2002). Pizzey (1975) argued that domestic violence is considered a private matter that can be resolved within the home. However, domestic violence is now of public concern with legal implications. Domestic violence victims can legally access justice if the abuse is reported. However, most

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cases go unreported, whether the victims are males or females who focus on numerous studies. Donovan and Hester (2010) posit that domestic violence is a gendered heterosexual phenomenon. Domestic violence is perceived through heterosexual lenses, with the male viewed as the abuser and women as the victims (Josolyne, 2011). The pioneering work by Steinmetz (1977) examined the "battered husband syndrome" where men were found to be reluctant to confess the violence to an outsider. George and Yarwood (2004) later argued that male victims do not come to the limelight because female victims outweigh them.

WHO (2002) states that domestic violence and gender-based violence are significant risks to women's health worldwide. Men, too, are increasingly becoming victims of domestic violence. For both men and women, the risks associated with domestic violence can be fatalities, physical injuries, psychosomatic and psychological problems with long-term health risk (Kenya Demographic Health Survey, (KDHS) 2014). Domestic violence against women has been extensively researched, and results show the contextual and cultural complexity it takes. This study focuses on ever-married men victims of domestic violence who are rarely, if ever, been systematically studied; consequently, understanding and awareness of the effects of domestic abuse against the victims are limited.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have examined the characteristics of domestic violence against men (Thureau et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2009; Khalifeh et al., 2015; Umubyeyi et al., 2014). Thureau et al. (2015), in a study examining 707 French victims of domestic violence among 81 men and 626 women, show that 49% of men were victims of repeated occasions of violence, 10% of men had been strangulated, 33% had weapons used against them, while 70% of men had been psychologically impaired. Wang et al. (2009), in a cross-sectional study of 2661 Chinese people, found that their female partners had hit 4% of men and 2% of couples had hit each other. Khalifeh et al. (2015), in another cross-sectional study with 170 male and 133 female psychiatric patients in England, reported that 42.9% of male patients had experienced emotional violence, 31.8% physical violence, 4.1% sexual violence. Additionally, Afifi et al. (2009), in a cross-sectional study involving 216 men and 190 women from the U.S., found that 23.3% of men in the survey were victims of domestic violence within their current relationships. Further, Umubyeyi et al. (2014) examined 440 men and 477 women in Rwanda and found that 4.3% of men had experienced physical violence, 7.3% psychological violence, and 1.5% sexual violence. Kolbe and Buttner (2020) found that wives mainly committed violence against men in a retrospective study that

spanned over four years at the Rostock outpatient department of domestic violence victims. They argue that most men were married to the female perpetrators or had lived with them for several years. Gadd et al. (2002) argue that domestic abuse against men can take life-threatening forms with the potential for long-term consequences. They argue that the humiliation and shame experienced when one decides to report abuse to the police can be overwhelming. As a result, male victims are unwilling to report because such an act will be undermining their masculinity (Carey, 2010; Gadd et al., 2002; Donovan and Hester, 2010)

The Kenya National Crime Research Centre (KNCRC) (2014) report on gender-based violence in Kenya involving 231 men shows that 68.1% had experienced inflicting bodily harm (expressed as hitting/battering/ beating); 58.3% domestic conflict (bodily harm and verbal abuse), while 49.1% verbal abuse/abusive language). Data from the Nairobi Women's Hospital Gender Violence Recovery Centre show that 6% of men victims of gender-based violence had sought medical attention. Additionally, KDHS (2014) reported that the ever-married men age 15-49 (44%) had ever experienced violence since the age of 15 and that men rarely report that wives or partners are the perpetrators of the violence. This report revealed that 6% of men had experienced sexual violence, 7% physical violence, while 21% emotional violence. The two reports show significant differences in the percentages of the reported cases, suggesting a lack of systemic assessment of how many men are domestic violence victims.

The studies reviewed above reveal that violence against men a global phenomenon similar to what is experienced by women. Where men are victims of violence, women are the perpetrator except in same-sex male marriages. Hamel (2007) found that women initiate physical violence more often than men do. Further, abusive women engage in emotional abuse, controlling behaviors, physical intimidation, and other forms of abusive tendencies, just like men perpetrators of violence. Unfortunately, male victims of domestic violence lack distinct recognition because, in most societies, domestic violence is a gendered social problem where males are presumed to be the perpetrators (Josolyne, 2011; Dutton and White, 2013; Hogan et al., 2012). Josolyne (2011) posits that the experiences of male victims of abuse resemble those typically experienced by female victims. Hines et al. (2007) state that men prefer not to report the abuse believing that the police would not take any action, and if and when they do, the male victim is likely to be blamed. Hence, men opt not to talk about violence because of the secretiveness, cultural values, masculine identity, tolerance, shame, and fear of losing face.

KDHS (2008-09) noted that in most cultures in Kenya, the level of spousal violence initiated by wives is only a fraction of the violence initiated by husbands. Holding this

position justifies the reasons why violence against men is often ignored. Inadvertently and because of little research on violence against ever-married men in Kenya, little or no funding is provided to address its effects (Hogan et al., 2012). However, there are detrimental negative physical, psychological, behavioral, and health concerns associated with domestic violence on men victims.

This problem is further compounded by patriarchal values that discourage men from speaking out against violence, especially if meted by a wife (Cheung et al., 2009). Paradoxically, just like women opt to remain in an abusive relationship and remain silent to protect their children, some studies have found this to be true in men. The KDHS (2014) revealed that men stay in abusive relationships to protect their children as they fear that the woman may influence them to think that he is a bad person or that he does not love them.

Although there is no single reason that can solely be attributed to violence against ever-married men, often women who are perpetrators are assumed to use violence for self-defense (Kaluyu, 2007). Additionally, violence against men is often attributed to men's inability to provide for the families, unfaithfulness, drunkenness, as reported in local dailies regularly. Further, women frustrated by their spouse's irresponsibility might become violent (Njuguna, 2014; Drijber et al., 2012; Simonelli and Ingram, 1998).

What is puzzling is that men victims of domestic violence suffer in silence, with most cases going unreported despite various support systems (KDHS, 2014). Drijber et al. (2012) further posit that violence against men goes unrecognized because it is often associated with shame, embarrassment, ridicule, and stigma. The theory of learned helplessness argues that violence is learned, positing that men who come from family backgrounds where they witnessed violence in their early childhood are least likely to engage in violence and are often likely to become victims. The cultural ideologies upheld silences the men by the constant reminder that "men do not cry" to portray the masculine identity.

Additionally, there is silent judicial discrimination against men victims, with most courts being more sympathetic to women victims, thus making males less likely to get a fair hearing. Nevertheless, abused men, just like abused women, suffer from depression, stress, and psychosomatic symptoms (Cheung et al., 2009; Barnett et al., 2005). This paper is informed by learned helplessness theory to shed light on why men victims of violence often choose to stay in abusive relationships in silence.

## METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional study was conducted with a population-representative sample drawn ever-married men aged 25-50+ years. The sample was selected from a total number of married

men employed in a public institution in Nairobi County, Kenya, who had attained post-secondary education. The study aimed at 220 ever-married men, where 50% were randomly selected to participate in the study.

## Data collection instruments

Data were collected using an unstructured questionnaire containing items on various forms of violence and silence culture attributions. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held to generate an in-depth understanding of the respondent's view of the study variables. A total of 12 respondents who volunteered to participate in the study were divided into two groups. The interview schedule Section A focused on the demographic data of the respondents, Section B common forms of domestic violence in marriages as well as which specific ones the respondents had ever experienced, Section C examined how the respondents experience them, while Section D focused on attributions for the culture of silence. A reliability Cronbach's Alpha of 0.79 was determined using test-retest, and the instrument was considered reliable.

Further, the researcher ascertained the validity of the instruments during the piloting session with participants who shared similar characteristics sampled population gave suggestions that helped remove ambiguities in the instrument. The researcher made an appointment with the two groups of respondents, each with six respondents. The average time taken by the two groups was 1:30 min to complete the discussions.

## Statistical analysis

Differences in demographic factors and the prevalence of forms of violence were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The research classified FGDs findings into themes which included forms of violence, psychosocial effects, and attribution for silence culture attribution.

## Ethical considerations

The research protocol and study tools were approved for scientific and ethical integrity by the National Council of Science Technology and Innovation. The researcher applied WHO guidelines on ethical issues related to violence research to select the participants. The participants were further informed about their free choice to participate and withdraw at whatever time they wanted. The researcher secured written consent from all respondents before the interview. To respondents were assured of confidentiality.

## RESULTS

### Demographic data

The majority of the respondents, 76% who participated in the study, were between 25-44 years, while 19% were between 45-54 years. The lowest percentage (5%) of those who participated were over 55 years. Further, 36% were married between 6-10 years, 30% 11-20 years, 20% above 21 years, while 14% had been married for five years or less. Most of the respondents, 92%, had attained post-secondary education, with only 8% who had achieved secondary education.

### Forms of domestic violence reported

The respondents' most common form of violence was physical, 80%, psychological violence, 72%, and verbal violence, 64%. The other forms of violence identified included sexual 6% and related financial abuse at 4%. These findings correspond to various studies reflected in literature (KDHS, 2014, 2008-2009; Thureau et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2009; Umubyeyi et al., 2014; Hines et al., 2007) that reported that most men are prone to experience physical and psychological abuse. The FGD sessions examined the forms of abuse under the following themes: physical abuse, psychological and verbal abuse, and descriptive results.

### Experiences of physical abuse

Physical abuse was the most prevalent among men victims, which is similar to that reported by women victims (KDHS, 2014). When asked to specify the forms in which physical violence occurred, they said pushing, slapping, punching, biting, and even throwing an object at the victim. These findings are similar to those reported by Drijber et al. (2012), who found that the typical household items used are chairs, knives, vases, and tableware.

### Experiences of psychological and verbal abuse

Of the 12 respondents involved in the FGD, 70% stated that women are good at inflicting psychological and emotional abuse. Often women's abuses include refusal to offer food, locking spouses out of the house, or ridicules to demean the man in front of children. It was also evident that most respondents noted that most of them suffer psychologically and are uncomfortable explaining some specific experiences of psychological abuse because they regard them as "very sensitive," "personal," or "annoying to mention." Another respondent stated that "discussing such experiences shows that you are a weak man who is not in control." This finding implies that even though men acknowledge that various psychological abuse is prevalent, most men had experienced it from time to time. The respondents stated that a lack of communication exacerbated psychological abuse. The results revealed that at least 80% of the respondents in the FGD had experienced prolonged silence and refusal to discuss family matters. The respondents stated that lack of communication and demeaning acts like being locked out of the house was common.

60% of the respondents in the FGD had experienced humiliation connected to poor communication. The respondents stated poor communication and secrecy on how family finances were being used as a big problem.

The prolonged period of silence created suspicion,

which the respondent stated was emotionally draining. As a result, one respondent stated, "men feel threatened" and feel unsafe, leading to violence to regain control, as stated by Njuguna (2014). Lack of communication was closely linked to verbal attacks, ridicule, verbal harassment, and name-calling, showing psychological violence concomitant nature. As a result, most respondents stated that the result was shaming and social isolation by most men victims of domestic violence (Carey, 2010; Drijber et al., 2012; Kolbe and Buttner, 2020).

### Experience of sexual violence abuse

Robinson and Rowlands (2006) noted that forced sex, even by a spouse, is an act of aggression and violence. The study revealed that only 6% of respondents had been sexually abused, similar to the one reported by the KHDS (2014). During the FGD, most respondents shared away from discussing sexual offenses, with most stating that "this is not a matter we can discuss." The reasons given were "sex is a private matter," "it is uncultural," and "it is embarrassing." These responses imply that sexual violence is most likely not going to be reported, a finding that contradicts those reported by KCRC, which shows significantly large numbers of men victims of sexual abuse. The secrecy with which the violations can occur makes it difficult to determine how the respondents have experienced this form of abuse. This finding suggests that culturally, sex is privately handled, and it is a forbidden issue that men cannot openly discuss, which contradicts women's ability to report a sexual offense. This raises the question of how men handle denial of conjugal rights, especially during divorce cases.

### Why men will not talk and cannot talk

Gelles (1993, 1980) argues that the family is a sacred institution for many Americans, and the family's rights to privacy are protected. Therefore, violence in the family is considered a private, family matter hidden behind a closed door. This implies that domestic violence, among other vices that occur at home, remains unchallenged and undercover. Even though family violence is acknowledged, many people who witness it are reluctant to report it for fear of interfering with family privacy or fear of retaliatory attacks (Barnette et al., 2005).

In this study, men socialized to believe that the family is a private institution, men are the family leader, and women are subservient to their husbands. As a result, when men become domestic violence victims, there is a disturbance of order and function. Unlike most abused women, who take action, the men are left in a void. They become stigmatized and prone to long-term mental health challenges that can affect the quality of their lives.

What is of interest is if the silence men victims of violence uphold is rooted in patriarchy and masculinist constructions of gender ideology (Sassatelli 2011, Yllo 2005), just like women's positions. Social forces effectively silence abused women (Anderson, 2010), with most suffering without disclosing to their families and friends because they fear the shame accompanying such disclosure.

As a result, men victims of abuse go unrecognized. They were probably less likely than women to report such incidents for fear of embarrassment, ridicule, and the lack of available support services (Barbette et al., 2013; Cheung et al., 2009). When men seek help or support, they are either ignored, ridiculed and even accused of being the violence initiator. The FGD session study respondents identified the following themes that explain the culture of silence: shame, stigma, masculinity, and the need to protect children. At least 80% of the respondents agreed that it was shameful to admit abuse by the wife. The argument is that men fear social ridicule and stigma associated with violence since they are expected to be stronger than women. In this case, abuse implies a lack of masculinity and weakness, yet the. Socially men are expected to be physically dominant and aggressive partners. Consequently, men admitting victimhood and labeling the violence a crime perpetrated by women is considered emasculating (KDHS, 2014; Steinmetz, 1977). These findings are consistent with the literature on domestic violence that men feel the pain of psychological and emotional abuse they endure as being far more intense than any physical abuse they encounter (Rhodes and McKenzie, 1998; Kelly and Johnson, 2008).

60% of FGD respondents stated that men victims would not talk about the abuse for the children's sake. According to Steinmetz (1977), many abused husbands refuse to leave for fear of leaving their children with abusive women. They believe that if they stay, they can at least protect the children where necessary. There is a cultural expectation that men should be strong and not cry for help. As a result, men put on a brave face and mask a masculine identity in an abusive relationship.

### **Do married men suffer any psychosocial effects of domestic violence?**

Folligstad et al. (1991) found that emotionally abusive relationships can destroy one's self-worth, leading to anxiety and depression, and making one feel helpless, ashamed, and alone. The results reveal that for men who experienced physical violence, 75% of them experienced anger and rage, 40% were emotionally hurting, 35% reported sadness or depression, 15% reported feeling shame or fear, and 10% felt unloved or helpless. The verbally abused respondents felt isolated, withdrew from family functions, felt harassed and disrespected, felt numb or helpless, shame, and humiliated. Even though these men considered separation or divorce, they could

not carry it through immediately because by leaving, society would know there is a problem in the marriage. The respondents stated that abused men are prone to extreme psychological torture, resulting in health issues such as hypertension, diabetes, heart problems, and other illnesses. The respondents stated that married men who have a drinking problem could indicate psychological and emotional abuse. It was also evident that most men will not talk about emotional pains because it is perceived as a weakness. After all, "real men" are not supposed to show emotional weakness. As a result, most men try to camouflage the psychological and emotional pain.

### **DISCUSSION**

The study sought to establish the forms of violence among ever-married men experience, the psychosocial effects, and the attributions for the culture of silence. The majority of the respondents were aged 25-44 years and were in marriage for a period ranging from 6 to 21 years. The majority of the respondents had attained post-secondary education.

In Kenya, domestic violence progressively draws the policymaker's attention as more and more women victims are reported with severe injuries. However, the KDHS and KNCRRC reports reveal that men are increasingly becoming victims of domestic violence in numbers that cannot be ignored. These trends are similar to those reported in western societies, as shown in the reviewed literature. Even though this current study has presented similar findings to those reported elsewhere, the study did not comprehensively examine other factors like personality influences, specific cultural backgrounds, and socio-political determinants of domestic violence.

The findings of this study are consistent with KDHS (2014), KNCRRC 2014; Drijber et al., 2012), Hines et al. (2007), Hogan et al. (2012), Robinson and Rowlands (2006), Thureau et al. (2015), Wang et al. (2009), Khalifeh et al. (2015) and Umubyeyi et al. (2014) who argue that male victims of domestic violence experience what female victims experience. The study established that married men were prone to physical violence 80%, psychological and emotional violence 72%, verbal violence 64%, and sexual 6%. The FGD revealed that all the respondents were aware that women are domestic violence perpetrators, just like the male perpetrators. Even though women perpetrators do not appear to seek power and control over their men (husbands), subjecting the man to violence makes the man subject to ill-treatment. Unlike men who often have been found to use physical violence, this study revealed that women use psychological and emotional abuse than physical abuse characterized by demeaning behaviors, general ridicule, belittling statements, and a general lack of sensitivity (Njuguna, 2014; Drijber et al., 2012).

Further, where women used physical violence, it was characterized by punches, scratches, scolding with hot

objects or liquids, bites, kicks, genital hits. It was also evident that physical and psychological violence was preceded and followed by a lengthy period of poor communication between them. In general, the respondents stated that the home environment was generally very hostile to men.

Hogan et al. (2012) posit that lack of avenues to address male victims of abuse leads to many negative physical, psychological, behavioral, and health concerns. Men who have continually abused emotionally chip away their feelings of self-worth and independence (Steinmetz, 1998; Simonelli and Ingram, 1998; Njuguna, 2014). This study revealed that most respondents had experienced psychological and emotional violence that was considered worse than physical violence. The respondents stated that most of them had anger and rage, moments of extreme sadness or depression, feeling shame or fear, or felt unloved or helpless (Hines and Malley-Morrison, 2001; Hogan et al., 2012). Further, the verbally abused respondents felt isolated, withdrawn from family functions, felt harassed and disrespected, felt numb or helpless, shame, and humiliated (Hogan et al., 2012). Studies are consistent with those by Follingstad et al. (1991) have confirmed that abused men suffer depression, stress, and psychosomatic symptoms.

Globally, the majority of cases of male victims go unreported. This study revealed that men suffer just like women victims do, but seldom report (Hogan et al., 2012; Hines et al., 2007; Drijber et al., 2012; Cheung et al., 2009). Domestic violence against men is surrounded by the secrecy buried in the cultural values, masculine identity, tolerance, shame, and fear of losing face, just like in women. The KDHS 2008-2009 report points out that only a fraction of the level of violence initiated by wives is reported. Hogan et al. (2012) argue that there is a distinct lack of recognition of male victimization in domestic violence, confirmed in this study. Domestic violence victims treat this matter in secrecy and as a personal problem upholding that family is a private institution (Donovan and Hester, 2010; Barnett et al., 2005). Hines and Malley-Morrison (2001) posit that men fear stigma, ridicule, and shame, and to remain in control, they keep silent. Cultural values and ideologies play a significant role in silencing male victims because of the embarrassment and likelihood of being ostracized for being abused by a woman (Josolyne, 2011, Cascardi et al., 1992; Dutton and White, 2013). The fear of being regarded as man enough is enough to silence the man completely.

## Conclusion

The increasing trend of domestic violence has left many men victims of domestic violence stigmatized and unsupported. Even though numerous evidence-based interventions have addressed domestic violence against women, the poor-rate men come out and report abuse,

challenging to offer intervention despite advancement in education against retrogressive cultural practices that glorify the masculine identity, oblivious that some men will be victims of domestic violence. This paper argues an urgent need for a men support system that demystifies violence against men to offer informed support. Given the increase in male victims of domestic violence, there is a need to carry out an in-depth study to determine the mechanisms that can be adopted to create safe spaces for men to feel secure to address the secretive, shameful, and stigmatizing nature of women perpetrated domestic violence in a patriarchal society where masculinity is glorified. With statistics and lived experiences revealing an increase in male victims of domestic violence, the questions that remain to be answered are: Why more females becoming violent? Have men always been victims but remained hidden by the gender view of domestic violence? Answering these questions will demystify male victims' experiences and pave the way for increased awareness of the support services available for all victims' gender, notwithstanding.

## Limitations of the study

The findings of this study are limited to a small sample of married men victims of domestic violence and the culture of silence. This has implications for the generalizability of the results. However, the findings of this study provide a basis for extensive research on the need to create safe spaces for men victims of domestic violence to enable them to speak openly on domestic violence.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Career decision making among young adults in Ghanaian secondary schools using super's career choice theory as a lens**

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**This study focused on analysis of Donald Super's Theory of Career Choice among young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools. This study indicates that, decisions made at tender age may relate to nothing but fantasy because they are likely to learn more on needs and wants of self rather than reality factor and also the inability of young adults to choose a good career for their lives is lack of career information and inconsistency of information, several researches viewed Donald Super's career theory as the foremost career researcher of his time. Concept of vocational choice theory, self-concept theory, career indecision and coping strategies, five life stages, life career rainbow, life roles and span, life space were discussed, implications for and consequently a critique of the theory which among other things were, more theory segments that should be evaluated empirically, particularly in life span of teenagers.**

**Key words:** Young adults, career choice, career indecision, career development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Career development is a life-long journey that starts at mid adolescence and ends at retirement (Bozgeyikli et al., 2009). Super (1990) opines career as a lifetime development not an event. There are many factors that affect the career development process all over the world. These factors are classified along psychosocial, social, emotional and physical factors (Bozgeyikli et al., 2009). These factors mutually interlink, affect each other and either enhance or limit occupational status of a person. People develop sense of career aspiration through integration and interplay of life-roles and events that

happen in the entire journey of life (Gysbers et al., 2003). Aside the views of these authors on career development all over the world including Ghana, factors that affect the career development process are many interlinked personality factors such as gender, interest, abilities, values, self-concept, intelligence, ethnicity and sexual orientation of the individual, and young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools are not an exception. Societal and cultural factors such as ethnicity or race, socio-economic status, social class, religion, family setup, relationships and culture, all have some among of

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influence on career development process in the lives of young adults in Ghana as experienced elsewhere.

Super (1990) highlights impact of interactive role of life-stages and life-roles depicted in his life-space-life-span theory" and how crucial it is in the process of occupational choice and development. For example, super contends that interplay of life roles such as being a worker, a student, a parent, a citizen, a leisurite and a homemaker informs the process of career development. Swanson and Gore (2015), Alluded that pursuing satisfying work-role contributes immensely in leading to productive and satisfactory life which is essential in attaining psychological wellbeing.

This study was intended to examine the interrelations of literature in career development and decision-making among young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools. Conclusions of this study will contribute to the increasing research, examining the dynamics of career development of population from adolescence to adulthood in Ghana and elsewhere.

### **Rationale of the study**

The rationale for this study was to review literature on Donald Super's Theory of career choice to see the relevance of the theory and how it correlates with the determinants of career decision making process among young adults in Ghanaian Senior High Schools. This study is therefore considered as a conceptual study without methodology whereby the determinants of career decision making process among young adults in Ghanaian Senior High Schools as discussed below are correlated in the literature in respect of Super's Theory. Literature reveals that Donald Super's Theory of career choice is one of the foundation theories of career development, so this has become necessary because the researchers want to find out whether what is perceived by young adults and practiced in Ghanaian Senior High Schools is in consonance with Super's theory. The findings from this will in turn inform counselors Ghanaian schools how they can support students in their career decisions.

It is usual in Ghanaian Senior High Schools for a person's intellectual ability to lead to a high academic level, which in turn decides the individual's professional decision. The subjects in which a student excels in school influence the type of professional decision he or she will make after graduation. Using super's theory of career choice as a lens, the study sought to find out how this relates with the theory.

The importance of learning experience may be attributed to the fact that students study about and explore many vocations in schools before deciding on a

career path and subject combinations that will eventually lead to that career path as perceived by students in Ghanaian Senior High Schools. Those students also pick what they want to do in the future in terms of their careers based on their learning experiences while in school. These parallels show that when students choose a career, their choices are affected far more by their own experiences and what a particular career is likely to offer in return.

At selecting vocational choices, young adults in Ghanaian Senior High Schools believe that personal characteristics such as abilities, resources, personality, and others should be matched with employment aspects such as wages, possibilities for future development, prestige, job stability, and environment. This emphasizes the need of recognizing one's own self-concept before pursuing a vocation.

Personal ambitions or preferences in life, academic standards, personal characteristics (age, sex, strength), interest, parental influence, peer group influence, the dominant occupation in the community, the career of significant others in society, job security in the career, job satisfaction, and the prestige are all factors that young adults in Ghanaian Senior High Schools consider.

### **Meaning of career from different perspectives**

According to the National Career Development Association (Sears, 1982), the whole work and leisure of a person's life is a job. The term 'career' included different roles, circumstances and places that you encounter in your lifetime, Gysbers and Moore (1981) suggested. It is advisable that the term 'career' is replaced by the phrase 'life career' in order to reflect the nature of such comprehensive and complex self-development throughout the lives of the person. McDaniels (1978) argues that while a job or job is part of a career, the whole spectrum of that broad concept does not exist. Career means a life-long lifestyle consisting of an array of work or recreational activities. Raynor and Entin (1982) stressed that the term career combines the concepts of phenomenology and behavior. In regard to past and present experiences, as well as future plans, it reflected their own self-perception in our social context. When the meaning of career is expanded to a wide range of roles integration in life experiences, factors such as work, education, family and life play an active role in the career choice and the career development process of the individual (Hansen and Keierleber, 1978). The career can be acknowledged according to Super (1976) as:

*the course of life events; the sequence of professions and other roles in life which combine the commitment to*

*work in its overall pattern of development;; The pay-as-you-go series includes, from youth to pension, the role of students, the staff or pensioners and their complementary professional, family and civic duties, and the role of employees and pensioners. Careers only exist when people pursue them; they are centered on people. This later notion of careers, "they exist only as people pursue them," sums up a good deal of the rationale for career guidance. (p. 3) (p. 5)*

When looking at the many perspectives based on meaning of Careers, according to Herr and Cramer (1992), are (a) unique to each individual, (b) produced by the person's choice and decision, (c) dynamic and unfold during one's life journey, and (d) interwoven entities of work and life such as pre-vocational and post-vocational considerations, and (e) intertwined with other aspects of one's life, such as family, community, and leisure.

Although the definitions tend to differ slightly in terms of emphasis and terminology when it comes to the concept of career, they seem to have many of the same fundamental features and elements. That is, rather than considering one's profession as a discrete, separate work-related aspect of one's life, one's career is viewed as an integrated, active, and necessary component of one's life. While one's professional experiences are always intertwined with other life experiences, one's life experiences can provide a good image of one's career progress. In this sense, life is synonymous with career, and vice versa. This appears to be in line with Miller's (1988) view of the link between life and work, albeit her notion of "life-is-work" is highly influenced by phenomenological and existential philosophical perspectives (Sharf, 1997). "A career is a person's life, and in this usage, there is one career for every person" (Cochran, 1991:7).

### **Career maturity and decision making process**

Young adults who appreciate their job roles and commit to actively participating in them quickly realize that they must prepare themselves to be productive workers in general, and eventually train for a specific occupation. The adolescent and young adult years, which Super (1990) referred to as the Exploration Stage of career development, are characterized by this preparatory process. Exploratory behavior, or action and thinking that increases self-knowledge about work values, vocational interests, and occupational abilities, as well as provides a vast fund of occupation, is the main coping behavior of this stage. The young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools who are transitioning from adolescence to adulthood have similar characteristics with young adults

in the exploratory stage of career development. Super, (1963) indicated that the exploratory behavior is influenced by a person's views toward planning and investigating the future, or, as Super frequently put it, "looking ahead" and "looking around".

Super (1974b) created the term "planfulness" to describe attitudes toward future planning. It refers to an understanding that educational and vocational decisions must be made at some point in the future, as well as a willingness to prepare for these decisions. Exploration attitudes refer to a desire to actively use environmental chances and resources to learn more about the world of work in general, and certain jobs in particular.

Career maturity is a metric for determining an individual's level of affective and cognitive career growth. There is no doubt that Donald Super is one of the career developmental theories whose concerted effort yielded a positive contribution to the scientific field of career development. Accordingly, the concept of career decision making cannot be over emphasized, the researchers tried to relate relevant literatures to this concept, Super (1953) as cited in Mamman (1992) in the concept of career decision making viewed that the term choice/decision making has different meanings at various stages and age levels. Decisions made at tender age may relate to nothing but fantasy because they are likely to learn more on needs and wants of self rather than reality factor and are not necessarily worked upon as it would be later on in life. He suggested that preference be consider as an unimplemented course of action which does not designate entering into a job. Basically, what this researcher said mostly happens to our nursery and primary school pupils, sometimes they may choose a career at their tender age because they might have watched a film, see things that interest them within their immediate environment, actually it amounts to nothing until when they mature enough. Oladele (1986) as cited by Mburza (2011) considers a person's career to be the series of important roles he or she has held throughout his or her life, which includes home, school, and community experience related to an individual's life idea and its execution in daily life.

Similarly, Super (1953) as cited in Bojuwoye (1986) stressed that, The irreversible nature of the choice process calls for greater care in selecting an occupation since final stage of the decision making process is related when the person enters an occupation. As we have seen from this researcher, the reality is that choosing a career may not be necessarily irreversible because many individuals change their careers or reverse it; recent researcher proves that, an individual may wish to change his or her career as a result of knowledge and time.

In addition, Super (1962) as cited in Momberg (2004) did not view his contributions to career psychology as a

theory, he preferred to view it as a range of different constructs that he used to enrich, extend, and elaborate career theory and practice his original ten propositions, according to a study of the relationship between personality trait and vocational interest in a South African context.

The above researchers have advocated that school counselors should be conscious of students' vocational preference, competences and also their interest, abilities and personalities, which necessitate their differences. Meanwhile, Momberg (2004) have the same stand with Bojuwoye where they said, people have different abilities, personalities, requirements, and value interest, trait, self-concept, vocational preferences and competence as such counselors should note these as cornerstones of their clients concern and put into consideration at the counseling sessions for proper counseling to help young adults make informed career choices. The degree to which people have been able to incorporate their self-concept in their professions is related to job satisfaction.

Super (1953) as cited in Machina (n.d.) sees vocational choice having different meaning at different age levels; this opinion coincided with Mamman (1992) who views that vocational development has different meaning at different stages. While Super 1953, also acknowledged the fact that career decisions are conceived at a tender age, he contended that such decisions are not highly related. Youngsters, according to Super 1953 are not likely to consider important variables to consider while considering a career choice such as psychological and non-psychological factors that might affect their choices. Super 1953 therefore suggest that preference should be considered as an unimplemented course of action.

In a study of parents' socioeconomic status and its impact on students' educational values and vocational choices, Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2011) stated, "the period culminates in a compromise between interest, capacities, value, and opportunities, and that the process can be divided into three stages, viz. fantasy dominating choice, tentative (around primary school age), when choice is influenced by interest, and final (around secondary school age), when choice is influenced by interest, then by capacities and values and the realistic choice. The realistic choice stage is faced with realistic factors which need to be guided carefully to make a successful life. It could therefore be implied that vocational adjustment is a developmental process. A choice has to be made but in a process where many factors such as the peculiarities and potentialities of the individual have to be considered. These influences could be intrinsic and extrinsic in nature." These are some of super's impressions about the prepositions which make the basis of his theory.

Mburza, (1992) in a study of motivation and interest in relation to occupational choice referred to this stage as

(Tentative) which is described by Greg as sub stage in exploration stage as period of self-examination, the period that the adolescent can ascertain whether or not he/she is vocationally mature. Year later, this same child will have a completely different view of what he would be in life. The choice now becomes more realistic as the child becomes more aware of his ability. Exposure and interaction among other factors eventually after the child's occupational choice as these experiences become more realistic. Also, Mburza (1992:20) said that "career development support the concept of career choice being developmental in nature". For the purpose of guidance and counseling super rightly claimed that, "we need an elaboration of the variable and the routes by which people arrived at, and enter an occupation. He further stressed that, interaction efforts of personal and social factors and the part they play in forcing a self-concept. They later have a crucial influence on the choice, entry maintenance and satisfaction geared from work. Another point in Super's emphasis in career development as a continuous process following a sequence of different stage is only loosely connected to chronological age. As individuals change constantly he/she encounters new experience, therefore occupational choice is subject to change to meet these needs.

The Exploration stage, which lasts from 14 to 24 years, is marked by a tentative period during which professional options are limited but not finalized. The career development challenges of crystallizing, clarifying, and implementing a job decision are encountered by individuals. When a person's work ethic, achievement, and foresight come together, they start thinking about the different selves they could create. These professional daydreams eventually crystallize into a publicly acknowledged career identity, complete with a preference for a specific group of occupations at a specific ability level. In the same vein Super (1957) as cited in Greg (1995) maintained the exploration period, which lasts from 15 to 24 years, is marked by self-examination, role-playing, and occupational exploration in school, leisure activities, and part-time job by persons who have established interests and abilities through school activities or practice work experience. This stage has three sub stages as follows;

- 1) Tentative sub stage 15-17 years: is characterized by tentative choices made after due consideration of individual's needs, values, interests, abilities, and opportunities available.
- 2) Transition sub stage 18-21 years in an attempt to implement self-concept through the choice of career, or course of training/education, individual's action is based on reality factors.
- 3) Trial sub stage 22-24 years the individual having made

seemingly appropriate choice, secured his first job and therefore is on the entry or trial sub stage that is to say the beginning job is tried out.

Themba (2010) identifies the following dimensions of career maturity as comprising his model in a study of career maturity across career stages in the South African military: orientation to career choice, information and planning, consistency of career preferences, crystallization of traits, and wisdom of career preferences. What's crucial to note about these dimensions is that he recognizes that they're better suited to the early (exploratory) stages of a career. When it comes to job choice, the presumption is that someone who is more concerned with making decisions is more likely to be ready and able to choose an acceptable vocation when the time comes than someone who is less concerned with making decisions (Super, 1957). One of the main reasons why teenagers can be immature is a lack of awareness of, or care for, the decisions they will face. As a result, this dimension can be measured by looking at how concerned an individual is about career obstacles and how well he or she uses existing resources to deal with decision-making duties.

According to Hargreaves (2006), one of the foremost career researchers of our time, Donald Super, has had a significant impact on the field of career psychology, particularly in the area of career development, as discovered in a longitudinal study of the occupational aspirations and perceptions of nine to thirteen year-old South African children. Super's goal, however, was never to create a single, well-integrated theory, but rather a collection of segmented theories that covered job growth, self-concept development, and life roles. Over the course of 40 years of research, Super established his career development theory, which is viewed as a lifelong process spanning five developmental stages from childhood to retirement. His approach has shifted the area of career psychology to see employment as one of many roles that people play in their lives, and as a role that varies with time.

### **Super's self-concept (self-awareness)**

Self-Awareness theory is one of the enormous contributions made by Donald Super in the development of career stages. Super was greatly influenced by the phenomenological trend of the social sciences. He awarded a certain importance to subjectivity in career development. The creation of the concept of 'self' or 'self-concept' is one of the decisive aspects of professional growth. The 'self', according to Super, can be defined as being what the person 'is'. The concept of the 'vocational self' is seen as diverse experiences related to the individual's career. As the self-concept gradually

develops, the individual tries to actualize it in a concrete manner by comparing it to the reality around them. However, as positive and negative experiences occur, the self-concept can be transformed this evolution is meant to help the individual adapt to professional changes. The more the individual advances in their career, the more their self-concept will be static. Today's reality can provoke the evolution of the self-concept (Samson, 2009).

On the other hand, Zunker (1998) is of the view that Physical and mental development, observations of work, identification with working adults, and general contextual experiences all contribute to the development of career self-concepts. A better developed career self-concept emerges from increased understanding and experiences in the workplace. Career self-concepts are just one aspect of a larger self-concept. They are the motivating factors that determine a person's job path and provide a form of self-expression.

Mamman (1992) opined that self-concept theory of vocational choice views vocational choice as a developmental process in which an individual implement his self-Concept. According to him, individual goes through series of life stages that are linked with the self-concept which is elaborated upon and clarified as he moves from childhood to maturity. This self-concept is then translated into aspiration preferences and work values the individuals vocational maturity depends on how successful he or she was able to deal with developmental challenges during the life stage of growth. He proposed five major life stages from growth to decline which are further divided into sub-stages.

- 1) Growth stage 0-15 is divided into fantasy, interest and capacity sub-stages.
- 2) Exploration stages 15-25 are sub-divided into tentative, transition and trial sub-stages.
- 3) Establishment stages 25-45 has the trial and specification sub-stages,
- 4) The maintenance stage begins around 45-65 years of age, while
- 5) The last stage Decline is divided into deceleration and retirement begins this stage last over a period of 65 years.

The five stages of development described by Super (1990) as referenced in Salami (2008) include growth (childhood), exploration (adolescence), establishing (young adulthood), maintenance, and withdrawal. Super proposed that certain vocational tasks are completed in identifiable and predictable sequences during each of the several stages.

Also, according to Van-Reenen (2010), a career theorist of career development highlighted on the changes that

people go through as they mature in a study of Career Indecision Amongst Prospective University Students. According to Super, socioeconomic variables, mental and physical abilities, personal attributes, and opportunities to which persons are exposed impact career trends. The concept of self-concept was one of Super's most important contributions to career advancement. According to Super (quoted in Tien, 2005), one's self-concept evolves and develops through time as a result of experience. In line with this, Zunker (2001:30) claims that in Super's paradigm, self-concept is an underlying element, "...vocational self-concept develops through physical and mental growth, observations of work, identification with working adults, general environment, and general experiences...."

A more sophisticated vocational self-concept is established as experiences broaden in relation to awareness of the world of work." In other words, people seek job fulfillment through employment roles that allow them to express, apply, and develop their self-concepts.

Vocational development may be regarded as the process of forming and applying a self-concept, according to Mamman (2002:112), and this process is projected from infancy to maturity as an individual continues to adjust to changing roles throughout his life cycle. As a result, when a person expresses a vocational preference, he or she is putting into occupational terms his or her own beliefs about the type of person he is and the type of person he or she would like to be. To press home his point, super argues that, understanding of the process of vocational development must begin with an understanding of the process of self-concept formation. Super (1963) states that self-concept formation begins when an individual recognizes himself as a distinct person, being both similar to and yet different from others; Super therefore categories the developmental process of career decision into various parts namely:

- 1) Crystallization Stage 14 to 18 years.
- 2) Specification stage 19 to 20 years
- 3) Implementation Stage 21 to 25 years.
- 4) Consolidation Stage 35 years and above.

Also, according to Super (1953), as cited in Dukku (1988), the process of vocational development is fundamentally the creation and implementation of self-concept, with the social component and reality playing a role, as well as a vocational decision. Crystallization (14 to 18 years), specification (18 to 21 years), implementation (21 to 25 years), and adolescence (35 years) are the stages, according to him. Meanwhile, some researches have the stand that Growth stage is going with crystallization stage while exploration stage is going with specification stage, implementation stage is moving with

establishment stage, and stabilization stage is moving with maintenance stage and Consolidation stage and above is moving with decline stage. These are the stages of self-concept theory developed by Donald Super which cannot be obtainable somewhere in Ghana because of the external forces, accident, and chance theory by some parents for their children at the age of 8-10 have to start their careers at the tender age.

According to Hargreaves (2006), in a study of nine to thirteen year-old South African children's occupational aspirations and perceptions, super's lifespan, life-space theory, where he views career development as the formation and implementation of self-concepts in occupational contexts and the synthesis of these self-concepts within the context of social, economic and cultural factors. Super considers the self-concept to be the most important construct in the career development process, and sees it as a continuous process of improving the fit between self and environmental determinants, as well as a process of integrating the individual's social, economic, and cultural reality with his own characteristics.

Super (1953) as cited in Olutola (1986) has presented two principal themes upon which career behavior can be analysed: Self-concept theory and developmental psychology, on the self-concept theory Super (1953) proposed that vocational self-concept develop on the basis of children's observation and identifications with adults in work. Self-concept theory requires a person to recognize himself as an individual and to realize his similarities with others. As an individual matures, he tests himself in many ways that have educational and vocational implications. As a result, as the process of distinguishing oneself from others progresses, so does the process of identification. Partly facilitating the differentiation and partly facilitate through life stages each of which calls for different vocational behaviours. Consequently, an individual passes through adolescent, young adult and adult life stages that demand vocational behaviours appropriate to each phase of his development Super then conclude that a person's mode of adjustment at one period of his life is likely to be predictive of his ability to adjust at a later period.

### **Career indecision and coping strategies**

Career decisions have a greater impact on people's life than few other decisions. As a result, it's not unexpected that understanding career hesitation is still one of vocational psychology's key concerns (Brown and Rector, 2008). One of the first tasks in career counseling is to identify particular obstacles that are preventing people from making career decisions (Osipow, 1999). Gati et al.

(1996) devised and validated taxonomy of challenges in career decision making to attain this purpose. According to the proposed taxonomy, there are ten types of difficulties divided into two groups, indicating a temporal distinction between difficulties that frequently arise before one begins the decision-making process (Lack of Readiness) and difficulties that typically arise only after the process has begun (Difficulties) (Lack of Information and Inconsistent Information). Young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools are no exception; they sometimes lack the readiness to make a professional selection because they are still in the teenage stage of life, moving to adulthood. Appropriate and consistent career information for them to make a sound career selection may be difficult to come by, as this information is often offered in bits and pieces by subject teachers who may have different perspectives.

The concept of Career Maturity is intertwined with the concept of career indecision. The ability "to make socially essential career decisions," according to Super et al; (1973), is one facet of Career Maturity (p. 4). As a result, career hesitation is regarded as a developmental issue during the job maturation process "that emerges from a lack of understanding about oneself or the workplace" (Chartrand and Bargh, 1994:55). The Career Indecision Assessment provides details on the specific issues that inhibit young adults from making career decisions.

Individuals make some of the most critical decisions of their lives when it comes to their careers (Lancaster, et al., 1999). Making such selections, on the other hand, is not only difficult, but also stressful and complicated. Although some young individuals make job decisions without apparent difficulty, many others confront challenges along the process (Amir et al; 2006). Such issues can cause the process to start late, stop in the middle, or lead to a less-than-optimal decision.

Understanding the roots of career hesitation is critical because it allows career counselors to better match their counseling tactics to the key drivers of their clients' decision-making challenges, resulting in more effective coping (Brown and Rector, 2008).

Making decisions can be difficult for a variety of reasons. Individuals are concerned not only about having to make a decision, but also about making the correct option and the potential negative consequences of making the wrong one (Frydenberg, 2008).

Naturally, most young adults who are having trouble selecting a professional selection try to deal with their problems in some way. Some people may feel immobilized or worried and resort to poor coping techniques like escape-avoidance behaviors, whilst others are more inclined to engage in problem-focused coping activities like planning, taking direct action, or seeking help. Indeed, coping strategies have been

thoroughly researched in a variety of circumstances, and a great deal is known about coping ways that are deemed more or less effective (Compas et al., 2001; Skinner et al., 2003). However, according to academics, the use and efficiency of coping methods varies depending on the type of stressor (DeLongis et al; 2005). What may be common among the young adults in Ghanaian Secondary Schools when they faced with stressors in career decision making process in their youthful exuberance is to deny their own interest and take after their close friends, forgetting that each individual is unique with different career interest. Career counselors are interested in how young adults tackle the problem of career pressures in order to help their client's better deal with the challenge of making more effective career decisions.

Skinner et al. (2003) conducted a review of stress and coping studies and identified over 400 coping strategies. Skinner et al. presented a motivational theory of coping based on this review, categorizing coping responses typically described in the literature into 12 categories of methods evolved to deal with a wide range of challenges. Self-reliance/regulation, support seeking, problem solving, information seeking, accommodation, and negotiation are six of these methods that are considered adaptive responses to stress (Zimmer-Gembeck and Locke, 2011). These six coping methods are frequently included in active and approach-oriented coping measures, which are typically linked to favorable outcomes after a stressful incident (Compas et al., 2001). The other six strategies (delegation, isolation, helplessness, escape, submission, and opposition) are frequently linked to discomfort and are frequently included in assessments of maladaptive coping.

### **Life span or life roles concept**

The concept of "Life Roles" helps us understand two important life concepts: First, career development covers all ages and is not limited to a remunerated activity associated to the workforce. A career plays a number of roles that evolve and develop based on the person's age and their situation. A career takes on multiples forms; this variety is desired and healthy for individuals (Samson, 2009). Equally, the life span vocational choice theory, which encompasses six stages of life and professional growth, was presented by Donald Super. These are the six stages. (1) Crystallization, years 14 to 18; (2) specification, ages 18 to 21; (3) implementation, ages 21 to 24; (4) stabilization, ages 24 to 35; (5) consolidation, age 35; and (6) retirement readiness, age 55. He later realized that they cycle and recycle throughout their lives as a result of changes in their selves as well as changes

in the workplace.

Super (1987) and Gross (1994) as cited in Adeoye and Bukoye (2010) have observed that career has become a necessity not only as a means of consistent sets of problems confronting young adults in choosing a vocation. The taste of choosing a life career has become a thorn in the flesh of many adolescents and many fall by the way side in an attempt to choose a vocation. The researcher therefore, argues that, it is very necessary to guide young adults to aspire for jobs of their interest and ability.

### Life-space

Everybody has his own style of life as such. The roles that people perform throughout their lives are referred to as life-space. Super emphasizes the importance of context in one's life, as it influences life roles and career behaviors such as exploration.

Super's paper on career theory (2012) According to Nevill (1987), Super's perspective on professions is not just academic, but also research-based and practical. As mentioned in Super's Career Theory (2012), Osipow and Fitzgerald (1996) described the theory as well-ordered, systematic, particular, relevant, and empirically substantiated.

Furthermore, it is founded on differential, developmental, phenomenological, and contextual methods, and it has not remained static, but has been continuously enhanced. By labeling his theory "differential-developmental-social-phenomenological psychology," Super (1994:64) claims that it encompasses multiple theoretical perspectives. Although his theory covers a wide range of topics, his earlier work is mostly based on person-environment theory, and his later work is focused on life span development theory (Super, 1994). Sharf (1995) discovered that, aside from the Theory of Work Adjustment and the Myers-Briggs theories, other career development theories, such as theories of traits and factor, Holland, Tiedeman, sequential elimination, and social learning, only include Super's growth and exploration stages, demonstrating the broad nature of Super's work.

Super (1990; Super et al., 1996), as mentioned in Dullabh (2004), considers profession decision to be a lifelong process. Different developmental activities must be completed at different periods of life in order to achieve career maturity. Super's thesis contains two fundamental tenets: career growth is life long and the self-concept is developed as each stage of life has an impact on human behavior (Savickas and Walsh, 1996). Furthermore, according to Super (1990; Super et al., 1996), careers develop as individuals master challenges, which are typically in the form of demands to change, and

which can be triggered by predictable developmental tasks loosely associated with chronological age or by unpredictable adaptive tasks that bear no relation to age or do not occur in a linear progression.

### FINDINGS

Generally, the results of the paper came out with the following career choice tips as;

- 1) When it comes to career choice, the presumption is that someone who is more preoccupied with making decisions is more likely to be ready and able to make the right decision when the time comes.
- 2) It is revealed that decisions made at tender age may relate to nothing but fantasy because they are likely to learn more on needs and wants of self rather than reality factor and are not necessarily worked upon as it would be later on in life.
- 3) The inability of young adults to choose a good vocation in life is lack of awareness of the particular vocation, and it can be examined by the interest of an individual challenge to that vocational choice or development.
- 4) It is discovered that Super has developmental stages from childhood to retirement and above.
- 5) Career decisions are among the most crucial decisions people make throughout their lives, according to the survey. Making such selections, on the other hand, is not only difficult, but also stressful and complicated. Although some young individuals make professional decisions without obvious obstacles, many others have difficulty making decisions. This can be due to a lack of career knowledge or information that is inconsistent.
- 6) Coping strategies for choosing a career path include; problem-focused or approach coping, emotion-focused coping, avoidant coping, and support seeking
- 7) Super's concepts of self-concept, life stages, life space, life career rainbow and life span are related and they shared some common features on the stages of a person's career
- 8) Super's theoretical formulations have been considered as one of the most significant ideas in the subject of career development, and his work incorporates a larger perspective of career development across the life cycle.
- 9) It turned out that Super's theory is still a very effective model for understanding career development and managing vocational education and counseling today.
- 10) The rainbow's life-span dimension depicts and demarcates life stages, which correspond to childhood, adolescence, maturity, middlecence, and senescence.

### Super's theory questioned

Super's Professional Development Theory is a



cornerstone in the field of career development; however it does not cover all.

Although empirical research has been difficult to achieve because of the broad scope of Super's theory, recent evaluations of the theory have been mostly positive, according to Geyer (2010) in a study of the occupational aspirations and gender stereotypes of South African and Australian senior primary school learners. Borgen (1991), as reported in Geyer (2010), sees Super's theory as one that has proven useful in that it is compatible with new notions and trends. Super's hypothesis, according to Savickas (2001), is still applicable in today's shifting employment setting and may be applied to a wide range of cultures and populations. Super's theory, on the other hand, has been criticized;

1) Super's life cycles aren't necessarily applicable to women, especially with the shift in gender roles over the last few decades. More segments of the theory, particularly the life space of teenagers and the life-span research of adults, should be empirically tested, according to Geyer (2010).

2) As Super correctly pointed out, career choice will not be significant to children under the age of 14 until they reach maturity; nevertheless, this cannot be recognized in certain parts of Ghana simply because some parents teach their children to begin a career at such a young age.

3) Super hasn't provided any testable hypotheses for his theory's many claims. Work satisfaction, professional maturity, and career progress, according to Salomone (1996), are not easily measurable, either because they are conceptually unclear or because tools to measure such constructs were not readily available at the time. Super's expansion of the notion of career (child, leisure, and citizen), according to the study, has grown overly inclusive, lacking definition, specificity, and exclusivity. Concepts that are vague and non-specific lose their utility.

4) It also fails to handle the intricacies of the evolving job economy, particularly in terms of numerous jobs. According to Coetzee (2006), Super's life-span structure is critiqued for its seeming rigidity in terms of life stages.

## SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEWED

The purpose of this paper was to review literature on Donald Super's Vocational Choice Theory. This study's theoretical framework is based on Donald Super's Vocational Choice Theory. Literatures on the option for a career, Self-concept of Donald super's theory, life stages, life span and roles, life space, career rainbow were reviewed, results of the related literatures, implications for counseling and the last but not the least the critique of

the theory were also discussed. Bases in support of the study on the concept of Vocational choice were discussed (Mamman, 1992; Bojuwoye, 1986; Momberg, 2004; Machine,"n.d" Hunter, 2009; Mburza, 1992; Themba, 2010). Supers self-concept was also considered. (Mamman, 1992; Mamman, 2002; Dukku, 1988; Hargreaves, 2006). This study is unique because it specifically determines the literatures on Donald super's theory of vocational choice the implications of this theory to were outlined.

## Career implications

The findings have several implications for designing and developing career development programmes and guidance. In doing this, individual differences such as gender, interests, and socio-economic factors should be considered. Also, should note the following;

1) Should note that vocational preferences of an adolescent are subject to continual change.

2) Career guidance should know that Vocational development has different meaning at different stages.

3) Should take into cognizance the inability of youth adults to choose a good vocation for their life as a result of lack of awareness of the particular vocation.

4) Should note that decisions made at tender age may relate to nothing but fantasy because they are likely to learn more on needs and wants as they grow from one stage to another.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Determination of the interest of Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi veterinary students in veterinary medicine and pharmacology: Implications for counselling**

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**The present study is carried out to determine the interest of veterinary students in veterinary medicine and pharmacology and the counselling implications. One hundred and thirteen students of veterinary college, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi were randomly sampled for determination of their interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology using age, sex and levels of study. The results showed that the sex and age of the students do not depend on their levels of study ( $P > 0.05$ ). The students' choice of veterinary medicine is dependent on their interest in the course, which is motivated by lecturer/student relationship ( $P < 0.05$ ). Many students significantly agree ( $P < 0.05$ ) that they have interest in pharmacology and would want to advance in the knowledge in order to become pharmacology lecturers. There is a co-relation between the students' interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology indicating that pharmacology is a core course of veterinary medicine.**

**Key words:** Veterinary medicine, pharmacology, interest, implications, counselling.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Veterinary medicine is the study of animal diseases including zoonotic diseases, their preventions, mitigations and cure. The study of veterinary medicine started about 250 years ago. The course is of 6-years duration. The mode of entry into university is either by Direct Entry (D.E., 5 years), University Matriculation Examination

(U.M.E., 6 years) and remedial programme (7 years). Regardless of the mode of entry, the students have privilege of completing the course in 8 years (D.E.), 9 years (U.M.E.) and 10 years (remedial) respectively. The study of veterinary medicine is broken into 3 phases. Phase I (preclinical) which includes Anatomy, Physiology

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and Biochemistry, whereas Phase II (paraclinical) comprising Pharmacology, Pathology, Microbiology and Parasitology. Phase III (clinical) comprising theriogenology, Medicine, Surgery, Public health and Preventive medicine. Animal production is taken at all the phases. However, general studies are taken between 100-300 levels of the study. Preparatory year (100 level) is not counted against veterinary students. Preclinical and paraclinical each last for 1½ years and clinical last for 2 years. Pharmacology, a Greek word comprising pharmaco, drug; logos-discourse in) is the science of drug. It deals with interaction of exogenously administered chemical molecules (drugs) with living systems (Tripathi, 2003). Pharmacology is the centre of medicine as it is a valuable asset for general practice of medicine, pharmacy and veterinary medicine. Many clinical pharmacologists have their enthusiasm sparked during the exposure to basic pharmacology in the paraclinical years. Others become interested in the use of drugs when they encounter specific therapeutic problems in the field. The main objectives of teaching pharmacology are: for academic jobs in medical schools; research jobs in pharmaceutical industries and drug regulatory bodies such as National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and for general practice (Ward et al., 1998). Education is defined as the process of initiation of the young ones into the culture of particular society (Chidobi, 2007). Interest is a tendency preference or engagement in a particular type of activity. Interest is a form of the manifestation of the cognitive need securing the orientation of a personality towards realizing the goals of activity, thus facilitating orientation and familiarization with new fact, a type of feeling experience, which might be called "worthwhileness", associated with attention to an object or course of action (Ramalingam, 2006).

## Interest

Intelligence is the ability to combine past experiences to solve new problem (Morris, 1991). To make any progress in a skill, the learner must be positively motivated, that is having some ambitions or aspirations connected with it. He will never be good at skill unless first of all, he really wants to. The greater his interest in achievement, the more rapid his progress will be likely. Students always show a much greater interest in courses which are associated with their own needs and experiences than in those which are not. Any lesson or learning activity must have some meaningful link with a student's experience if it is to be successful. Experience-link should be used to arouse interest to introduce a course. Discipline is training of the mind and soul in accordance with the laid down rules, regulations and the traditions of the society. Some students seem naturally enthusiastic about

learning, but may need or expect their instructors to inspire challenge and stimulate (Ogbonna and Lloyd, 2007).

## Factors motivating interest

Whatever level of motivation students bring to classroom will be transformed for better or worse by what happens in that classroom (Davis, 1999). Unfortunately there is no single magical formula for motivating students. Many factors such as interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence, self-esteem, patience and persistence could motivate interest. Quin (1995) defined motivation as the need and incentive that cause people to behave the way they do. It is the instigator and energizer of human actions. The motivating factors could come from inside or outside the organism, leading to achievement of goals. The factors could be in form of interest, need and aspiration (Omeje and Agu, 2004). Some students are motivated by approval of others, while some by overcoming challenges (Davis, 1999).

## Teacher's role

Teaching situation that can enhance students' motivation include giving positive feedback that supports students' belief that they can do well; ensure opportunities that the students can do well; help students find personal meaning and value in the material; create atmosphere that is open and positive; and help students feel that they are valued members (Lucas, 1990). Passivity dampens students' motivation and curiosity (Lucas, 1990). Characteristics of students' motivation include: teachers' enthusiasm; relevance of the material; organization of the course; appropriation of difficult level of the material; active involvement of students; variety; rapport between teachers and students; and use of appropriate, concrete and understandable examples on educational, vocational, family or personal problems (Ramalingam, 2006).

## Student's role

Therefore, students should be encouraged to focus on their continued improvement not just on their grade on any one test or assignment (McMillan and Forsyth, 1991). Competition produces anxiety, which can interfere with learning. The impact of student perceptions and characteristics also vary across the various dimensions of teaching performance with the potential bias being highest for evaluation questions relating to overall performance, and lowest for questions relating to formative assessment and deep learning outcomes (Worthington, 2001). Evaluations of teaching are now commonplace in most universities and the empirical

analysis of this student-based approach to appraisal proceeds apace. The focus of research has shifted more recently to methodological concerns and the study of specific background characteristics, which might harm validity (Wachtel, 1998). Put differently, there is the possibility that background characteristics [or factors that have nothing to do with the lecturers' behaviour or effective teaching] could bias student ratings. If this is the case, student evaluations as a valid indicator of teaching effectiveness, whether for formative (quality improvement) or summative (quality assurance) purposes, could be called into question. Some evidence on the biases introduced by background variables into student evaluations already exists. Four broad sets of factors are noted. To begin with, an extensive literature has developed concern with the characteristics associated with the administration of student evaluations (Chen and Hoshower, 1998; Wachtel, 1998). The second group of background variables posited to influence student evaluations of teaching are concerned with the characteristics of the course itself (Marsh and Dunkin, 1992; Braskamp and Ory, 1994; Anderson and Siegfried, 1997). This widespread literature now recognises the impact of electivity; level of course, subject area, and workload, amongst others, on teaching ratings. The third group of background variables relates to the characteristics of the lecturer, for which a large number of factors have been proposed and duly tested (Anderson and Siegfried, 1997; Wachtel, 1998). These include lecturer rank and experience, the reputation and research skill of the instructor, along with more base concerns of gender, minority status and physical appearance. The final group of background factors concerns the characteristics of students themselves and the biases introduced into student evaluations of teaching (Chen and Hoshower, 1998). Most of the existing work is largely 'generic' and has not focused on specific attributes of the teaching context. This is important because subject or discipline-specific analyses would provide greater empirical certainty on the role of background characteristics in teaching evaluations. Fourth, "a few background variables have not yet been sufficiently investigated as to whether there is a significant effect on student ratings. It is felt that the effect, if any, of the age of the students on ratings could be studied, provided that other characteristics such as course level, class size and prior student interest could be controlled for" (Wachtel, 1998). Despite evidence suggesting the bias of background characteristics represents "quite complex interactions between gender, teacher characteristics/behaviours and student perceptions and expectations" (Casey et al., 1997), rigorous empirical analysis would therefore facilitate greater certainty on the status of student background characteristics in teaching evaluations. Several dimensions of teaching performance are modelled, including aims and objectives, personal characteristics,

curriculum design, commitment to improvement and an overall performance ranking. Teaching is the central task colleges and universities perform for students. Policy administrators often emphasize teaching as the key determinant to a college student's academic experience and successful transition into the labour force. Many university and college mission statements declare that graduates should leave with strong analytical abilities, communication skills, and be primed for fulfilling careers. Students, on the other hand, often complain distinctively in teaching evaluations about how ineffective some lecturers have been in helping them meet these goals. "I would rather eat glass," for example, is one student's response to whether he or she would take one of our colleague's courses again. As post-secondary school enrolment continues to increase along with tuition, colleges and universities face renewed demands for better teaching and student experience. Several more recent meta-analyses, however, suggest that teacher quality does in fact lead to higher test scores, but the mixed conclusions across studies may indicate that the size of the influence may depend on the circumstance (Hedges et al., 1994). Studies that examine the relationship between teacher quality and longer-run outcomes, such as earnings, find more consistent evidence that teacher quality matters. Teacher quality may differ in many ways not captured by observable qualifications or experience. Test score improvement differs substantially for students with different teachers, but in the same school and grade. Although explanations for these differences are not readily captured by common measures of teacher quality, they nevertheless indicate teachers play an influential role (Watkins, 1994).

### **Role of culture**

Mogbo (2001) reported that cultural practices in society usually result from ingrained prejudices, attitudes, customs and behavioural effects which discriminate against and bridge human's legal rights and access to otherwise commonly owned resources and educational opportunities. Ajayi (1989) described culture as the totality of the people, their complex beliefs, laws, customs and habits which determine the values, rites and behaviour of the individual members of the society. Maduabum (1995) reported that teaching strategies employed for the science subjects are not different from the conventional methods.

### **Accreditation of veterinary college**

Students depend on the quality and integrity of the accreditation process as a means to verify the worth of their financial, time and personal investment (Simmons, 2004). Accreditation is one way of assuring that the study

of veterinary medicine is credible and competent. The standard of accreditation is reviewed from time to time (Leist, 2003). Accreditation is a process used to assure quality in higher education and to encourage and promote improvement and advancement in education. It is a process valued by professions, educators, trade association colleges, governments, industries, employers and societies (AVMA, 2004). Veterinary schools are assessed for accreditation to complement other evaluation activities (Craven and Strous, 2004). Veterinary curriculum has been changed from time to time to meet the academic needs of the world (Jefferies, 2003). Preliminary assessment indicates mostly positive reaction to problem-based learning, while identifying areas of concern (Howellet al., 2002). Changes are unavoidable in order to train veterinarians who are qualified for meeting the increasingly stringent demands of different areas of profession (Simoens et al., 2004). Collaboration between students was fostered by tablet computer use, which offers possibilities for future development of collaborative learning environments. The electronic learning means has flexibility with the way in which it is evolving to meet the changing needs of the teaching programme (Ellaway et al., 2005). Veterinary students and graduates' feelings of competence in technical skills increased in parallel with curriculum support (Ozen et al., 2004) which focuses on academic and scientific training, active learning and problem solving training communication, professional behaviour and lifelong learning (Van Beukelen, 2004). Although, curriculum varies between schools, they all aim to produce a generalist veterinary-specialization, which occurs after graduation (Collins and Taylor, 2002).

### Statement of the problem

A number of veterinary students are being withdrawn at the end of every academic session, most especially those in undergraduate IV going to V and many also repeat UG IV and V while others drop out. There is need to find out the causes of the students failure in their professional examinations with a view to proffering lasting solution bearing in mind that lack of interest, inability, age and sex are some of the factors that may affect student's performance at the professional examination.

### Purpose of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

- (i) To determine the interest of veterinary students in veterinary medicine and pharmacology;
- (ii) To identify factors responsible for lack of interest in pharmacology and veterinary medicine;
- (iii) To determine student/lecturer relationship with a view to improving performance, so that the students can

complete the programme in good time.

### Research questions

Some of the questions the research is seeking solutions for are: at 300 levels some veterinary students opt out of veterinary medicine, while at 400 some are withdrawn based on academic incompetence. Therefore the current system is in trouble. So the research questions are:

- (i) How will the interest of veterinary students in veterinary medicine and pharmacology be motivated?
- (ii) What are the factors responsible for lack of interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology?
- (iii) Can student/lecturer relationship improve performance and therefore encourage the students to hold grip to the course and if possible complete the course in good time?

### Research Hypotheses

- (1) The null hypothesis states that all 300-600 levels of veterinary students have interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology.
- (2) The null hypothesis states that there are no factors responsible for lack of interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology.
- (3) The null hypothesis states that student/lecturer relationship cannot improve performance and guarantee graduation in good time.

### Significance of the study

The study will enable us to know the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may be responsible for students dropping out and withdrawing from veterinary medicine with a view to counselling the affected students. Both the students and the lecturers would know why the students fail exams and so can be advised on how to improve on their performance. Government can also use the findings with a view to reviewing curriculum whenever need arises. Parents of the students can also be advised on how to handle such type of students so that their academic problems do not lead to suicide. The centre for Guidance and counselling of the University can use the findings to guide and counsel the students in order to improve on their performance.

### Scope and limitation of the study

The study covered 300- 600 undergraduate levels comprising male and female students of College of Veterinary Medicine, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi. Since Veterinary students start pharmacology

from 300 level and end the course in 2nd semester of 400 level. However, the students apply the knowledge of pharmacology in the clinical levels (500 and 600).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

This work was set out to examine the interest veterinary students of Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi in veterinary medicine and pharmacology. Based on the nature of the work, quasi research design was adopted. The justification of the research design is real in the sense that not all undesirable variables can be excluded from the experiment, even though some of them can be controlled by the researcher. There was no random assignment of participants to the interventions in order to estimate the causal impact of the intervention in the studied population.

### Area of the study

The area of the study was University of Agriculture, Makurdi, located about 20 km from Makurdi town which is about 250 km away from Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The centre is located at the Southcore campus of the University, Eastward of River Benue.

### The Population of study

A total of 113 sampled students from College of Veterinary Medicine, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, participated in the study. The students who were Nigerians came from various states of the Federation and belong to different ethnic groups comprising both Christians and Muslims. They were of either sex, age range between 16 and 43 years and between 300 and 600 levels of the study.

### Sample and sampling technique

Veterinary students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi in 300, 400, 500 and 600 levels were randomly selected for the study. Levels 100 and 200 were excluded, because they did not take pharmacology course. The designed questionnaires were administered to 113 out of 173 students of veterinary medicine who voluntarily participated and have taken at least a course in pharmacology. The questionnaires were filled and returned. The adopted random sampling technique was based on the belief that the technique has the ability to ensure that each element in the population has a chance of being sampled.

### Instrumentation

The instruments used were questionnaires, students and Federal university of Agriculture Makurdi as centre of the study. The interest of students in veterinary medicine and pharmacology was determined based on principle of "agreement" or "disagreement" with reference to sex, age and level of their studies.

### Validation of instruments

The questionnaire contained 6 itemized questions constructed by

the researchers and given to Dr. (Mrs) E.G. Egbe-Okpenge and Prof. C.O. Iji who are experts in the field for validation. They recommended that the statements in the questionnaire should be based on principle of agreement or disagreement.

### Method of data collection

All the questionnaires filled by respondents were collected and sorted out according to age, sex, levels and interest based on the principle of agreement or disagreement.

### Method of data analysis

The results were presented in tabular form and the data analysis was based on the method of Howell (2007) Chi. Square was used to analyse the data at 5% level of significance.

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows levels and sex distributions of students that were admitted into veterinary medicine. Out of the 113 respondents, 79 students were males while 34 students were females. But 300, 400, 500 and 600 levels students recorded 15, 20, 24 and 20 male students respectively. Whereas the total numbers of the students in each level were: 300 (17), 400 (24), 500 (41) and 600 (31) with 2, 4, 17 and 11 female students respectively. The variables are independent of each other ( $P > 0.05$ ).

However, a total of 67 male students were within the age range of 16 – 29 years and 12 male students (30 – 43 years) respectively. Whereas 27 female students within the age range of 16 - 29 years and 7 (30 – 43 years) were also recorded (Table 2). The variables are independent of each other ( $P > 0.05$ ). Table 2 shows age and sex as factors responsible for interest or otherwise of it. Ninety six out of 113 veterinary students chose to study veterinary medicine as against 17 students that were given the course against their will. However, 108 out of 113 respondents developed interest in the course during the study period as against 5 students who had no interest in the course. Although 84 out of 113 respondents believed that lecturer/student relationship was cordial and has motivated their interest contrary to the belief of 29 students who disagreed that lecturer/student relationship was cordial and motivating (Table 3).

The overall translate to 288 veterinary students choosing the course with interest further motivated by lecturer/student relationship. But a total of 51 students were given the course against their interest and they believed that unfriendly and ill-motivating lecturer/student relationship has further demoralized their minds (Table 3). The variables are dependent on each other ( $P < 0.05$ ). Table 4 shows the distribution of veterinary students who had interest in pharmacology with intent to advance the knowledge in order to become pharmacology lecturer. The variables are dependent of each other ( $P < 0.05$ ).



**Table 1.** The distributions of levels and sexes of veterinary students.

Sex	Levels of studies				Grand total
	300	400	500	600	
Male	15	20	24	20	79
Female	2	4	17	11	34
Grand total	17	24	41	31	113

**Table 2.** Age and sex distributions of veterinary students.

Sex	Age		Grand total
	16 - 29 years	30 - 43 years	
Male	67	12	79
Female	27	7	34
Grand total	94	19	113

**Table 3.** The distributions of veterinary students who chose to study vet medicine with interest and believed in cordiality of lecturer/student relationship as a motivating factor.

Status	Parameter			Grand total
	Choice of veterinary medicine	Interest in veterinary medicine	Lecturer/student relationship as motivational factor	
Agree	96	108	84	288
Disagree	17	5	29	51
Grand total	113	113	113	339

**Table 4.** The distributions of the population of veterinary students who had interest in pharmacology and wished to advance the knowledge and become lecturer in the field.

Status	Parameter			Grand total
	Interest in pharmacology	Interest to advance knowledge in pharmacology	Interest to become pharm lecturer	
Agree	74	56	34	164
Disagree	39	57	79	179
Grand total	113	113	113	339

Seventy-four (74) out of 113 veterinary students had interest in pharmacology as against 39 that lacked interest in the course. Although 56 students had intention to advance the knowledge, the remaining 57 had no interest for postgraduate studies in pharmacology. Furthermore, 34 out of 113 students had interest to become pharmacology lecturers after their postgraduate studies in pharmacology. The overall translated to 164 out of 339 that have interest in pharmacology with intention to advance the knowledge and become lecturers in the field, as against 175 students who did not have interest in pharmacology and so would not want to

advance in the field because of lack of interest to become pharmacology lecturers.

## DISCUSSION

The lack of significant difference ( $P > 0.05$ ) between the number of veterinary students in clinical years (500 and 600 levels) and preclinical years (300 and 400 levels) shows that the ability to move from preclinical to the clinical years doesn't depend on the level of students (Table 1) but instead on the ability of individual students.

However, the less number of students in preclinical years may suggest low number of students' intake, high number of drop out and or withdrawal from the programme based on academic incompetence. Therefore, students should be counselled to learn together (Michaelsen, 1992). Since learning acquired as a group would confer performance advantages on students analysing future evaluations, either as part of a group or as individuals. This improved learning is reflected in improved student ability to understand and retain content (Pickrell et al., 2002). Students ability to monitor and improve his or her progress by formulating an argument or constructing a new product, demonstrates evaluation and metacognition activities (Mansilla and Gardner, 1998). Functioning groups can share resources to enhance each member's performance. Specifically, groups can share information, skills, and understanding of implications, enabling the members to predict the outcomes (Chang et al., 1998). The programme of veterinary medicine in Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi allows a maximum credits of 24 units up till 400 level, hence 400 level used to be the "break point" between preclinical and clinical years of veterinary programme of the University. Many students usually repeat or are withdrawn at this level. Then, at 300 level, some students that envisage problems and who think they cannot cope with the system usually drop out to take an option in College of Science or Animal science. The increased number of male veterinary students (79) over female students (34) which gives the ratio (10:3) in favour of male students connotes low level of enrolment of female candidates in veterinary medicine. Education is a key factor in human development and social transformation. The problem of women development in Nigeria traced its root to type of education and low female enrolment in schools during the missionary era and British Colonial administration (Okonkwo and Eze, 2008). One of the first critical issues, perceived by many as a threat, that was identified by the "Mega Study" and supported by the Brake report was the economic impact of the feminization of veterinary profession. The fact is that the income of women in veterinary profession seriously lags behind that of men and that men's income is already grossly standard (Brakke, 1999). The finding shows that the sex of students studying veterinary medicine does not depend on the age of the students. That is, the age ranges considered in this study cut across all the sexes. However, 94 out of 113 students were within the age range (16 – 29 years) indicating the possibility of going for youth service if they are able to complete their programme before the age of 30 years (the limit set by NYSC). However, 19 students were already above 30 years indicating the possibility of exemption from National Youth Service programme. That translates to 2 in every 10 veterinary students of University of Agriculture Makurdi are due for exemption from youth service. More so, 3 in every 10 female

veterinary students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi are also due for exemption as 2 in every 10 male vet students are due for the exemption.

The findings show that the students' choice of veterinary medicine is dependent on their interest, which is motivated by lecturer/student relationship. Many students (96) of veterinary medicine from Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi chose the course by themselves signifying high level of interest by the students (108) in the course as justified by cordial and motivating relationship between the vet students and their lecturers as claimed by 84 out of 113 students. Therefore, translating to 288 out of 339 veterinary students having chosen and developed interest in the course as motivated by cordial relationship between students and their lecturers. This may be attributable to teaching methods adopted by teachers and readiness of students to learn. Knowles et al. (1998) have described teaching methods as being either teacher centred with dependent learning (Pedagogy) or learner centred with independent learning underpinned by the learners' experience and intrinsic motivation (andragogy). Nevertheless, 51 out of 339 students had no interest in the course which translates to 3 in every 10 students getting repeat, withdrawal or drop out based on lack of interest. That is why some students have either dropped out or withdrawn from the course (Table 3), because of lack of interest. Interest being an element or item in individual's make up, either congenital or acquired because of which he tends to have this feeling of "worthwhileness" in connexion with certain objects, or matters relating to a particular field of knowledge (Ramalingan, 2006). School curricula of today are replete with materials that furnish numerous possibilities for interest to develop. A teacher should know the interests of his students early in the school year. Instruction should begin at the point of interest (Skinner, 2009). One external measure of the quality of a teaching programme is the success of its graduates on examinations. In trying to provide the best education possible in a limited amount of time, the goal of veterinary faculty is not simply or necessarily a high pass rate in these examinations. A high pass rate on these examinations combined with abundant job opportunities for graduates can increase students' interest in the course (Bristol, 2002). Defining a set of attributes expected of veterinary graduates is a key step in obtaining an effective outcome assessment of a professional educational programme (Walsh et al., 2002). Table 4 shows the distributions of the population of veterinary students who had interest and wish to advance the knowledge in order to become lecturers in pharmacology. The findings show that 74 out of 113 students have interest in pharmacology that is intended to be advanced by 56 students from which only 34 wanted to become lecturers in pharmacology translating to 3 in every 10 students developing interest in pharmacology with intention to advance the knowledge

and become lecturer in the field. However, 4 in every 10 veterinary students have no interest in pharmacology despite the cordial and motivating relationship between the students and their lecturers. The factors that may be responsible for lack of interest in pharmacology are the bulky nature of the course that involves cramming, some strange terms in addition to having a lot of calculations. Although the students were not asked for the reasons of lack of interest in pharmacology, but some complained of lack of adequate practical, others requested for lecturing/practical pedagogy to make them acquainted with strange terms and procedures. Some complained that some lecturers do not give adequate explanations during lecturing and that the hand-outs/lecture notes are bulky and so tossing interest in the course. Interest is the central force that derives the whole machinery of the leading learning process (Mangal, 2010).

Autonomy-supportive teacher behaviour can be effective in fostering intrinsic motivation in students. Students' sense of belonging is fostered by an instructor that demonstrates warmth, openness and encourages student participation. He is enthusiastic, friendly, helpful, organized and prepared for class (Freeman et al., 2007; Reeve and Jang, 2006). High-achieving students pursued the extra credit work, while students who were earning poor grades did not. This behaviour is tied to student motivation. Students who were motivated to succeed in the course made the choice to do the extra credit work, which was consistent with the other choices they had made, such as to attend lectures and help sessions. Reading ability impacts the achievement levels of students in academic settings (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2001; Zhu, 1999). Therefore, one response is affected by consequences associated with concurrently available responses (Williams, 1994). Similarly, students who earned poor grades typically demonstrated a low commitment to several components of the course, including the extra credit work (Moore, 2005).

The fact that 70 male students participated in the study in comparison with 34 female students may suggest higher male enrolment in veterinary medicine, perhaps as a result of increased interest the males have in the course. However the observation of 65 students within the age range of 16 to 29 years who are studying veterinary medicine at UGIII to VI levels may suggest that the majority of students in the Nigerian veterinary school are within this age bracket. Many students graduate from veterinary schools at about 30 years of age may be, due to academic problems such as repeating one or more levels of study. In some Nigerian Vet schools like A.B.U. Zaria where prerequisite policy is adopted some students study veterinary medicine for about 12 years. In Usman Danfodiyo University Sokoto, the study lasts for less than or equal to 9 years. In Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi where students do carry over courses to year IV, many students graduate within or equal to eight years.

However, in Sokoto, cases of withdrawal are more

rampant than any other Vet School in Nigeria, because there is neither carryover nor spill over. The method considered as best by some veterinary professionals in the country, unlike other disciplines where students graduate at the age of 20 or little above 20. Many veterinary students interviewed in this study want to continue with pharmacology and even want to become lecturer in the field, simply because they chose to study the course. Veterinary students are in between top flyers and averagers since the pass mark in veterinary medicine is 50% those who cannot cope up are usually withdrawn to study other options. Therefore, weaklings and bandwagoners have no opportunity to continue in veterinary medicine.

However, based on the level of intelligence students can be categorized into 4 categories; Top-flyers rank among the best and brightest. They dream big and work really hard and would seldom fall below grade B; they develop exceptional mastery of their courses and always stand out from the rest. The averagers constitute the average students who are neither at the top nor at the bottom. They are reluctant to try something extraordinary and are content with C grade. Averagers can migrate to the top-flyers' group when they put in extra-academic effort and they can slip to the weakling's category. The weaklings are academically weak students who struggle to make an E grade and are happy with it. Any grade above E comes to them as a pleasant surprise. Their major concern is how to escape carryover and spill-over. The bandwagoners strayed into academics, enrol for the programme just to make themselves feel good, default in class attendance, test, assignments and sometimes exams. They never hurry to graduate and remain at bottom of academic ladder (Ndubueze, 2010). Therefore, the decision to intervene in terms of lack of interest must be based on the presenting problem and whether the students like the intervention as relevant to stated goals. The teacher can identify patterns of thinking and assumptions indulged by students which may be hindering their progress in the study of veterinary medicine. Not only that, the focus on historical background of families of veterinary students may reflect on significant experiences that may stimulate natural ability of students to change (Hanna and Brown, 1991).

The study has shown that more males study veterinary medicine than females and those within the age range of 16 -29 years are more. Many vet students find the course less difficult but experience has shown that only a few make distinctions in pharmacology. This shows that older people can improve their performance on intelligence tests. Instruction in test-taking methods and in problem-solving strategies can improve the cognitive performance of older subjects (Schaie, 1990). Counselling is the practice of applying psychological theories and communication skills to clients' personal problems, concerns, or aspirations. Some forms of counselling also include advice-giving, but the dominant ethos is one that provides facilitation without directive guidance (Colman,

2003). Both positive and negative comments make feedback and success. Praise builds students' self-confidence, competence, and self-esteem (Lucas, 1990). Teachers' expectations have a powerful effect on students' performance. If a teacher acts as though he expects his students to be motivated, hardworking and interested in the course, they are more likely to be so. Failure to attain unrealistic goals can disappoint and frustrate students (American Psychological Association, 1992). Students who learnt under a teacher who made adequate preparations for the lesson had higher achievement than those who learnt under a teacher who did not prepare for the lesson (Ajayi-Dopemu, 1986). Chu (1997) and Naka (1998) have discussed link between various aspects of cognition – particularly attention, memory, and language-and-handwriting skill. It is suggested that good handwriting can make the student ready to benefit from class room instruction.

Research about the connection between teacher quality and student outcomes at the post-secondary level is virtually non-existent. A few studies focus on the effect of particular types of graduate assistants, but these studies rely on relatively small samples and do not have much information on student background. For example, Borjas (2000) analyzed the impact of foreign teaching assistants on economics students' performances at Harvard University. More recently, Ehrenberg and Zhang (2005) examined the effects of adjuncts (part-time faculty) on student dropout rates using institutional-level data from a sample of U.S. universities. Bettinger and Long (2004, 2005), estimated from an administrative dataset of public four-year universities in Ohio, the effects of adjunct professors on course selection and dropout rates using year-to-year and class-to-class variation in first year instructors. They estimate that adjuncts had very small positive effects on students' picking similar subject courses in subsequent years (relative to full-time faculty), but adversely increased the likelihood that students drop out in the second year. Using administrative data from a large Canadian university between 1996 and 2005 suggest that whether an instructor teaches full-time or part-time, does research, has tenure, or is highly paid has no influence on a college student's likelihood of dropping a course or taking more subsequent courses in the same subject. What does matter is instructors' perceived effectiveness and related subjective measures of quality evaluated by students (Bettinger and Long, 2005). Hence, teachers with an autonomy supportive style rely on different instructional behaviours to motivate their students than do teachers with a controlling style (Reeve and Jang, 2006). Class grade distributions and dropout rates differ across college instructors teaching the same course, but less so compared to class grade distributions across elementary and secondary school instructors. Standardized effects from a change in instructor quality are about half the size or lower for college instructors than for elementary and secondary teachers (Kane et al., 2006). Perhaps by the

time students enter college, cognitive ability and motivation are less malleable than in early childhood and, consequently, teachers have less impact. When students claim they are not interested in anything, educators must help them discover what actually does interest them. Furthermore, another way to help youth expand their repertoire of interests is by arranging systematic opportunities for them to interact with community members who are engaged students and have a wide variety of life experiences (Brozo, 2005). Students are able to engage in scientific discourse, hold competing hypotheses, look for supporting evidence, communicate their ideas with supportive arguments, and propose possible empirical studies to further their understanding (Yang, 2007). Contracting involves a learning agreement between students and teachers, and it offers the opportunity for independent thinking (Mar et al., 1993).

Therefore more teaching staff should be employed to handle available programmes. Academic staff from senior lecturer position be given administrative training and lecturers be motivated through incentive and promotion to ensure effectiveness and achievement of set goals and objectives to move university education forward (Omirin and Ajayi, 2011). Duke (1990) sees teaching as intentional transfer of knowledge whereas counselling is an interactional relationship designed to facilitate the personal development of information leading to effective decision taking and awareness of self. The concept of guidance and counselling in the Nigerian educational system is a thing of recent origin (Nwonye, 1999). Before this time, guidance and counselling was something informal and incidental and was carried out by teachers in their daily association with students (Amali, 2007). Shertzer and Stone (1980) listed appraisal, information, counselling, planning, placement, follow up and evaluation services as the responsibility of counsellor.

## Summary

The students' choice of veterinary medicine is dependent on their interest in the course, which is motivated by lecturer/student relationship. However, the sex of the students studying veterinary medicine does not depend on their age and levels of study. Many students significantly agree that they have interest in pharmacology and would want to advance in the knowledge in order to become pharmacology lecturers. Therefore the students' interest in veterinary medicine is correlated to their interest in pharmacology signifying that pharmacology is a centre of medicine.

## Conclusion

The choice of veterinary medicine by veterinary students is as a result of students' interest both in veterinary medicine and pharmacology, 5 in every 10 students want

to advance the knowledge in pharmacology and 3 in every 10 students want to become pharmacology lecturers.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the students should be further motivated and encouraged by way of counselling to study harder in order to succeed in their professional examinations. More so, pedagogical methods aimed at making veterinary medicine more appealing should be adopted. Lecturer/students relationship should be further strengthened in order to increase motivating role in students' performance in professional examinations. It is suggested that another study be carried out to compare the interest of students of various veterinary schools in veterinary medicine and pharmacology. More so, both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that could motivate interest in veterinary medicine and pharmacology should also be studied independently.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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*Full Length Research Paper*

# **An assessment of adequacy of guidance and counseling programme in secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan**

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This paper explores the factors that influence implementation of effective guidance (G) and counseling (C) programme in secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan. The study was directed by Person-Centered theory developed by Carl Rogers that is hinged on the three pillars that is, congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard, better known as core-conditions. The study identified a total of 341 respondents out of a population of 1,505, but after attrition of some respondents, the study ended with 1,302 from which 306 was used. The researcher used stratified random sampling for students and purposive sampling for teacher counselors and education administrators at national and state level. Findings suggest that despite the emphasis on G and C in schools by the South Sudan curriculum framework, the provision of this service is highly inadequate and/or missing altogether. Teachers are not trained to handle school G and C. The main implications of the study are the need for a more comprehensive guidance and counseling policy document which will provide for training and posting of teacher counselors to schools, providing a budget and assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the programme by MOEST. This research suggests that further studies can be carried out in this area but in other location of the country for comparison purposes like in the Greater Bahr-el-Ghazal and Greater Upper Nile regions. The researcher recommends a study on the role of G and C in improving retention, performance and improved completion rate of student in secondary schools in South Sudan.

**Key words:** School guidance and counseling, teacher counselors, effective counseling programme.

## **INTRODUCTION**

According to the South Sudan Curriculum Framework, one aim of education is to have learners who have self-belief to be creative problem-solvers, relate well with

others and understand others concerns and needs. The curriculum framework further states that students should be taught not only academic and vocational subjects but

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also school programme which include physical activities and sports, personal development programme, careers guidance and community involvement both at primary and secondary school levels. These programmes include: Physical activities and sports. Personal development and life skills programmes (to include guidance and counseling), Careers guidance, community involvement and peace education. The proposed curriculum framework indicates that at Primary school, the programme will include personal support for their students that will have elements of life skills and career guidance but will not be examinable. At secondary level, the curriculum states that the programme was planned by the schools to meet the needs of their learners since there is no syllabus for the programme. This is aim to help the student make the best use of their own facilities and capacities as well as enhance their personal development.

Effective counseling programs are important to the school climate and a crucial element in improving student achievement. Wango (2006) citing Kamunge report (Republic of Kenya, 1988), observes that guidance and counselling is an educational programme that seeks to enhance personal development. It is manifested through self-awareness, knowledge of the self and the total environment. Such knowledge should enable individuals as members of society acquire skills, attitudes and positive self-concept for performance and effective use of opportunities available in life. Guidance and counselling can also be conceptualized as being developmental and preventive as opposed to intervention and reaction. Thus guidance and counselling programmes should prepare individuals for all the key milestones in life and can be best offered during an individual's education life span.

This study therefore purposes to investigate whether GC services are offered in secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan as stipulated in the proposed South Sudan curriculum framework also looking at the adequacy of services, training level of teacher counselors and gaps in the service with an aim to addressing them.

### **Theoretical framework**

This research was guided by Person-Centered Theory of Carl Rogers (1968). In applying Person-Centered counseling approach in education, Gatongi (2007) says that the core conditions stated above of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard are very important qualities that any person would desire to receive from fellow human beings. All human beings wish to have an environment where there is acceptance, non-judgment and warmth. The core conditions enhance effective and caring relationships. According to Carl Rogers, adolescents wish to conform to peers but parents disapprove of such conformity. This brings conflict because the adolescents still require parental

support.

Another conflict arises from the adolescents' struggle to leave childhood ways and be independent. The adolescents also suffer stresses arising from changes in their bodies, expectations and aspirations of parents, teachers, peers, society and their own. These stresses and conflicts lead to confusion manifested in a variety of adjustment mechanisms (Makinde, 1984). Wambeti and Mwenda (2016) notes that comfortable setting where the client can feel at ease to discuss their experiences. The approach is one of the most used theories of counseling both by practitioners and researchers. It has been found useful in helping individuals to overcome anxiety, personality disorders and drug addictions among other issues.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) asserts that a traumatic experience may have a profound effect on the physical health, mental health, and development of the student. How students process trauma depends on their age and level of development. By understanding how students experience traumatic events and how they express their lingering distress over the experience, school personnel can better respond and help them through this challenging time. NCTSN further notes that students exposed to a traumatic event feel self-conscious about their emotional responses to the event. They often experience feelings of shame and guilt about the traumatic event and may express fantasies about revenge and retribution. A traumatic event for adolescents may foster a radical shift in the way these students think about the world. Some of these adolescents may begin to engage in self-destructive or accident-prone behaviors, and reckless behaviors. There may be a shift in their interpersonal relationships with family members, teachers, and classmates. These students may show a change in their school performance, attendance, and behavior.

This theory was chosen because there is a relationship between the Carl Rogers' conditions for constructive change to occur in the client and the variables of the study such as the factors that influence effectiveness of the school counseling service (independent variable) as effective school guidance and counseling (dependent variable). According to Wambeti and Mwenda (2016), students are likely to avoid seeking for counseling from a teacher-counselor who does not show them empathy and unconditional positive regard. The Carl Rogers' conditions for constructive change in the client provided an appropriate framework for exploring the barriers to effective student guidance and counseling in secondary schools.

Looking at the psycho-social well-being in secondary schools in South Sudan, one will appreciate the need to deal with issues of aggression (whether verbal or physical) among learners which manifests in schools through fights among students, bullying, rudeness, disrespect, negligence, truancy, delinquency and



sometimes through psycho-somatic stress disorders.

Learners at any level in the country have not been spared by prolonged armed conflict both before and after July 2011 independence. To anybody understanding, if the above issues are left unresolved, it may even contribute to low completion rate, poor performance and poor inter-personal relationships in education institutions. The study therefore seeks to uncover factors that are at play in implementing school G and C and make recommendations that can help in making the service to be relevant and effective to the consumers (students and members of the school community).

### Background of the study

South Sudan is the 54th nation in Africa and the youngest only having attained independence on 9th July, 2011 after a long period of pre-independence war that lasted well over two decades. Thirty-eight years of civil war, between the Sudan and South Sudan, has displaced 4.9 million people and killed more than 2 million. The vital infrastructure of the Republic of South Sudan has been essentially destroyed, and there is an almost complete lack of basic social services.

The population is estimated at 9 million, with more than half living below the poverty line, especially in rural areas (World Bank, 2013). This war left a lot of socio-economic devastation and noticeable under-development in various sectors including education. While the nation was putting on every effort to heal from the trauma and losses of the pre-independence war, the country suddenly plunged into another political turmoil in December 2013, and repeated again in 2016. This situation has left both socio-economic and political effects that the country is still dealing with to date. All these experiences left a traumatized community, a fact quite evident in various social institutions and mainly in education. Various mechanisms have been and are still being employed to aid the populace in healing from such acquired or inherited traumas and secondary schools have not been exceptional. International standards for counseling require that counseling be provided to students regularly and that it should be built into the curriculum and delivered through scheduled classroom instruction (ASCA, 2006). Ruttoh (2015) quoting Melgosa (2001) says that an organized guidance and counseling programme is essential in assisting students cope with the stresses they face while in and out of school. Some of these stresses include physical and psychological changes they face due to adolescence include adapting to their new image, facing the growing academic demands, establishing vocational goals, learning to control sexuality, emotional and psychological independence from their parents. Inman (2019) asserts that the goal of high school counselling is to "help every student develop abilities of self-understanding, decision-making, life planning and action-

taking to be able to adjust in the career options he or she decides to pursue. An organized guidance and counselling programme will offer right environment for the growth and development of the student and offer quality education. Nkala (2014) in his study carried out in Nzilikazi province observed that in order to come up with an effective GC Programme, it is necessary to determine what support services and available resources are necessary to meet the needs of students, families and the communities. In Zimbabwe for example, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is not clear on the required professional qualifications of G and C Programme implementers which are assumed may have an impact on the future of students. It is noticed that teachers who are holders of Bachelor Science Honours in Counselling and Masters in Science in Counselling are mostly trained at Zimbabwe Open University. "A properly conceived and organized School guidance and counseling (SGC) programme would be governed by a clear statement of mission which defines the outcome of the counseling program, set clear and measurable learning objectives and goals, and identify the inputs and strategies that should come together to make the delivery of the program possible" (Deneke, 2014).

The current view of professional school counseling, as reflected in the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (ASCA, 2006), calls for school counselors to shift from more traditional, reactive roles within schools in order to become more comprehensive and proactive in their delivery of counseling services to students.

Mushaandja (2013), recommend that counseling services should focus more on preventative interventions rather than remediation activities.

GC programme should be able to reflect on other characteristics of the clients, such as age, location or environment, cultural background, sex and economic status. In effect, this means that the main aim of any school counseling model should be developmental in nature whereby it helps to model students in a manner that they should develop intrinsic drive to adopt pro-social behaviors both in and out of school (Deneke, 2014).

According to the module developed by UNESCO (2000) in Botswana, school counseling programme should serve the following purposes -: Increases self-knowledge and how to relate effectively to others, broadens knowledge about the changing environment, helps them reach their fullest academic potential, provides opportunities for career exploration, planning and decision-making, provides an opportunity for networking with services and thus establishes an effective, support system, teaches responsible behaviour. In summary, a successful school guidance programme, according to UNESCO (2000, Module 4) should have the following characteristics:

- 1) A record of success -It is important to identify a

leader with good experience, and who is a competent professional who has had the relevant training. Such leaders can direct a programme competently, and adhere to the ethical and legal issues related to it.

2) Inspires confidence - A realistic and supportive programme leader inspires confidence and trust among subordinates and acknowledges the accomplishments of the support staff and gains their confidence. This provides the organization with a group of dedicated and confident staff.

3) Promotes partnership - A good programme leader ensures teamwork. The success of the organization is shared between him and his subordinates and this creates a feeling among them of belonging. No one looks only to the leader for success but considers it instead a shared responsibility.

Gudyanga et al. (2015) says that, the support of head teachers as they are responsible for the achievements at school. Effective head teachers mobilize enough materials and human resources for their schools. Head teachers should ensure that the curriculum is managed effectively through proper allocation to other teachers. Head teachers must support guidance and counselling in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling guidance and counselling programmes, which if done correctly leads to success of Guidance and Counselling and achievement of the goals.

In South Sudan, the general situation in education is that there is inadequate staffing at all levels especially due to low motivation through low level salaries, delay in payment of teachers, stagnation in job groups without regular promotions etc. this conversely may translate to the fact that the few teachers in the teaching service may have heavy workload and may spare little or no time for counseling. Moreover, their professional training may not afford them adequate skills for counseling students. This finally coupled with inadequate resource allocation for this service may make it challenging for schools to establish GC service. This study therefore tries to explore the adequacy of GC service in secondary schools in South Sudan with an aim to making recommendations on how to improve the service.

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a cross section survey, where variables are studied as they exist in their current situation. Mubanga (2016) observes that a survey usually involves collecting data by interviewing a sample of people selected to accurately represent the population under study. The study opted for this method to allow for complete and detailed analytical and in-depth assessment of information. This research used descriptive statistics like percentages, tables and figures during data presentation. The study used basic statistics which will be further elaborated by analysis of themes and content in a qualitative approach. This research used mainly stratified random sampling to identify strata for data collection, especially for the student-respondents who were the majority. This is the design that divides populations into sub-populations called

strata. Members are selected from each stratum at random. This is for the purpose of ensuring representativeness and generalizability in determining the sample size, the researcher used the following method:

$$N = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{1302}{1+1302(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} = 305.992$$

Sample is  $n=306$ :  $N = \text{population } 1302$ ;  $e^2 = \text{Margin of error/or degree of freedom}$

Various instruments were used and among them were open-ended questionnaire that was administered to students and teachers in the selected schools. Amin (2005) observes that questionnaires are chosen because of their ability to reduce biasness. Additionally, a face-to-face interview guide was also used on Education Administrators both at State and National level. An observation checklist was therefore developed which targeted to collect data on three main areas of G&C, that is, administrative aspect like presence of formally established G and C programme, availability of G and C facility with all required resources, etc. In data analysis, the researcher used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 16.0 (SPSS). Data were presented using descriptive statistics that is percentage, frequency, pie chart, graphs etc. Data were presented in qualitative form with minimal use of quantitative analysis like frequency tables and percentage figures.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

After analysing respondents bio-data, the researcher went ahead to analyse themes and content from raw data collected on G and C. The first item sought to gather information on availability of G and C Service in school (Table 1 and Figure 1).

This item sought to establish whether there is a formally established G and C in the school. From the data collected, 221 respondents taking 74.410% said that there was no G and C service in their schools. This shows that there is a gap in provision of G and C services in South Sudan secondary schools that needs to be addressed. Further in this item, 17.508% said that their school had G and C service. 8.88% included 21 respondents who said that they did not know about existence of G and C service in their school. This might be so due to the absence of the service or facility where they can get assistance to this effect. Three respondents (91.0101%) did not answer this questionnaire item. These findings compare positively with the study findings of a research carried out in Zimbabwe by Gudyanga et al., (2015) on Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Secondary Schools in Chinhoyi Urban where 2.9% of the respondents said that schools hardly implemented G and C, 62.9% did not implement G and C while 14.3%

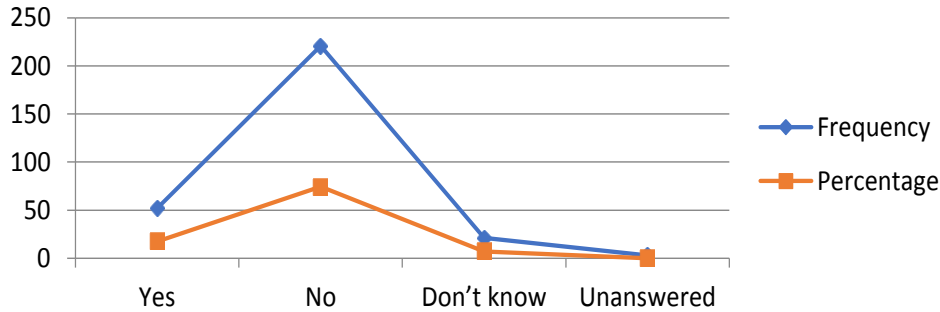


Figure 1. Line graph showing responses on availability of G and C service in school.

Table 1. Availability of G and C service in school.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	52	17.508
No	221	74.410
Don't know	21	7.0707
Unanswered	3	1.0101
Total	297	99.9988

were not sure about its existence and 2.9% did not know anything about it. Mushaadja et al. (2013) in schools in Namibia, found out that in many schools, little (if any) real counseling took place; most interventions were practical and/or focused on motivating learners a study carried out in Windhoek on Major challenges facing teacher counselors in not to become disheartened.

**Is there a teacher in charge of handling students' personal, inter-personal or academic issues?**

This item on whether the school has a teacher-counselor responsible for handling learners' issues, the highest frequency was not standing at 54.5454%. Most respondents confirmed that there was no trained teacher in counsellor to whom they could refer to in case of need arising out of academic or personal concerns. Only half of that percentage, 27.2727% said that the school had appointed a teacher to handle their issues. The rest of the percentage was for those who did either not know or ignored the item and left it unanswered. This may compare positively with the findings of Gudyanga et al. (2015) in Zimbabwe who found out that 62.9% of respondents confirmed having G and C in schools that was implemented only to a lesser extent and fell short of its expectations to perform its mandate in alleviating students' issues. In the same study, 45% disagreed on the importance of G and C in handling their issues while others did not even know what it was. Nweze and Okolie (2014) in a study carried in Nigeria found that 73.33% indicated that their schools did not have G and C services

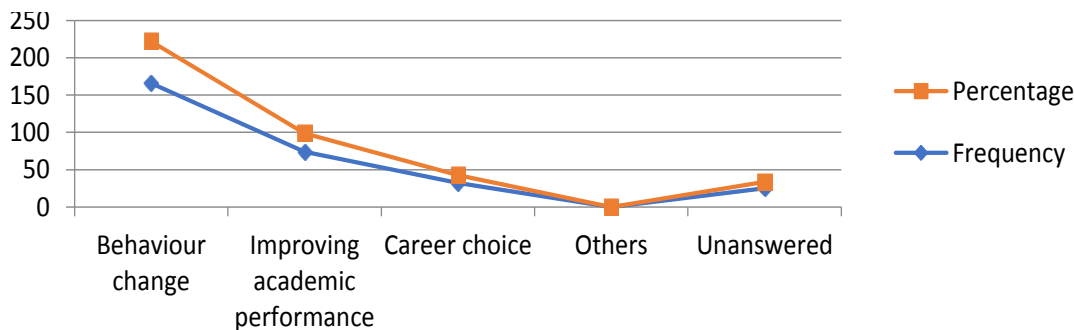
and did not even have a teacher-counsellor appointed.

**What are the commonest methods used by teachers and school administration to deal with the issues that require G and C?**

In reference to the statistics obtained from students, in case of a student committing an offence, the commonest mode of correction in their school is manual tasks (40.404) followed by guidance and counselling (23.569). The research however found an interesting data of schools still using corporal punishment (6.734) as a disciplinary procedure, despite the fact that it is proscribed in education in South Sudan. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which South Sudan is a signatory, Article 5 states, "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel or inhuman treatment or punishment".

**In which ways do you think G and C is important in helping students in your school?**

This item sought information on the importance of school G and C in helping learners in the school. Data given indicates that G and C service is important in helping learners in behaviour modification. This was confirmed by 166 respondents who claimed 55.89% followed by 24.915% who felt that the service is important in helping students to improve in their academic performance. The third group of respondents taking 10.774% believed that



**Figure 2.** Line graph showing ways in which G and C helps students.

**Table 2.** Ways in which G and C helps students.

Importance of school G and C	Frequency	Percentage
Behaviour change	166	55.892
Improving academic performance	74	24.915
Career choice	32	10.774
Others	0	0
Unanswered	25	8.417
Total	297	99.998

Source: Primary data.

school G and C was necessary for helping learners in career choices (Table 2 and Figure 2).

***Suggest ways in which you think the school can help in making G and C service effective in handling learner's issues.***

This instrument was analysed using content analysis or only explanation of findings since quantifying it in percentages and frequencies was not possible as some students gave similar answers. The commonest suggestion was given by 143 respondents that the government through the MOEST should appoint, trained and qualified teacher counsellors.

This was explained as being so necessary because some issues overwhelm the teachers and with limited professional competency, they end up not helping students effectively. In other instances, teachers may break confidentiality by revealing information they acquire from students in counselling sessions. These findings compare positively with findings of a study done in Kenya by Mikaye (2012) who said that in order for schools to carry out guidance duties and activities, teacher-counselors need to receive appropriate and professional training before they become qualified guidance teachers. For teachers without prior training, on-the-job training could be provided to familiarize them with the knowledge and skills needed for the job as guidance teachers.

Secondly, guidance and counselling needs a budget that should come directly from MOEST. Mikaye (2012) observes that the main issues hindering guidance and counselling due to lack of resources in the school were lack of privacy since there was no guidance and counselling office. They lacked funds to sponsor the guest speakers and attend workshops. "The need for human resources suggests that schools need more professional school guidance personnel. There is a need for further training in counselling skills." In addition, the guidance teachers wanted their school principals to receive some training in counselling and guidance. "I think school principals and all teachers should receive appropriate [guidance and counselling] training." In their opinion, guidance training should be incorporated into all teacher training programmes (Yuen et al., 2002).

**Data analysis from teacher-counselors**

***Does MOEST support guidance and counselling programme/service?***

Findings indicate that 86.7% of respondents confirmed that MOEST does not support G and C programme in their school. In a similar study done by Gudyanga et al. (2015) in Zimbabwe Chinhoyi Urban found out that only 22.9% of the respondents had facilities, 2.9% was not sure of the resources available and 74.3% highlighted that they did not have the resources for the programme.

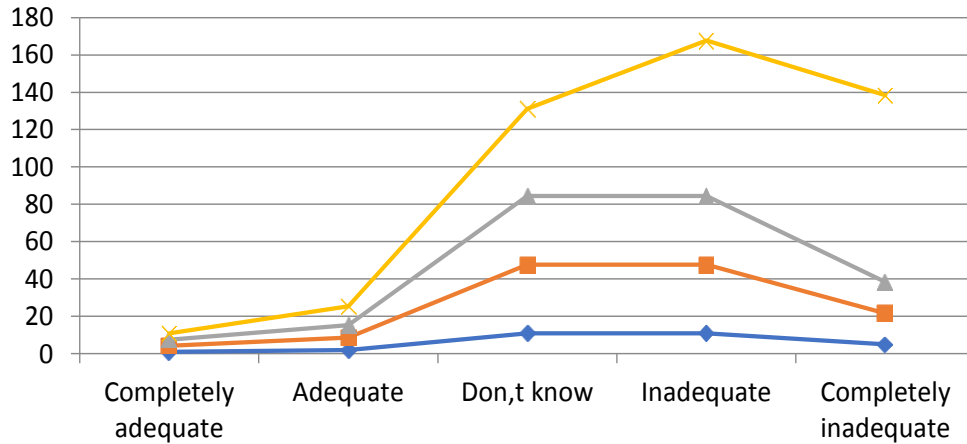


Figure 3. Line graph showing level of adequacy of school G and C services.

Table 3. Rating of adequacy of G and C service in respondents' school.

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)
Completely adequate	1	3.3	3.3	3.3
Adequate	2	6.7	6.7	10.0
Don't know	11	36.7	36.7	46.7
Inadequate	11	36.7	36.7	83.3
Completely inadequate	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

**Have you undergone training as a teacher-counselor?**

The item indicated above, sought to gather information on whether the teacher-respondents underwent any training regarding G and C as the table above indicates, none of the 30 teachers selected for this study underwent any form of training in G and C. Gudyanga et al. (2015) in a study in Chinhoyi Urban found out that 91.4% of the teacher-respondents had never undergone such training on Guidance and Counselling. In a similar study carried out in Sotik District in Kenya by Nyamwaka (2013) indicates that, 42.9% considered the training grossly inadequate for them to be able to carry out their duties effectively as counsellors. None of the respondents considered the training adequate or very adequate. Oyieya (2013) conducted a study in Kabondo District and proposed that teachers should receive appropriate and professional training before they become qualified guidance teachers.

**Are the teachers involved in G and C relieved from some of their teaching duties?**

On whether teacher - counselors are relieved from some

of their teaching duties, 93.3% said that they were not. Teachers were expected to handle their full teaching load as well as other mentorship duties and attending to learners personal needs outside classroom teaching. Only one respondent said yes while one more did not answer the item. This compares well with findings from a study by Nyamwaka (2013) which revealed that majority of the teacher counselors (85.7%) had a heavy teaching load which made it impossible for them to have time for guidance and counselling duties.

He found out that the number of lessons allocated to the teacher counsellors from the table, 14.3% of the respondents had between 16-20 lessons, while the majority (71.4%) handled between 26-30 lessons and 2 respondents (14.3%) had a teaching load of above 30 lessons. His findings further agree with previous studies that in most schools, guidance and counselling is perceived as an extra-curricular activity. As a result it is neither provided for in the schools' time table nor given priority in the school budget (Kilonzo, 1989; Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999; MOE, 2000).

It is clear from the above presentation that majority of the respondents either did not know the level of adequacy of the counseling services in the schools or they believed that the service was inadequate. Most of the respondents here felt that, the available counseling

services were not adequate enough to handle issues from students (Table 3 and Figure 3). A study carried out by Natesan et al. (2016) in Malaysia found out that two-thirds of the teachers counseling were classified as having a moderate effectiveness.

***The extent to which is G and C programme/service is able to deal with students issues***

The next question became invalid because the response in 2 above was NO. This indicates that the MOEST does not support G and C programme or services in secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan in any way. These findings compares positively with studies carried out in Kenya by Ruttoh (2015) who found out that 57.2% of the students have not attended counseling session(s) with the teacher counselors. The reasons they gave for not attending were: There was no programme in the school, the quality of the service was poor because they thought some teacher counselors were rude, not confidential and others had a bad attitude towards the students. The students therefore felt that they were not welcome and the service was not professional enough to win their trust. This means that despite the great importance placed on school counselling service by various governments, most of them have not been able to either set aside a budget to facilitate the programme, train school counsellors, give a motivational allowance to teacher counsellors or even create, furnish and maintain G and C office in schools. Figure 4 shows the commonest issues among students which require G and C service.

Adane (2016) in his study in Ethiopia, had findings that indicated that, disciplinary cases, low motivation of students to engage themselves in teaching learning process, lack of study techniques, cheating, disruptive behavior in class, disrespect for teachers, low academic performance, harassment of female students, not doing assignments and homework on time, late coming to school, fighting among students and bullying are some major problems commonly mentioned among others. All these mentioned problems by students and school administrators are psychological and have their own adverse impact in student learning, meaning there is need to do counseling to alleviate the adverse effects of such cases.

***Briefly comment on some of the challenges that influence the implementation of effective G and C programme/service in Secondary schools in South Sudan.***

This item was responded to by listing challenges according to their importance as follows:

1) Lack of trained counsellors and some members of staff

have low professional qualification. This is confirmed by a lot of untrained personnel and volunteers teaching in secondary schools.

2) Lack of funding to implement guidance and counselling in schools

3) Lack of an official document to guide provision of school G and C.

4) Understaffing in some schools which makes teachers handle many lessons leaving them with little time to handle students' personal issues through G and C.

5) Some of the school members do not know much about G and C. Some do not make a difference between other disciplinary approaches of G and C.

Momanyi (2013) had similar findings to those of Juma (2009) who studied on the challenges guidance and counselling departments face while offering their services in secondary schools in Ngong Division. She used descriptive survey design, questionnaires and interview schedules to collect data. The findings established that the department in most schools here lack rooms from where they can carry out their activities.

**Summary of findings**

Findings from data collected brought forth the following findings

1) School G and C is a necessary service which should be supported in order to provide the correct service to students. Majority of the teachers indicated that guidance and counselling services were necessary in the schools especially for educational matters.

2) The current situation of G and C in their schools was not effective enough to assist learners; therefore a lot still needs to be done. However, a negligible number of respondents confessed to have a vague idea of what G and C is in school and felt that what it can do is already catered for in the discipline committee.

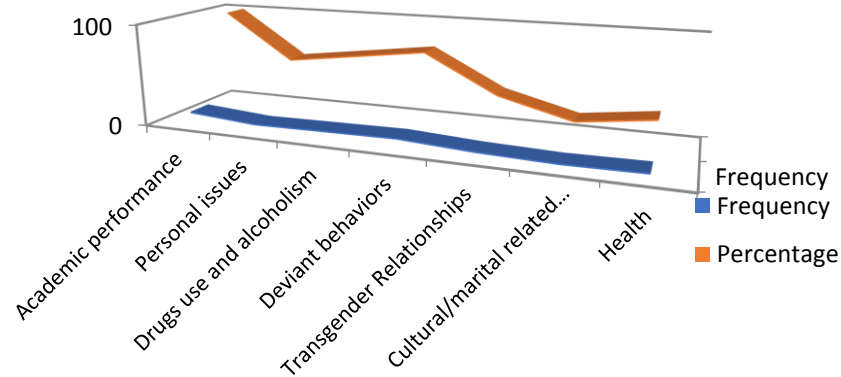
3) There was no formally established school G and C programme that could help in solving learners personal, academic and psycho-social issues.

4) Findings revealed that no teacher is trained to handle G and C department in schools and neither is any appointed into that office either by MOEST or by school administration.

5) G and C service needs to be offered by trained and competent teachers. However, there was admission to the fact that teachers were not trained specifically to handle G and C in schools. They were supposed to do it as a delegated duty just like sports and club patronage.

6) Schools lacked resources in the school from the MOEST, lack of counseling facility in the schools with privacy for easy consultation by students, the schools lacked funds to sponsor the guest speakers and attend workshops, teachers lacked training on counseling, and hence issues of unethical practices like breaking confidentiality would be expected in such cases.

7) Lack of awareness about such services in schools



**Figure 4.** Line graph showing commonest issues among students which require G and C service.

Some students confessed having very little knowledge about the importance of school G and C.

Regarding measures that can be taken to improve school G and C, the study listed them according to importance as:

(i) Establishment of Department of school G and C: This suggestion was that the government through the MOEST should train teachers in G and C and post them to schools to head the Department of G and C. The schools should set aside a room in a convenient place with comfortable furniture and needed resources to support the department. The Department of G and C should be viewed as being of importance just like other departments in the school, therefore must enjoy as much attention as other Departments in the school.

(ii) Training of teacher-counselors: The findings show that training can be done either as teachers' continuing education program or workshops to help refine their skills and knowledge in counselling. This is because, without qualified personnel, even with establishment of a counselling Department, it may not be possible to run the services required by the students. This implies that if these teachers are trained and posted by the MOEST, then there was incentives to accompany their responsibility and teachers was motivated to handle it effectively.

This implies that if trained teachers are posted to head school G and C, there was high level of professionalism in service provision and this may attract more students seeking the services.

(iii) Allocating a budget for establishment of/and support of G and C: The study found no budget has ever been allocated for G and C to secondary schools. This implies that without a budget, there would be no resources for G and C, creating an office for the same would not be possible and provision of incentives to teacher-counselors would not be done. This in effect would mean that requirements for setting up a counselling office and

equipping it would not be done and the human resource would not be facilitated to handle it. Otherwise, the only way to make G and C work is to provide a budget by MOEST to schools and ear-mark it for G and C activities in the school.

iv. Allocating time for G and C in the school time-table: This item had the response that G and C was not time tabled in the school master time table. This means that there is no specific time at which G and C should be done. The school time-table is supposedly loaded with examinable subjects leaving teachers with little time for counselling learners as well as learners who are loaded with a lot of class work and assignments. This implies that G and C officially assigned time therefore it is easily ignored by both teachers and students.

v. Relieving teacher-counselors' of some of their teaching load: This study found out that teacher-counselors were not relieved of all or part of their teaching load. They taught a full workload assigned to them and handled other responsibilities given to them. This implies that teachers have no time in the South Sudan education context to do G and C to students since the time-table is packed with examinable subjects and other school support activities like sports.

vi. Giving some incentives to teacher-counselors: According to the findings of this study, no incentives are paid to any teacher who may engage in counselling of students either as a delegated duty or as a situational demand. Information gathered from the schools indicates that teachers by nature of their profession are expected to do guiding and counselling to learners at no extra pay except their usual salary. This is not the case with other responsibilities where a head of Department, Director of academics, students' discipline in-charge and other related departments enjoy responsibility allowance. This has the implication that G and C in schools is not as recognized as other responsibilities and lack of accompanying incentives discourage teachers from undertaking the duty.

vii. Including students in the counselling committee:

Inclusion of students in the school G and C committee is not necessarily to give them equal leverage in managing the programme, but to promote feeling of ownership and use them as a link in unearthing students issues that a teacher may find challenges in discovering. Learners are important players during the implementation process although they are usually ignored during decision-making and vision building if learners do not register for a particular subject, the change effort is fruitless. The degree of implementation success (the extent to which curriculum objectives are achieved is established by learners' behavior change as a result of the innovation. (Gudyanga et al., 2015; Fullan in Gwengo, 2003).

Viii. Setting up of assessment and evaluation mechanism for school G and C: This study found out that there is no monitoring mechanism that is put in place to evaluate G and C programme in schools. The MOEST has never developed a policy document that can help in assessing the implementation of School G and C. It therefore made it difficult to evaluate and report on the extent to which G and C is effectively implemented in schools. All school counselors stated that there is no job description and guideline that guides them. They further described that; they are not evaluated based on their provision of guidance and counseling services. But rather, they are evaluated by their engagement in other activities than counseling services provided which is hindering them not to get appropriate feedback and improve their services.

### Implications of findings

The study revealed that the teacher counselors were facing many challenges including lack of appropriate space and time to counsel learners, and lack of skills to effectively address learners' psychosocial needs. These findings further indicate that parents are sometimes involved in learners' disciplinary offences and some schools had gone a step further and established a discipline committee. This implies that no teacher is well equipped with psycho-social skills except the knowledge that they may have received on educational psychology during their teacher training course. Further, this piece of data opens to the question on whether, apart from classroom teaching and other administrative duties, they are capable of handling issues among learners that require guidance and counseling. s that the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools is still not well established even-though in every secondary school there is a teacher who is full time counseling, yet the services provided by them showed less effective counseling. This issue should be given serious attention by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology as these services are required in high schools to assist the students to face many challenges in this borderless world.

The study revealed further that there as scarcity of resources and facilities for Guidance and Counselling in

schools such that funding is needed for the programme to have an impact. Head teachers and administration do not seem to be giving enough support to the teachers as they claimed during interviews. Schools need resources and facilities for effective implementing of Guidance and Counselling. The implications are that unless there is adequate preparation of human and material resources, then school G and C may not be effectively implemented. In as much as the MOEST has detailed G and C as one of the non-examinable but students support services, it may not be successful until schools are empowered enough through training of teachers who may in turn establish and manage G and C department. The implication here is that for effective G and C in schools to be established, the MOEST should take the initiative of directing school administration to set up a department of G and C, then appoint and send for training teachers who will manage it. This would be coupled with orientation of the other teachers and the head teacher about G and C since this is a collaborative affair, which requires support of every teacher.

This above revelation may be a disturbing phenomenon in education settings since school G and C service is necessary as agreed by Yuen et al., (2002) who observes that the goal of G and C is to help students grow as whole persons; it is about meeting students' individual needs. The underlying philosophical assumptions are that students can grow through the counselling and guidance process; guidance and counselling training is essential for every teacher and administrator.

MOEST needs to enforce the proposal in the Curriculum Framework by allocating a budget for school G and C separately and following it with staffing the department of school counselling with a trained teacher in G and C. This implies that for G and C to succeed, there is need to provide both human and material resource, whereby, the appointed teacher should hold the post of a Head of Department in order to give school guidance and counselling the same weight that is given to other departments. It is this trained and well facilitated teacher that will establish a very functional counselling unit in the school and offer effective GC services in secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following:

- 1) MOEST should facilitate teachers and head teachers in secondary schools by providing minimum guidelines for putting in place guidance and counseling services and provide an office where privacy is made a priority. This will encourage more students to visit the office.
- 2) Guidance and counselling teachers should be well trained on how to carry out their duties by being sent to attend many seminars and workshops to improve on their



skills.

3) The MOEST should set aside a proper budgeting for adequate provision of guidance and counselling materials as well as facilitating guest speakers and paying incentives to the teachers involved in this school programme.

4) There is need for schools to have a budget to invite guest speakers who will provide the counseling services to the students in areas of concern and mentorship on topical issues that they have expertise in. It has more impact that when done by their regular school teachers.

5) Department of guidance and counseling should outsource and avail student inventory, bulletins on different topics, handbooks for different educational opportunities, career booklets, books on psychology, audio and visual materials, psychology magazines should be provided to the school to improve the department.

Finally, a similar study needs to be done in other locations especially the Greater Bahr-el-Ghazal that was not covered by this study due to logistical challenges. It is suggested that a study be carried out in related area focusing on a different variable like relationship between school G and C and students' discipline. The researcher recommends a study on the role of G and C in improving retention, performance and completion student in secondary schools in South Sudan. The researcher recommends a replication of this study for other levels like basic education or higher education in the Republic of South Sudan.

## LIMITATIONS

Limitations are conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations, Best and Kahn (1998), the researcher faced certain challenges. For this study, the major limitation was scarcity of literature. There was no much current literature available on the subject that provided an in-depth study of the problem concerning the delivery of counselling services in South Sudan secondary schools. It should be noted that there are sharp differences between the case under study and any other nation in the world. For this study, there was only one study done in education in South Sudan that had a mention of guidance and counseling, other than the Proposed South Sudan Education Curriculum Framework. Therefore, the researcher relied heavily on literature from other countries, regions and continents. However, findings are still generalizable to other situations as the study has uncovered similar challenges that have been identified by other researchers elsewhere in the world.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interests.

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