

**ROLE OF COUNSELLING IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS IN  
SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KABWE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA.**

**BY**

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**TITLE: Role of counselling in academic achievement of pupils in selected  
secondary schools in kabwe District, Zambia.**

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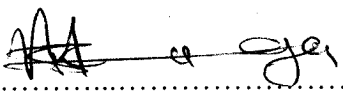
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**DECLARATION**

I, Mulenga Tobias Chileshe, do declare that this research report is my own work and the fact that it has never been submitted by any person to this or any other University for the fulfillment of the Master Degree of Science in Counselling or any other reason. I therefore submit this report as a requirement for the completion of the Master Degree of Science in Counselling.

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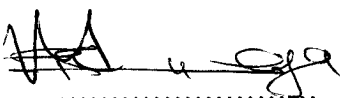
Signature: 

Date: 28/09/2016

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**


This research report by Mulenga Tobias Chileshe is a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Master Degree of Science in Counselling by the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

Researcher

Signature:  .....

Date: 28/09/2016 .....

Supervisor

Signature:  .....

Date: 05/10/16 .....

## DEDICATION

This document is dedicated to my all members of the family who have or have not offered me any physical, psychological, social, emotional and material support. To my Mummy, Daddy and siblings, I dedicate this document for the fact that the encouragements and support you gave has resulted in the achievement of completing this important document which is one of the requirements in completing this programme. I also dedicate this document to my nephews, nieces, friends, brothers and sisters in law who were instrumental in the completion of this report and study.

## Abstract

The study investigated the role of counselling in academic achievement of pupils in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District of Zambia.

The objectives of the study were; to investigate the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement, to determine types of counselling offered to pupils and to identify challenges hindering the provision of counselling services. The sample size was 125 and the descriptive survey design was used. The researcher used semi structured questionnaires to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from school counsellors and pupils. In addition, academic record schedule mark sheets to check if academic achievement for pupils had been improving or not after accessing counselling services were also used.

The researcher distributed questionnaires to participants and thereafter collection was done after they completed answering questions and also observation was done to check the conduciveness of counselling environments in the selected secondary schools.

Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate tables and charts. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data by drawing important themes.

According to the major objective of this study which was to investigate the role counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement, the findings from the participants were that counselling improves school attendance, prevents school dropout, reduces cases of indiscipline, develop effective study habits, avoid and manage risk behaviors, helps deal with academic and social problems. When counseling addresses these issues, pupils will be able to focus on their education and later their academic performance may improve.

Based on the findings of this study, a conclusion was made that counselling plays a role in academic achievement as counselling help pupils to focus on their education and later their academic performance improve.

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study: There is need for school counsellors to implement all the types of counseling needed in schools. School counselling programmes should be strengthened in order to improve the academic performance of secondary schools in Kabwe District.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank all the people who helped me in the completion of this research report as without them, it would have been very difficult for me to come up with a well meaningful research report. First and for most, I would like to thank my mother who always encouraged me during my childhood to work hard to achieve whatever I wanted to achieve when I grow up. I also thank all my family members who have been there for me during my course of study and before. My sincere thanks goes to my elder brother who took me back to school after two years of school stoppage as without him I do not know where I could have been today.

To my supervisor Dr Daniel Ndhlovu, I say a big thank you for the unfailing and critical guidance during the period of writing this report.

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**List of abbreviation**

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences



## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter highlights the following elements of the study; background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific study objectives, and study questions, significant of the study, delimitation of the study, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and operational definitions.

### **1.1. Background of the study**

Recently, there has been an increased attention to the continuing decline of academic achievement of pupils in some secondary schools of Kabwe District. Looking at this decline of academic achievement of pupils, there is an assumption that there are many factors which may be negatively affecting the academic achievement of pupils in secondary schools of Kabwe District. Challenges which may be affecting the academic achievement of pupils in Kabwe District include indiscipline due to lack of good morals and values, poor school attendance and stress which is a product of various problems faced at home and within the school environment. This is supported by Forman and O'Malley (1984) who stated that social stressors which are related to social relationships with peers, interactions with teachers, and participation in classroom activities are among other factors which may affect academic achievement.

There has been indication by studies done elsewhere that counselling services improve the academic achievement of pupils. This is supported by the study conducted by Sink and Stroh (2003) who randomly selected 150 secondary schools from across the state of Washington. The

schools and pupils within those schools accurately reflected the diversity found throughout the state. Schools were then divided into the treatment group and the comparison group based on the level of implementation of the comprehensive counselling program within each school. Standardized norm referenced and criterion referenced test score were used to evaluate the academic achievement of the pupils participating in the study.

Sink and Stroh (2003) found that pupils who attended the same school for three or more years where a comprehensive counselling program was in place performed better academically. Additionally, students who remained in the same school for multiple years with a fully implemented comprehensive school counselling program earned higher achievement test scores than students who attended schools where no such programs were in place (McGannon, Carey & Dimmitt, 2005; Sink & Stroh, 2003). Based on this study conducted by Sink and Stroh (2003), hope is given to improve pupils' academic achievement in Kabwe District through counselling interventions which have worked elsewhere. Therefore, once pupils are assisted to address various problems which hinder their academic excellence through counselling, stress levels may be reduced. This would then help pupils succeed both academically and socially. Hence the need for conducting this study which investigated the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement in secondary schools of Kabwe District to help pupils improve their academic achievement.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Despite counselling being offered to pupils in secondary schools of Kabwe District, the role it plays in their academic achievement was not known. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement in secondary schools of Kabwe District.

## **1.3. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement in secondary schools of Kabwe District.

## **1.4. Specific study objectives**

The study objectives were to:

1. Investigate the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement
2. Determine types of counselling offered to pupils
3. Identify challenges hindering the provision of counseling services.

## **1.5. Study questions**

The study questions were:

1. What is the role of counselling in pupils' academic achievement?
2. What type of counselling services are offered to pupils?
3. What are the challenges hindering the provision of counselling services?

### **1.6. Significance of the study**

The results of the study may benefit pupils by providing the role counselling can play in improving their academic achievement. In addition, the results may benefit the Ministry of General Education officials by highlighting the types of counselling services provided to pupils as well as challenges faced in the provision of counseling. This may in turn help to put up measures to improve the delivery of counselling in secondary schools of Kabwe District, thereby improving pupils' academic achievement.

### **1.7. Delimitation of the study**

This study investigated the role counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement, types of counselling services offered to pupils and challenges faced when providing these services in selected secondary schools of Kabwe District. The study therefore focused on five secondary schools in Kabwe District of Zambia. The names of secondary schools are not mentioned because of ethical issues. These schools were chosen because they had experienced a decline in the academic achievement of pupils in the recent past despite counselling being offered to pupils.

### **1.8. Conceptual framework**

When counselling services are provided to pupils, there are possibilities that their behaviors and morals may change positively, school attendance improve, concentration during lessons improve, abilities to deal with social and academic problems may also be enhanced. They could also ask questions where they not clear, their career choice decisions become simple and work hard towards fulfilling their careers of their choices. As a result of these positive impacts of counselling on pupils, their academic achievement is likely to improve.

In most cases, pupils who do not do very well academically have challenges dealing with problems they face, their school attendance is poor and their moral and behavior standing are questioned. These situations may not apply where pupils have learning disabilities but if not, they are the major causes to poor academic performance. However, when pupils are empowered with knowledge and skills through counselling, they are able to stand firm and deal with various social and academic challenges helping them to do very well academically.

### **1.9. Operational definitions**

**Academic** relates to institutionalized education such as schools, colleges and universities

**Achievement** is success in doing something well usually with effort

**Academic achievement** is accomplishing educational success usually with reference to better grades

**Counselling** is a process which involves a professional relationship between counselors (experts and most powerful) and clients (people in need and very vulnerable)

**A School counselor** is a teacher offering counselling services to pupils in secondary schools.

### **1.10. Ethical Consideration**

The researcher obtained permission from the University of Zambia Institute of Distance Education (IDE) to conduct the study. Further, the researcher sought informed consent from the participants before questionnaires were given to them. The researcher also did not force the participants to participate in the study against their wishes or forcing them to talk about what they did not want. Further, assurance was given to participants that the information they provided would be used for academic purposes only.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviewed literature on the brief history of counselling, types of counselling offered to pupils in schools. It further reviewed literature on the role counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement as well as on the challenges which are experienced during the provision of counselling in schools.

### **2.1. Brief history of counselling**

The history of counselling formally started at the turn of the twentieth century in the United States, although a case can be made for tracing the foundations of counselling principles to ancient Greece and Rome with the philosophical teachings of Plato and Aristotle. There is also evidence to argue that some of the techniques and skills of modern day counselors were practiced by Catholic priests in the middle Ages, as can be seen by the dedication to the concept of confidentiality within the confessional practice (Gibson and Mitchell, 2003).

According to Kochhar (2013), the factors leading to the development of counselling in the United States began in the 1890s with the social reform movement. One of the social difficulties was that of people living in urban slums and the widespread using of child labor which irritated many. The social and political reformer Frank Parsons is often credited with being the father of the counselling movement.

In 1909 the Boston Vocation Bureau founded by Frank Parsons helped outline a system of vocational guidance in the Boston public schools. The work of the bureau influenced the need for and the use of vocational guidance and counselling both in the United States and in other

countries. By 1918 there were documented accounts of the bureau's influence as far away as Uruguay and China. Counselling in these early years was considered to be mostly vocational in nature, but as the profession advanced other personal concerns became part of the counselling agenda. The 1920s and 1930s saw an expansion of counselling roles beyond working only with vocational concerns but social, personal, and educational aspects of a student's life also needed attention (Kochhar, 2013)

## **2.2. The role of counselling in academic achievement**

Wynne and Walberg (1986) stressed that for schools to fulfill their role in society; they should have both character development goals and academic learning goals included in the education process because they are inherently complementary. This evidence implies that schools should focus on feelings and values, as well as emphasizing academic achievement because when pupils have good morals and values, good character and many other problems may be addressed through counselling, then academic achievement among pupils can easily improve.

Instilling values of responsibility into pupils through the provision of counselling will make them to be accountable for their own learning experience. This literature suggests that if the counselors support and teach pupils good values, academic scores may be positively enhanced.

Instilling of values into pupils through counselling to make pupils responsible is supported by the study conducted by Hanson and Ginsberg (1988) in the United States on the relationship of values and pupils' academic achievement who found that good morals and values did influence high school academic outcomes significantly and positively. For instance white adolescents who score high on math achievement tests tend to have a strong sense of control over their lives, and hold high educational expectations. Also, values had at least twice as much importance in

predicting levels of pupils' academic performance as their findings support the suggestion that when pupils, their parents, and their peers believe in values and behaviors that rely on responsibility, pupils have better chances of improving academically in school. Therefore good values provided through counselling were found to have a direct positive effect on pupils' academic achievement.

According to Brown (1999) counselling support pupils directly in their academic life to foster, promote, and increase interpersonal competencies as well as academic achievement. The schools' Counselors believe that sound education involve the development of the whole person; this includes the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of pupils' lives. This implies that counselling equip pupils with knowledge and necessary life coping strategies which help them overcome various social and academic problems which may hinder their academic achievement.

The study carried out by Ndirangu in 2007 on the influence of counselling on academic performance of pupils in selected public secondary schools of Bahati Division in Nakuru District of Kenya has indicated that once challenges faced by pupils are addressed, the stress levels may be reduced through school counselling. Therefore, the alleviation of stress plus the information provided to pupils on the importance of education in their lives help them to develop inner interests towards education. As a result pupils' academic achievement later improves.

When counselling services are provided to pupils, there are possibilities that their behaviors and morals change positively, school attendance improve, concentration during lessons improve, abilities to deal with social and academic problems are enhanced and ask questions where they are not clear, their career choice decisions become simple and work towards fulfilling their



careers they have chosen. As a result of these positive impacts of counselling on pupils, their academic achievement may improve (Borrow, 1983).

Counselling services provided to pupils reduce the dropout rates among school going children and enhancing their academic achievement. Pittman (1986) points out that pupils can be empowered through counselling with personal and social factors which are potential means for reducing high school dropout rates. This suggests that lack of counselling integration in pupils' academic programs tend to be the main determinant of high rates of secondary pupils' dropout.

Along with Pittman, other researchers have discovered similar results. Bearden, Spencer, and Moracco (1989), for example, were interested in describing the dropout phenomenon from the student's point of view in secondary schools of Jeffersontown. Their results were very interesting because the pupil's number one suggestion for reducing the dropout rate is for counselors to have more interaction with the pupils. They attributed this to the idea that pupils want someone to notice their efforts, or non efforts and be counselled based on their abilities and weaknesses. This is important for counselors to be aware that pupils leave school psychologically long before the actual dropout occurs.

The study conducted by Hanson and Ginsberg in 1988 on the role of counseling conducted in the United states and Sally (2009) on School Counseling Services and pupils' academic success in London found that pupils' academic achievement has been affected positively by the good morals and values and other skills and knowledge instilled in them through counselling, the role of counseling in pupils' academic achievement in Kabwe District of Zambia is not known. Therefore the need why this study was conducted in Kabwe District was to confirm if counselling plays a role in pupils' academic performance.

If the results of this study tallies with other studies done in other parts of the world that counseling has a role in pupils' academic performance, then intensive counselling services may be considered to be established in all the secondary schools in Kabwe District and other parts of the country so that academic achievement among pupils can be improved further.

### **2.3. Types of counselling offered in schools**

The contributions of school counselling programs to the educational system and to the individual student's development are many and varied. Although the basic goal of school counselling is to enhance the pupil's educational development, a lot of studies show that through counselling, some pupils achieve identified results in a range of areas such as academic achievement, improved school attendance, improved school attitudes, improved school behavior, social skills, information to assist in choosing potential careers, self confidence development, interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction (Hanson and Ginsburg, 1988).

For students to achieve the above stated outcomes as a result of counselling services provided, various types of counselling should be offered. Lindsay (1983) in his book "Problems of Adolescence in Secondary Schools" identified academic planning, personal and social development and career counselling as three major types of counselling.

Academic planning is among types of counselling offered in schools. In this type, School counselors work closely with pupils to plan their course of studies, to support their school performance, to review progress, to set academic goals, as well as to implement and evaluate academic interventions put in place and specifying what the counsellor and the pupils should do. School counsellors communicate with families on an ongoing basis to provide updates on student achievement and attendance as well as to recognize successes.

Personal and social development is another area of concern in counselling. This counselling focuses on the whole development of pupils, facilitating social and emotional learning opportunities, connecting pupils to activities and electives based on their interest and academic ability, building school and community alliances, and providing ongoing individualized attention to ensure student success. School counsellors facilitate individual and group counselling, as well as crisis intervention counselling when needed.

Career and post secondary development is another major type of counselling provided to pupils in schools. This type helps pupils understand their strengths, talents and how their abilities can be utilized in various college and university major careers. School counsellors facilitate school wide activities and counselling lessons related to post secondary planning. Career and post secondary development counselling services aid pupils in admissions into institutions of higher learning.

Other types of counselling which may fall within personal and social type of counseling include areas described below. These areas were made known by Gorardo (1996) in his book “Teenagers and Their Problems” as major issues to be addressed by counselling.

School drop outs counselling involves providing information to pupils on what is supposed to be done when faced with challenges which may threaten them dropping out of school. Premature school termination has become an increasingly more difficult problem both locally and internationally for pupils' tertiary education as more careers require education up to the completion of secondary school level. This puts counselling services in a unique position to assist pupils with career guidance and help them establish meaningful goals including the completion of secondary education.

Another important factor is teen pregnancies which have continued to be of great concern as a lot of girls both in basic and secondary schools are conceiving while at school affecting the completion of their education. Counselling services in this case empower girl pupils with knowledge on how to avoid pregnancies by either abstaining or if impossible using family planning methods such as family planning pills and injections as well as condoms.

Drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, continue to be a serious problem for youth. Despite national efforts to eradicate these problems, many pupils still find their way to these mind altering chemicals. For the fact that school counsellors are trained to understand the effects of different drugs on the wellbeing of pupils, they assist them with interventions or community referrals through counselling services which are provided in schools.

Based on the reviewed literature, it is not known whether relevant types of counselling expected to empower pupils with knowledge and skills to copy and make informed decisions to deal with various challenges they face in order to focus on their education activities are offered to pupils in secondary schools of Kabwe District. This study therefore became imperative to fill up this knowledge gap.

## **2.4. Challenges that hindered the provision of counselling services**

The delivery of counselling in schools faces numerous challenges to effectively address pupils' problems. Among the challenges counselling programmes in schools face is inadequate resources (financial and material resources) and facilities as well as heavy work load for counselor teachers to effectively meet pupils' needs through counseling (Engel, 1959).

The school counsellors work full time as teachers in addition to undertaking their and counselling duties and responsibilities in the school. In such circumstances, the counsellors perform their counselling responsibilities on disorganized part time basis with no time table for counseling activities. This is supported by Khaemba (1986) who indicated that counselling activities in schools are sandwiched between class work and co curricular activities. This has resulted in limited teacher counselor dedication to counselling as the schools, pupils and parents are more concerned with academic activities.

Mutie and Ndambuki add that because of the busy teaching schedule, many pupils regard and perceive the teacher counselor as a teacher first then a counselor. Their perception about the teacher counselor and counseling services is very much influenced greatly by how they perceive him or her as a teacher first. These challenges among others affect the operations of guidance and counseling programs in the schools. Therefore to be sure that the challenges faced during the counselling practice as reviewed may also be experienced in secondary schools of Kabwe District, conducting this study in this area became necessary.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter highlights the following elements; research design, study population, sample size, sampling procedure, instruments for data collection, procedure for data collection, limitations of the study, data analysis.

### **3.1. Research Design**

The descriptive survey design was used for this study because it enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from the pupils and school counselors in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District. Descriptive survey design was also used because the study sought to describe the behavior (academic achievement) of participants (pupils) after counselling is offered. This is because the aim of the study was to investigate the role of counseling on the academic achievement of pupils, which implies that counseling will effect change in pupils causing them to improve their academic achievement. The independent variable which is counseling has already been established in secondary schools and hence the study is interested in its influence on pupils' academic performance.

### **3.2. Study Population**

The population of this study was all school counsellors and all grade 12 pupils from the selected secondary schools of Kabwe District. The size of the population from where the sample size was drawn was about 1145. This population was estimated by assuming that there are 45 pupils in each grade 12 class and if a school has 5 grade 12 classes, then  $45 \times 5 \times 5 = 1125$  plus 4 school counselors from each school makes the estimated population equal to 1145. Therefore to

determine the sample size, it is recommended that at least 10% of the total population is taken as the sample size.

### **3.3. Study Sample**

The sample size for this study comprised of 23 pupils and two school counsellors from each secondary school. The sum of all pupils and school counsellors gave 125 as the sample size of this study representing 11% of the total population. Normally, it is recommended that the sample size should be at least 10% of the population.

### **3.4. Sampling Technique**

Stratified sampling was used to select secondary schools as schools are in zones in Kabwe District which were considered to be stratas. Purposive sampling was used to select school counsellors from the five secondary schools selected out of the eleven in Kabwe District. Then simple random sampling was used to select the schools and the pupils.

### **3.5. Instruments for collecting data**

Questionnaire and document analysis schedule were used to collect data. The researcher designed semi-structured questionnaires in order to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from participants. One questionnaire was for the pupils and the other one for school counsellors. The questionnaires for both pupils and school counsellors highlighted insights on the role of counselling on academic achievement, types of counselling offered and the challenges faced among other issues included. Data concerning the academic achievement of pupils was collected by analyzing pupils' academic record schedule mark sheets to check if academic achievement has been improving or not after accessing counselling services.

### **3.6. Procedure for data collection**

The researcher distributed questionnaires physically to the participants and thereafter collection was done after the participants completed answering questions in the questionnaires. Document analysis was done on the pupils' academic schedule mark sheets to determine academic achievement of pupils.

### **3.7. Limitations of the study**

This study on its own has limitations that prevent it from being seen as ultimate on the role of guidance and counseling on pupils' academic achievement. The most obvious of these limitations is lack of complete control of many other factors that affect pupils' academic achievement. For the fact that each and every pupil brings problems from outside the school set up, it becomes difficult to know how many pupils have personal or social problems that may be beyond the scope of weekly guidance and counseling sessions. These social and personal problems may include issues such as dysfunction in the home, abuse from their guardians, lack of appropriate resources to complete school work and other problems which may affect concentration during lessons.

The study also did not control factors affecting pupils' academic achievement where gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic statuses are concerned. These factors are among those known to contribute to academic achievement among pupils of all ages.

Despite the researcher having experienced these challenges, he tried his level best to ensure that data was collected from eligible participants. Collection of data from eligible participants helped the study to be reliable as well as generalizing the results to all secondary schools in Kabwe District.



### **3.8. Data analysis**

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and thematic analysis was used to analyze data in this study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze quantitative data by generating tables and charts accompanied by descriptions of information in tables drawn. Thematic analysis will handle analysis of qualitative data in the study. Important themes will be drawn from the information provided by the participants from the data collected through questionnaires.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the study findings from participants are presented with reference to study questions. Brief description of the findings is also done to ensure that the reader adequately understands what the tables, charts and graphs are all about.

4.1 What is the role of counselling in pupils’ academic achievement?

Figure 1

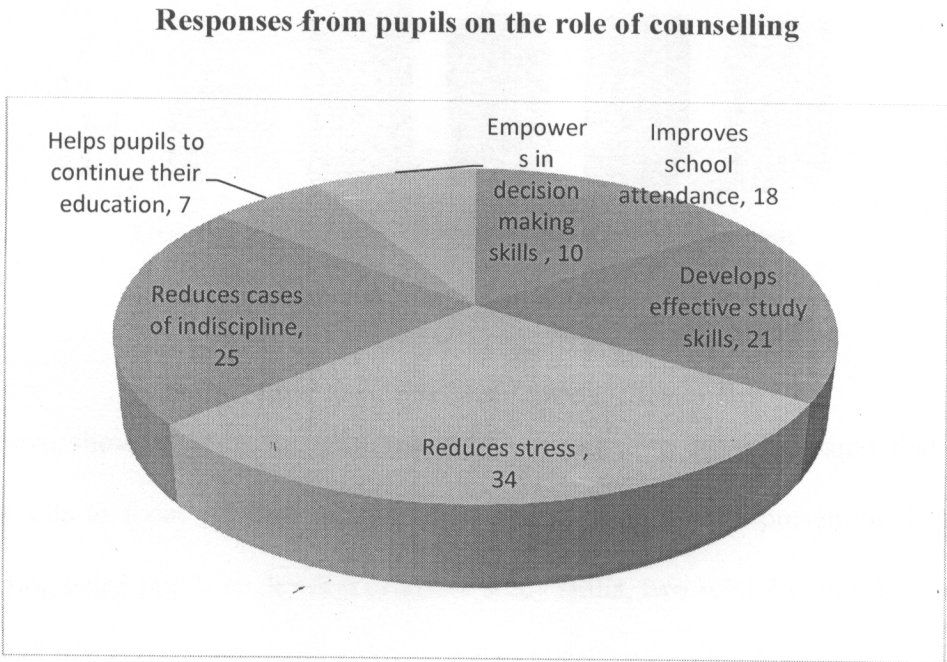


Figure 1 above shows that 34 pupils representing 30% indicates that counseling helps them manage academic and social problems, 21 pupils representing 18% indicated that counseling help them develop good study habits, eighteen pupils indicated that counseling provided to them helps them to improve school attendance representing 16%. Further ten pupils representing 9% indicated that counseling enables them to manage risk behaviours, seven pupils reprenting 6%

said that counseling helps them not to give up their education for various problems they face and 25 pupils representing 22% indicated that counseling help that to be disciplined. The total number of pupils who took part in this study was 115.

Table 1

Responses from school counselors on the role of counselling

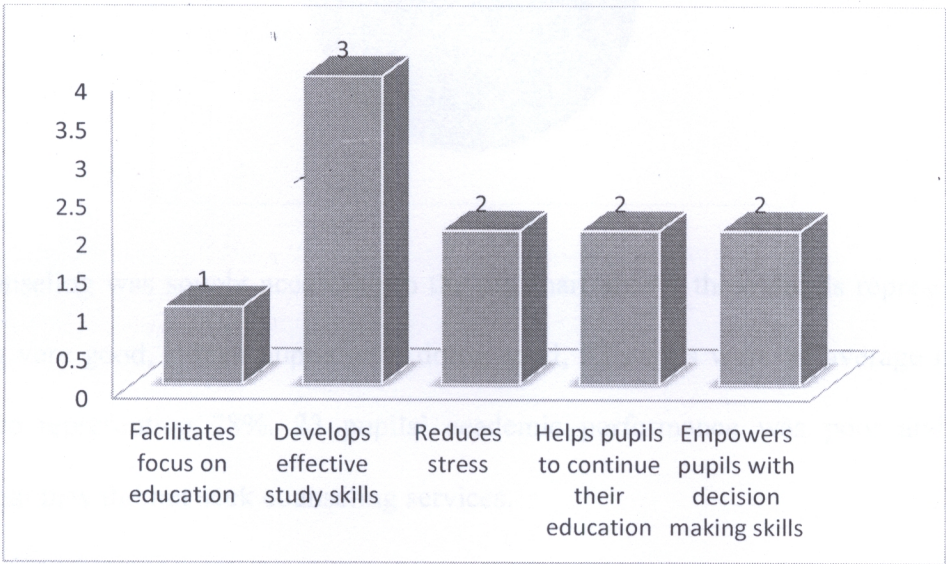
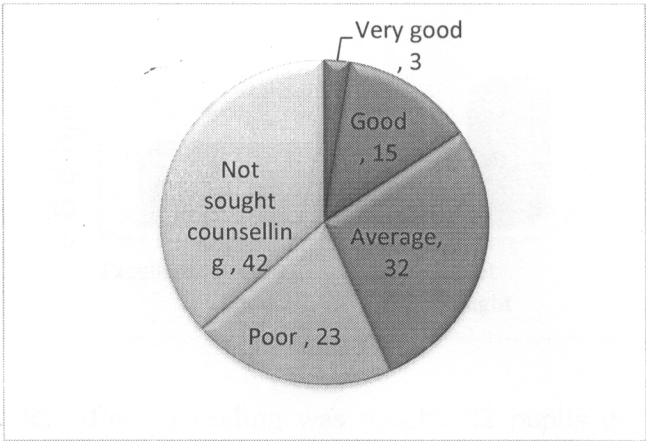


Table 1 above shows that one school counselor representing 10% indicated that counseling facilitates pupils to focus on their studies, three school counselors representing 30% indicated that counseling helps pupils to develop effective study skills, two school counselors representing 20% indicated that counseling reduces stress among pupils, two school counselors indicated that counseling helps pupils to continue and finish their education and the last two school counselors made clear that counseling empowers pupils with decision making skills.

**Figure 2**

**Level of academic performance of pupils before seeking counseling**



Before counseling was sought according to the pie chart above, three pupils representing 2.6% were doing very good, fifteen pupils were doing good, 32 pupils were on average in academic performance representing 28%, 23 pupils' academic performance was poor and 42 pupils indicated that they did not seek counseling services.

Table 2

Level of academic performance of pupils after seeking counseling

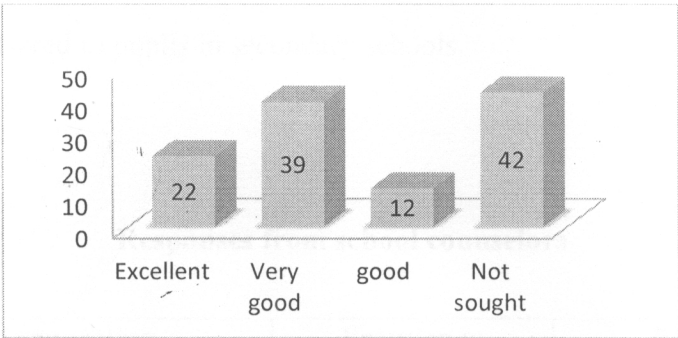
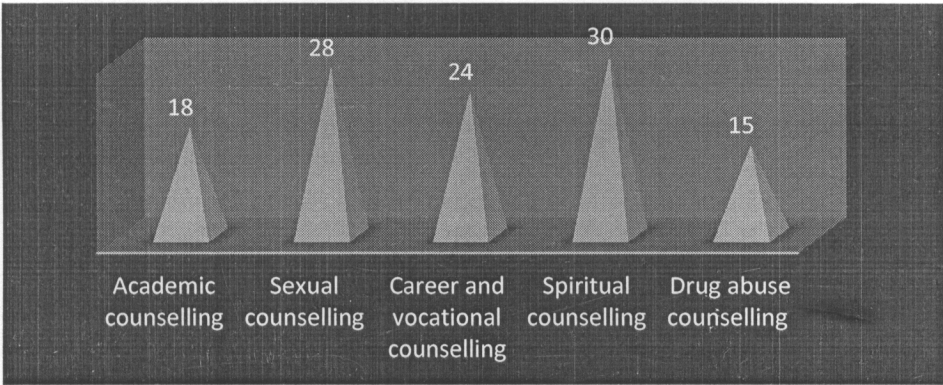


Table 2 above shows that after counseling was sought, 22 pupils did excellent in academic performance representing 19%, 39 pupils did very good representing 34%, twelve pupils did good representing 10% and 42 pupils had no access to counseling services.

4.2 What type of counselling services are offered to pupils?

Figure 3

Responses from pupils



According to the findings on types of counseling offered to pupils as shown above, 18 pupils which is 16% indicated academic counseling as one of the types provided, 28 pupils which is

24% said sexual counseling is provided, 24 pupils which is 21% said career and vocational counseling is provided, 30 pupils representing 26% said spiritual counseling is provided and 15 pupils representing 13% indicated that drug abuse prevention counseling is also provided among types of counseling offered to pupils in secondary schools.

**Table 3**

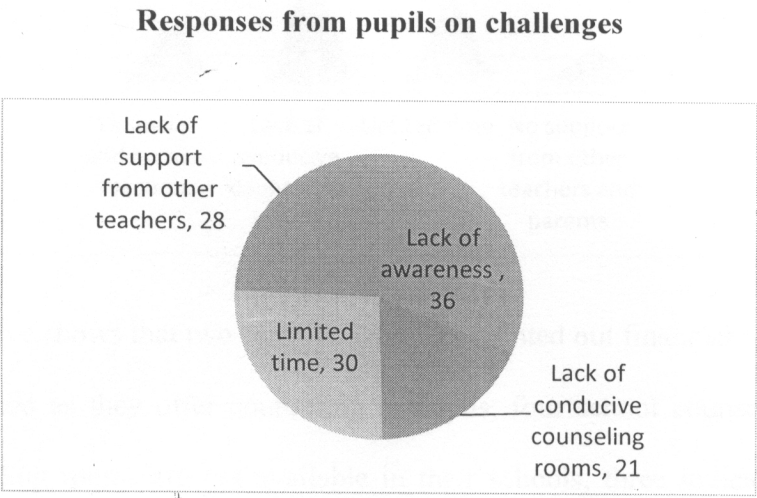
**Responses from school counselors**

Type of counseling	Frequency	Percentage
Academic counseling	4	40
Career and vocational counselling	2	20
Social counseling	3	30
Health counseling	1	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

The frequency above shows that four school counselors confirmed offering academic counseling, two school counselors indicated that they provide career and vocational counseling, three indicated that they offer social issues related counseling and one school counselor said that they offer health counseling to pupils at that school.

4.3 What are the challenges hindering the provision of counseling services?

Figure 4

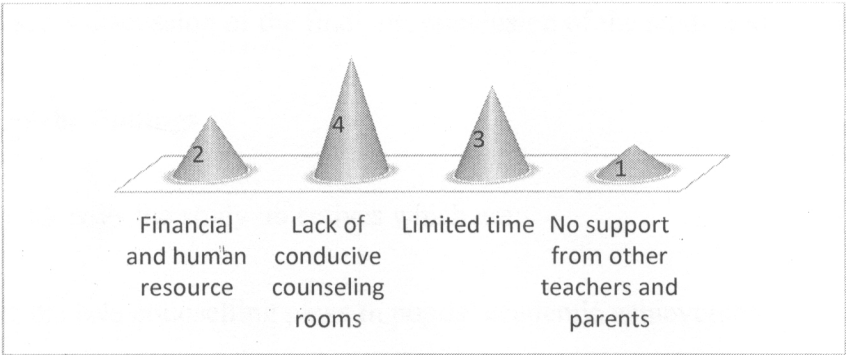


According to the pupils, the pie chart shows that 28 pupils representing 24% indicated that lack of support from other teachers is one of the challenges experienced, 36 pupils representing 31% said that they lack knowledge concerning counseling in school, 21 pupils representing 18% pointed out that conducive counseling rooms are not available in schools and 30 pupils who make 27% of the all pupils said that there is limited time for both pupils and school counselors to make engage in meaningful counseling.



Table 4

Responses from school counselors on challenges



The histogram above shows that two school counselors pointed out financial and human resource as a challenge faced as they offer counseling to pupils, four school counselors indicated that conducive counseling rooms are not available in their schools, three indicated that they have limited time to offer counseling and one school counselor said that there is lack of support from other teachers, management and parents.

4.4 Summary of the findings

The following are the findings of the study based on the objectives

- Counselling plays a role in academic achievement of pupils in Kabwe District
- Different types of counselling services are provided to pupils in selected secondary schools
- The provision of counselling services in the selected schools are hindered by quite a number of challenges such as limited time for both school counselors and pupils to provide and seek counselling services respectively, lack of human and financial resource and lack of conducive counselling rooms



## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, DISSCUSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents discussion of the findings, conclusion of the study and recommendations.

### **5.1 Discussion of the findings**

The discussion addresses the study objectives which are:

1. To investigate the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement
2. To determine types of counselling offered to pupils
3. To identify challenges faced in the provision of counseling

### **5.11 investigating the role counselling plays in pupils' academic achievement**

The first objective of the study sought to investigate the role counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District of Zambia. This objective was based on the fact that counseling is offered in almost all secondary schools in Zambia including those selected secondary schools in Kabwe District but the role counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement or performance in sampled secondary schools in kabwe is not well known.

The pupils and school counselors who took part in this study from selected secondary schools in Kabwe District pointed out a number of issues as the roles counseling plays in pupils' academic achievement. Figure 1 and table 1 summarize the responses of pupils and counselors respectively.

According to figure 1, 25 pupils indicated that counseling helps them not to engage in indiscipline activities or behaviors; this is done by instilling values of responsibility and good morals into pupils through counseling making. This helps pupils to focus on their studies rather than wasting time doing irresponsible activities and also to be accountable for their own learning experience. This suggests that if the counselors support and teach pupils values and good morals academic scores may be positively enhanced, thereby improving academic achievement of pupils. This finding agrees with the study conducted by Hanson and Ginsberg (1988) in the United States on the relationship of values and pupils' academic achievement who found that good morals and values did influence high school academic outcomes significantly and positively.

Pupils who were 34 (30%) indicated that counseling reduces stress among pupils experienced as a result of social, personal and academic problems they face during their course of study. Stress deviates the concentration on any activity an individual is performing. This is the same case with pupils and therefore when pupils are stressed due to various problems, their concentration on their studies is affected and this hinders academic achievement. This finding matches with the result of the study carried out by Ndirangu in 2007 on the influence of counselling on academic performance of pupils in selected public secondary schools of Bahati Division in Nakuru District of Kenya which indicated that once challenges faced by pupils are addressed, the stress levels may be reduced through school counseling. Therefore, the alleviation of stress plus the information provided to pupils on the importance of education in their lives help them to develop inner interests towards education. As a result pupils' academic achievement later improves. This is true because even when stressed pupils try to study, they cannot comprehend any concept but when stress is relieved or reduced through counseling; their concentration in studying is at pick

enabling the understanding of what they are studying and as a result academic achievement improves.

Pupils representing 18% from selected schools pointed out that counseling helps them to develop effective study habits. Good study habits are among key factors contributing to academic achievement of pupil's world over. So through counseling pupils are empowered with knowledge to develop and use good study habits as they prepare for academic tasks such as tests and final examinations, this makes them ready to be flexible and use strategies which assists them to plan successfully for academic activities.

According to table one, two school counselors representing 20% indicated that counseling empowers pupils with decision making skills concerning their social and academic life. The other two school counselors made it clear that counseling helps pupils to continue their education. Empowerment with decision making skills for social and academic life makes it possible for pupils to make decisions that are likely not to cause any harm to their personal and academic life, this can easily improve pupil's academic achievement as when they are free from social and academic problems due to effective decisions making made, they are free from stress and other pressures resulting in excellent concentration on studies and better understanding in what they are learning.

Counseling helping pupils to continue their education implies that, counselors are able to talk into pupils on how education is important in their lives as well as in the economic development of the nation. When this is understood by pupils, they are able to develop inner interest in education and work hard to ensure that the goals they have set based on what they want education to impact in their lives are achieved, consequently improving their academic

achievement. This continuation of their education also prevents school dropping out among pupils.

Counselling services provided to pupils reduced the dropout rates among school going children, enhancing their academic achievement. This is supported by Pittman (1986) points out that pupils can be empowered through counselling with personal and social factors which are potential means for reducing high school dropout rate. This suggests that lack of counseling integration in pupils' academic programs tend to be the main determinant of high rates of secondary pupils' dropout.

One school counselor indicated that counseling facilitated pupils to focus on their education. This role of counseling helps pupils to improve their academic achievement in such a way that when counseling is provided to pupils, it helps pupils to be free from any kind of pressure they are going through such as irrational thinking leading to unnecessary behavior, social, academic challenges are addressed. These various issues are addressed because counseling is an empowerment in decision making, making good choices in terms of choosing friends, managing stress as well as dealing with academic issues or challenges.

According to Brown (1999) counselling support pupils directly in their academic life to foster, promote, and increase interpersonal competencies as well as academic achievement. This implies that counselling equip pupils with knowledge and necessary life coping strategies which help them overcome various social and academic problems which may hinder their academic achievement.

### **5.12 Determining types of counselling offered to pupils**

The second objective of this study intended to determine the types of counseling offered to pupils in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District.

Although the basic goal of school counselling is to enhance the pupil's educational development, behind educational development there are other issues which must be addressed through counseling to achieve educational development by pupils. These areas through which pupils develop academic achievement through counseling include areas such as improved school attendance, improved school attitudes, improved school behavior, social skills, information to assist in choosing potential careers, self confidence development, interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction, management of their emotions and stress (Hanson and Ginsburg, 1988).

For pupils to acquire skills in dealing with the above stated outcomes as a result of counselling services provided, various types of counselling should be offered. Therefore, the major duty of this objective was to probe whether various types of counseling services needed for pupils to deal with different social and academic problems are offered in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District so that they are able to deal with those problems and concentrate on their studies enabling them to improve their academic achievement. And if some major types counseling are not offered, considerations for ensuring that those types of counseling not offered should be introduced.

According to figure 3 showing responses of pupils on the types of counseling offered in their schools, eighteen pupils representing 18% indicated that academic counseling is provided in their schools. Academic counseling assists pupils to deal with various academic problems they are facing such as difficulties in understanding certain concepts, poor studying habits and how to

plan their academic activities. When pupils are empowered, they are able to deal with these problems and later academic performance is likely to improve.

Pupils who were 28 representing 24% indicated that sexuality counseling is provided at their schools. Sexuality counseling to pupils is very important as most of them may start engaging in sexual activities without being knowledgeable of the risks they are exposing themselves to which to a greater extent may affect their concentration on their education negatively. Sexuality counselling helps pupils to access information concerning sexual issues such as having protected sex to prevent exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and avoidance of unwanted pregnancies. Pregnancies during the education period results in girls dropping out from schools and not attending lessons if they are expected to come back and write the exams.

But if pupils are empowered with knowledge concerning sexual issues, they are able to stay in schools and concentrate on their studies as sexually transmitted diseases cannot keep them away from school during treatment. Also dropping out of girls and missing lessons due to unwanted pregnancies cannot be a problem and this will help pupils always attend lessons and do well in academic tasks given to them including final examinations.

Pupils who represented 21% indicated that career and vocational counselling are among types of counselling provided in their schools. Career and vocational counselling helps pupils to understand their strengths, talents and how these abilities can be utilized in various college major careers. Once pupils have a clear picture of what careers they want to do after secondary education, they become focused and work very hard academically to ensure that the subject grades needed in those careers are met. As a result of this, the academic achievement is likely to

improve through the aim of ensuring that grades needed are met so that they can easily join the careers they have chosen.

Pupils who were 26 indicated that spiritual counseling is offered at their schools. Spiritual counseling mainly is concerned with empowering pupils with spiritual knowledge as well as what is expected of them to conduct themselves relating to the teachings of various religions to which they belong. Spiritual counseling also forms the foundation of moral upright of pupils in terms of how they are supposed to behave and treat their friends in school and in the society at large.

Good moral behavior of pupils imparted through spiritual counseling help pupils to have self control in terms of not missing lessons, engaging in drugs and beer drinking, having unnecessary sexual relations but dedicating most their time studying and part of it preaching the word of God. This later result in academic performance to improve as there is also a positive relationship between discipline and academic achievement.

Table 3 which is representing school counselors' responses on types of counseling offered, shows that fourty (40%) school counselors indicated that they provide academic counseling and two school counselors (20%) indicated that they provide career and vocational counseling which have been discussed already on pupils' responses.

Further, three school counselors indicated that they provide personal and social development counseling to pupils at the schools where they work. This type of counselling focuses on the whole development of pupils, facilitating social and emotional learning opportunities, connecting pupils to activities and electives based on their interest and academic ability, building school and

community alliances and also providing ongoing individualized attention to ensure pupils' academic success. School counsellors facilitate individual and group counselling, as well as crisis intervention counselling when needed in this type of counseling.

By pupils having their personal and social problems dealt with through the knowledge acquired from this type of counseling, there are more chances that their academic performance will improve as problems which are likely to interfere with their concentration on studies are dealt with leaving their minds free and ready to concentrate on academic issues.

One school counselor stated that healthy counseling is provided to the pupils. This type of counseling involves pupils provided with healthy issues related information such as keeping themselves clean to foster hygiene living, to seek medical attention whenever they feel unwell, disposing dirty things in the right places where they are supposed to be exposed. Using protective measures when engaging in sexual activities with people whose sexually transmitted status is known to avoid being infected because if infected, there are chances that a pupil may contract sexually transmitted diseases and stop coming to school which may result in poor academic achievement.



seeking counselling services due to lack of knowledge results in their academic performance declining. But if the school counselors sensitize pupils as they come in new grades such as grades eight and nine during orientation, pupils could be aware of services offered by the counselling department and staff. And as a result, when pupils experience problems or challenges whether social or academic they would be able to go and seek counselling even before they are referred.

Still on figure 4, 21 pupils pointed out that there are no counselling rooms conducting for counselling in their secondary schools. This is because counselling rooms which are there do not provide the privacy they need when they go for counselling and due to this, most of them despite having pressing issues which they even know that counselling services can help them a lot, still they sit back for fear that they will be exposed to their friends as well as teachers that they have this particular problem.

In addition the rooms available are used for both counselling sessions and the office where all other activities related to guidance and counselling are conducted including attending to people who come to seek other services such as collecting results and certificates. Due to this, pupils feel insecure and not free to go and seek counselling services. This hindrance cause pupils to go through anguish with the problems they face resulting in stress and depression episodes which affect the concentration of pupils on their studies and later performs poorly on the assessment tests and final examinations.

Table 4 shows views of school counselors on challenges hindering counselling in schools in Kabwe District. Counselling programmes in schools require adequate availability of resources and facilities for effective counselling services delivery. However 12 per cent of the school counsellors reported that counselling programmes in their schools lack adequate financial, human and material resources to effectively meet pupils' needs through counselling. This was reported to hinder the successful operations and delivery of counselling services in the schools. This simply means that although pupils went to seek counselling services but due to non availability and scarcity of the needed resources, the quality of counselling services offered were compromised. As a result pupils concerns and needs were not adequately met; hence the problems continued troubling them failing to focus on academic issues and later achieving poorly on academic performance.

However when all resources needed for running the counselling programme in school are available, we expect quality services to be delivered because counselors handling pupils would be qualified and competent, finances could be used to source other materials needed and later counselling needs of pupils could be met and improve focus on their education even improving academic achievement.

Three school counselors represent 30% indicated that they have limited time for conducting counselling to meet pupils' counselling needs as one of the challenges faced in the provision of counselling. This entails that school counsellors work full time as teachers in addition to undertaking their counselling duties and responsibilities in the school. In such circumstances, the counsellors perform their counselling responsibilities on disorganized part time basis with no time table for counseling activities. This is supported by Khaemba (1986) who indicated that

counselling activities in schools are sandwiched between class work and co curricular activities. This has resulted in limited teacher counselor dedication to counselling as the schools, pupils and parents are more concerned with academic activities.

Mutie and Ndambuki add that because of the busy teaching schedule, many pupils regard and perceive the teacher counselor as a teacher first then a counselor. Their perception about the teacher counselor and counseling services is very much influenced greatly by how they perceive him or her as a teacher first. These challenges among others hinder the provision of counseling programs the schools.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Based on the study findings, the following conclusions were made:

1. Counselling plays a role in academic achievement of pupils as academic performance among pupils has improved after have access to counselling in Kabwe District
2. Types of counselling such as personal counselling, sexual counselling and academic counselling among others are provided to pupils
3. Lack of infrastructure in terms of counselling rooms, human and financial resources are among challenges hindering the provision of counselling in selected schools

### 5.3 Recommendations

From the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made;

1. Head teachers should strengthen counselling programmes in schools to improve pupils' academic performance beyond the current level of pupils' academic performance
2. School counsellors should provide all types of counselling services to adequately meet the counselling needs of pupils
3. The Ministry of General Education should employ trained school counsellors and build counselling rooms conducive for pupils' counselling sessions
4. The Ministry of General Education should allocate funds specifically for running school counselling programmes

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1: Questionnaire for pupils**

**Section A: Background Information**

- 1. Name of the school.....
- 2. Type of school; Boys boarding [ ] Girls boarding [ ] Mixed day [ ]
- 3. Age group in years; 15 to 19 [ ] 20 to 29 [ ]
- 4. Gender; Male [ ] Female [ ]

**Section B: Counselling Programme**

- 1. Are you aware of the existence of the counselling department in your school?  
  
Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 2. If yes, are you aware of the services being offered by this department? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 3. If yes in 2, have you ever sought for the services of this department? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 4. What are the problems/issues that made you seek for these services?.....  
.....  
.....
- 5. What kind of counselling services are offered at your school?  
.....  
.....

6. How often have you sought counselling services? Often [ ] very often [ ]
7. Has the services sought had any positive influence on your academic performance? Explain
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Section C: Academic performance in School**

1. How can you rate your level of academic performance before seeking counselling?
- Very poor [ ] Poor [ ] Average [ ] Good [ ] Very good [ ] Excellent [ ]
2. How can you rate your level of academic performance after seeking counselling?
- Very poor [ ] Poor [ ] Average [ ] Good [ ] Very good [ ] Excellent [ ]
3. If the answer in 2 is good or very good, what are the factors that have improved your academic performance? Cooperation among teachers [ ] Counseling services [ ]
- Discipline [ ] Good studying habits [ ]
- Other (specific).....
- .....
4. What do you think are the major problems affecting the effective practice of counseling at your

school?.....  
.....

5. What is supposed to be done to improve access of pupils to school counselling services?  
.....  
.....  
.....

**End of questions; thank you for your cooperation!!!**

**Appendix2: Questionnaire for school counselors**

**Section A: Background Information**

My name is Tobias Mulenga Chileshe, a student at the University of Zambia undertaking a degree in Masters of Science in Counselling. As part of the requirements of the course, I am required to undertake a research project in my area of study. My research topic is “The role of guidance and counselling in academic achievement of pupils in selected secondary schools of Kabwe District. You have been selected as one of my respondent in this study. Your sincere and correct answers will be key in fulfilling the aim of the study. All information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

- 1. Name of the school.....
- 2. Type of school; Boys boarding [ ] Girls boarding [ ] Mixed day [ ]
- 3. Age group in years; 25 to 40 [ ] 41 to 56 [ ] 57 to 72 [ ]
- 4. Gender; Male [ ] Female [ ]
- 9. What criterion was used to appoint you as a teacher counsellor?  
  
Professional training [ ] Nominated by the staff members [ ] Nominated by head teacher [ ]

**Section B: Counselling Programme**

- 1. Has your school established a counselling department? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 2. What kind of counselling do you provide at your school?  
.....

.....  
.....  
10. Are pupils at the school aware of the existence of the counseling department?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

11. If yes, are they aware of the services offered by the department?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

12. Do they seek for these services offered? Yes [ ] No [ ]

### **Section C: Role of counselling in academic achievement of pupils**

1. How can you rate the academic performance of Grade 12 pupils at this school?

Very poor [ ] Poor [ ] Average [ ] Good [ ] Very good [ ] Excellent [ ]

2. If the answer in 1 is good, very good or average. What are the factors improving academic performance of pupils in this school? List factors improving academic performance among pupils.

(i)..... (ii).....

(iii).....(iv).....

(v).....(vi).....

3. From follow ups made on pupils referred for educational counselling and other problems affecting their academic achievement, is there any indication of improvement in academic achievement? Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. As a teacher counselor, what do you think is the role of guidance and counseling in pupils' academic achievement?

- (i)..... (ii).....
- (iii).....(iv).....
- (v).....(vi).....

**Section D: Challenges in school counselling practice**

What challenges do you think hinder efficient operation and management of guidance and counselling in your school?

- (i)..... (ii).....
- (iii).....(iv).....
- (v).....(vi).....

5. How do you deal with these challenges.....

6. Suggest ways in which the counselling programme in this school can be improved and be made more efficient in providing the necessary services to the pupils?

- (i)..... (ii).....
- (iii).....(iv).....

*End of questions; thank you for your cooperation!!!*