

**STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COUNSELLING IN A SELECTED  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN LUSAKA PROVINCE, ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I, **Kayembi Chilomba**, do declare that this dissertation is my own work which has not been submitted for the award of a degree to this or any other university.

Signature.....

Date.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my elder brother, Kamu Chilomba, whose life has been severely devastated by an undiagnosed mental illness. I will always cherish the moments I shared with my elder brother as a young boy. Even at this time when it is excruciating to think of what he could have been and what he could have achieved in his life, had it not been for the mental illness, I still have much respect and love for my dear brother.

## APPROVAL

This dissertation by Kayembi Chilomba is approved as partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Counselling at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

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## ABSTRACT

This study used a descriptive survey to establish students' attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia. Additionally, the study sought to establish factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling; to investigate if there were any differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling; and to investigate if there were any differences in students' attitudes towards counselling among the grades.

The sample of this study was 64 students comprising of 33 females and 31 males from Year/Grade 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the secondary school. The age of the respondents ranged from 10 to 16 and came from different national backgrounds.

This study used a semi-structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire comprised of a Likert scale and open-ended questions. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS while thematic analysis was for qualitative data.

This study found that students had diverse attitudes towards counselling, including counselling being good; counselling being helpful; counselling being unhelpful; counselling being uncomfortable; and counselling lacking confidentiality. This study found that the effectiveness of counselling, counsellor traits and confidentiality were the factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling. The Independent t-test results revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students' attitudes towards academic, social and careers counselling, but were towards personal counselling. The one-way ANOVA test results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in students' attitudes towards counselling among the Grade/Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 groups.

Based on the above results, the following recommendations have been made: principals, teachers, parents and school counsellors have to sensitise pupils on the benefits of counselling in school; School administrators have to employ at least two school counsellors comprising of at least one male and one female counsellor; school administrators have to encourage school counsellors to pursue continued professional development; and school counsellors have to belong to professional bodies and associations.

It is hoped this study has added to the existing body of literature on school counselling and opened a window on students' attitudes towards counselling in an international school with a diverse student body.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter presents the introduction. It consists of the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, ethical considerations, theoretical framework, and operational definition of terms.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

‘Attitude refers to feelings, beliefs, and reactions of an individual towards an event, phenomenon, object or person’ (Hodges and Logan, 2012: vii). Attitudes are not innate attributes of mankind. They are learnt, relatively stable but can be modified. Attitudes could be implicit or explicit, conscious or unconscious, rational or irrational; extraversion or introversion. Attitudes are evaluations people make about objects, ideas, events or other people. Attitudes can be positive or negative. An attitude is an individualistic, abstract entity and kind of intervening variable imposed in order of behavioural responses. It was, therefore, important to find out students’ attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka province.

Counselling in schools, including international schools, is essential as pupils are confounded by the challenges of growing up (Bor et. al., 2002). Daily life for children in international schools can be very challenging due to several factors. Students in international schools are confronted by challenges such as competitiveness, bullying, social exclusion, racism, academic underachievement, peer pressure, substance misuse and other psychological difficulties.

A school is considered a primary and essential context for supporting, nurturing and facilitating educational, social and emotional development of children. Schools are also increasingly playing an important role in identifying, managing and preventing mental health problems among pupils (Bor et. al., 2002).

There is a shortage of specialist educational psychologists who are required to work with children with special educational needs in schools. Common personal and emotional problems among average pupils may go unnoticed by busy teachers. Early identification of psychological problems, be they transient or more entrenched, can prevent major and more permanent behavioural problems. Governments around the world require schools to be inclusive institutions. As a result, schools host children from diverse cultural and ability backgrounds. Counselling is, therefore, essential to meet the diverse needs of pupils (Bor et. al., 2002).

Counselling is necessary in schools to prevent violence among pupils. Some atrocities have been committed by students in schools. For example, the murders at Columbine and Santana high schools in the USA and Damilola Taylor in the UK gave impetus to understand and prevent violence among young people. Problems such as suicide and homicide can be prevented and schools have a role to play in the prevention of these tragedies through counselling.

Counselling in schools has a long history. As early as 1913, the London County Council appointed its first child psychologist to examine what they considered to be dull, backward and feeble minded children and to give guidance to teachers and parents on the treatment and education of children attending ordinary schools (Milner, 1974). School counselling in the United States goes as far back as 1898 where the Central School in Detroit had a school counsellor. School counselling in the United Kingdom began to develop in the 1960s.

In the United Kingdom, the Newsome Report focused on the needs of learners who were failing to reach their true academic potential and recommended that school counsellors should be employed. Due to the Newsome Report, some counselling courses were introduced in universities, including Reading and Keele, for the training of counsellors in schools. These courses were available only to teachers who had at least five years of teaching experience. By the 1970s, there were several hundred school counsellors and nine full-time counselling courses at universities in England and Wales. There were 18 courses such as Guidance and Counselling in Education at Reading or the Full-time Diploma courses in School Counselling at Swansea and North East London Polytechnic. Some local education authorities also developed counselling services in their schools. The Association of School Counselling was set up to provide a professional organisation for anyone involved in counselling students and young people (Bor et. al., 2002).

However, the enthusiasm of the universities in the United Kingdom to offer counselling courses was not met with government support (Jones, 1970). Consequently, employing of school counsellors was viewed an extravagance. This led to counselling services being offered in an ad hoc manner. In the 1980s, there was a shift on the emphasis of counselling in schools. The local authorities were of the view that it was the teachers who should be taking up the responsibility of pastoral care of the students and that counselling should be incorporated into the school curriculum (Hamblin, 1974). The development of counselling in schools happened in an ad hoc manner where some schools employed counsellors while other employed some trained teachers to take up dual roles. Counsellors were free to develop counselling services leading to different roles, relationships and styles of practice.

In the recent years in the United Kingdom, counselling has begun to take on a more prominent role in schools. Teachers are under increasing pressure to teach, keep records on their pupils and fulfil all the criteria of the National Curriculum (Bor et. al., 2002). As a result, teachers can often find it difficult to add on the pastoral role. Therefore, some schools have begun to realise the need to employ a full time counsellor. The usefulness is increasingly recognised of having someone on site who is available to all the students, not only to meet their educational needs, but also to meet their emotional and psychological needs, thereby contributing to the emotional wellbeing of the whole school.

The Council of International School (CIS), of which many international schools, including the ones in Zambia, are affiliated to, shows its commitment to the wellbeing of students in schools through its statement on child protection.

The following is the CIS statement on student wellbeing (<https://www.cois.org>).

We work to ensure our member communities provide comprehensive, effective education and support for children and young adults, focused on their physical, social and emotional well-being. Together with a team of global experts, we provide child protection training, resources, and support to our school and university leaders. We empower them to learn how to educate their communities and develop capacity to prevent and manage all aspects of abuse.

Talking about child abuse is not easy. Although it may be uncomfortable, it is critical to start the discussion in international school communities. The ease of mobility that international work provides, coupled with weak recruitment practices, different cultural norms and underdeveloped legal systems in various countries can make international education communities prime targets for child abusers. At CIS, we purposefully foster open discussion with our members and have invested to increase the knowledge of our staff to consider the role we all have in keeping students safe.

In addition to integrating new practices into our member services, we have created a series of workshops to raise awareness and improve practices within schools and universities. Abuse encompasses a range of behaviour including neglect, bullying, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, and exploitation. Through our work with law

enforcement officials, investigators, lawyers, medical doctors, and psychologists, we've grown our expertise in specific types of abuse, its origins, the resulting risks and realities for international communities.

The above statement shows how important students' wellbeing is in schools. Counselling is one crucial services that schools offer to ensure student wellbeing.

A look at the websites of international schools in Zambia shows that they are committed to providing caring and safe environments for their diverse student bodies. International schools in Zambia comprise of students with diverse cultural, racial, lingual, and educational backgrounds. As such, international schools have student support services which include counselling services. International schools are committed to employing at least one full-time counsellor. It was, therefore, important to find out the students' attitudes towards counselling.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Understanding of students' attitude towards counselling in schools is necessary if students have to be helped (Sackett, Farmer and Moran, 2016). International schools take student wellbeing to be of paramount importance. However, the attitude of students towards counselling in International schools in Lusaka province is not known. This study, therefore, sought to understand students' attitude towards counselling in a selected International school in Lusaka Province of Zambia.

### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to explore students' attitudes towards counselling in selected international schools in Lusaka province.

## **1.5 Objectives of the study**

The following were the objectives of the study:

- 1) To identify students' attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka province.
- 2) To explore the factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling.
- 3) To explore if there were any differences in seeking counselling between male and female students.
- 4) To explore if there were any differences in seeking counselling among the grades.

## **1.6 Research questions**

The following were the study questions:

- 1) What are the attitudes of students towards counselling in the selected international school?
- 2) What are the factors that contribute to students' attitudes towards counselling?
- 3) Are there differences in seeking counselling between male and female students?
- 4) Are there differences in seeking counselling among the grades?

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

It was hoped that the results of this study would bring more insights on the attitudes of students towards counselling, thereby contributing to the body of knowledge on student counselling in international schools. It was further hoped that the findings of this study would help school counsellors to improve counselling services to students in international schools. Moreover, it was hoped that through the results of this study, students with counselling needs in international schools would be helped more effectively.

## **1.8 Limitations of the study**

This descriptive survey study was conducted in one selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia. As a result, caution was taken in generalising the results to other international schools in Zambia and other parts of the world. Besides, self-administered questionnaires which were used to collect data could be misinterpreted and attitudes of individuals change over time. However, findings of this study are still reliable and valid as the questionnaires were distributed to a relatively large sample of respondents and comprised of both Likert scale questions and open-ended questions.

## **1.9 Theoretical framework**

This study was guided by the stimulus-response theory by Wrightsman (1985). Under the stimulus-response and reinforcement theory, a stimulus is a psychological term for an object, event or person. This is a kind of classical conditioning. This is where people learn to respond only to a stimulus that is the same as the original conditional stimulus. Stimulus generalisation is the associated behavioural response to similar stimuli people come across with in their environment. If an object, event, or person is similar to the original stimulus to one an individual was conditioned, he or she would behave towards that similar stimulus in the same way.

The behaviourist approach shows that individuals learn or become conditioned to behave the way they do. People form learnt behaviours as a result associating of a particular stimulus with a particular response. Reinforcement helps in the formation of stimulus-response units of behaviour. Stimulus-response and reinforcement theories make the assumptions that attitudes are changed only if the incentives for making a new response are greater than the incentives for maintaining

the old response. The intensity with which some attitudes are held may be increased through the use of verbal-conditioning procedures (Olufemi, 2012).

The stimulus-response theory of attitudes guided this study in establishing the students' attitudes towards counselling. The theory guided the study in finding out what the students' attitudes towards counselling were. The stimulus-response theory was also crucial in finding out the factors affecting students' attitudes towards counselling. The theory was helpful in exploring the factors that contribute to students' attitudes towards counselling. Moreover, the stimulus response theory of attitudes guided the study in establishing whether students' past experiences with school counselling services affected their attitudes towards counselling.

### **1.10 Operational definitions of terms**

**Student:** A learner in a school.

**Attitude:** Attitude refers to feelings, beliefs, and reactions of an individual towards an event, phenomenon, object or person' (Hodges and Logan, 2012: vii).

**International school:** A school different from that of a national education system that offers an internationally recognised curriculum to a nationally diverse student body by a nationally diverse staff body.

**Counselling:** A professional helping relationship in which an individual is helped to resolve problems related to emotional, social, academic or any other psychological issue.

**Client:** A person seeking counselling services and is in a counselling relationship.

**School counsellor:** A professionally trained counsellor offering counselling services to students in a school setting.

**Referral:** The process of terminating a counselling relationship and sending a client to another professional for more specialised services.

**Counselling relationship:** The interactions between a counsellor and a client.

**Code of ethics:** The rules and regulations governing counsellors offering counselling services.

**Confidentiality:** The act of keeping clients' information in a safe and secure manner without divulging it to third party without the clients' consent.

### **1.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented the introduction. It has described the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, and operational definition of terms. The next chapter will present literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Overview**

This chapter reviews relevant literature on students' attitudes towards counselling. It contains literature on counselling in schools; history of counselling in schools; and students' attitudes towards counselling.

### **2.2 The Need for Counselling in Schools**

There has been a tremendous growth in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy internationally in the recent past (Bor et. al., 2002). This growth has manifested itself in a number of areas, including health care, family, work place and schools. The development of a separate speciality of counselling in schools has been in part due to the decline in the traditional pastoral roles of teachers. Teachers find very little time to engage in extra-curricular activities which in many countries were the normal expectations of all teachers. In the United Kingdom, for example, teachers have been constrained by the National Curriculum, Standard Assessment Tasks (TAKs), and the general pressures of their core duty in schools – teaching. Moreover, children and young people in schools have become more aware of their needs and are often the ones seeking counselling help to help them overcome the social and emotional challenges of growing up. The parents of young people and children in schools are keen in having a supportive adult in school with whom their children can share their challenges with – parents are the ones who have sought counselling services for their children in schools (Bor et. al., 2002).

The above literature on the positive attitude of students towards counselling is from the United Kingdom. It was, therefore, important to find out the students' attitudes towards counselling in an international school in Zambia.

In the United Kingdom, the requirements of the Children Act 1989 for pastoral provision in schools has encouraged to set up formalised counselling services. Head teachers of schools also recognise that the skills of psychotherapists and counsellors can be fruitfully employed in dealing with the tremendous range of difficulties that students bring to school (Bor et. al., 2002). There are numerous books on child and adolescent psychopathology. However, there are very few books

on counselling and psychotherapy in schools. Counselling and psychotherapy in schools are more recent services as such services were sought outside the school setting in the past.

There are a number of reasons for change in the need for counselling services in schools (Bor et. al., 2002). Daily life for children in schools can be very challenging and stressful even for the most resilient of children. The challenges that children face when growing up in schools include competitiveness, bullying, social exclusion, racism, family crises, sibling rivalry, academic underachievement, abuse, homophobia, peer pressure, and substance abuse (Bor et. al., 2002).

The above literature has given insights into the challenges faced by children and young people as they grow up. These challenges are the ones that necessitate counselling in schools. However, the above literature is from the United Kingdom. Therefore, carrying out a study in Zambia's international schools was essential in adding to the body of knowledge on student counselling.

Schools, like home, are considered a primary and essential context for supporting, nurturing and facilitating educational, moral and social development of children and young people (Bor et. al., 2002). There is increasing awareness of the role that schools play in identifying, managing, and preventing mental health problems in children and young people (Bor et. al., 2002). There are very few specialists such as educational psychologists and counsellors in schools. Such professionals are required to work with students with needs. Busy teachers are unable to notice average students with emotional and social difficulties (Bor et. al., 2002).

Early identification of psychological problems, be they transient or more entrenched, can prevent major and more permanent behavioural problems in children and young people. Many governments around the world require schools to be inclusive institutions. As a result, children in schools come from diverse backgrounds and abilities. 'Ecological assessments' of students help to identify unique and specific problems that may require attention by the school, rather than the one that views them as deficient and inseparably different, and counsellors have a role to play in this (Bor et. al., 2002).

Rare but headline-catching atrocities committed by some children have been the impetus behind efforts to understand and prevent violence in schools. For example, the murders at Columbine and Santana high schools in the USA and of Damilola Taylor in the UK gave the impetus to understand and prevent violence in schools. Problems such as homicide and suitable may be prevented and

counsellors have a role to play in this. Some atrocities are witnessed by school children as those in Brooklyn, New York who saw the bombing of the World Trade Centre by terrorists in 2001. Such horrific incidents may have serious psychological consequences on children and, therefore, the need for counselling services in schools (Bor et. al., 2002).

In many countries such as the USA and UK, counselling as a profession is now better managed and regulated and there is an improved understanding and the benefits and limits of counselling practice (Bor et. al., 2002). Some counsellors are more willing to work collaboratively with other professions in school setting as members of staff team, thereby removing some of the mystique and scepticism previously associated with their practice (Bor et. al., 2002).

The previous literature is mainly from the UK and USA as there is little or no research carried out in schools, especially international schools in Zambia. This study, therefore, aimed to fill this gap in literature by exploring the students' attitudes towards counselling in the selected international schools in Lusaka Zambia. The study further sought to fill the gap by exploring factors that contribute to students' attitudes towards counselling; investigating if there were differences in seeking counselling between male and female students; and if there were differences in seeking counselling among the grades.

### **2.3 History of Counselling in Schools**

Counselling in schools is not a new phenomenon. Records of counselling in schools date as far back as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1913, the London County Council appointed its first child psychologist to examine 'dull, backward and feeble minded children and to give guidance to teachers and parents on the treatment and education of children attending ordinary schools (Bore et. al., 2002).

School counselling in the USA is well developed and goes as far back as 1898 where the Central School in Detroit had a school counsellor. In the UK, however, it was not until the 1960s that school counselling began to develop. The 1963 Newsom Report focussed on the needs of pupils who were failing to reach their true potential in school and recommended that school counsellors should be employed. Due to these recommendations, some counselling courses were started for the training of school counsellors at universities, including Reading and Keele. There were several hundred school counsellors by the 1970s in England and Wales and nine full-time courses at

various universities throughout the country. In 1973, there were 18 courses such as Guidance and Counselling in Education at Reading or the Full-time Diploma courses in School Counselling at Swansea and North East London Polytechnic. Some local education authorities developed counselling services in their schools. The Association of School Counselling was set up to provide to provide a professional organisation for anyone involved in counselling children and young people (Bor et. al., 2002).

By the 1980s, there was a shift in emphasis on counselling in schools. The local education authorities were of the view that it was the teachers who needed to be taking the role of pastoral care and that counselling should be integrated into their teaching practice and be part of their responsibility as teachers (Hamblin, 1974). Some schools continued to employ counsellors while others trained their teaching staff to have a duo role. There were few guidelines for counselling; counsellors were free to develop counselling services leading to different roles, relationships and styles of practice. Recently in the UK, there has still been few courses specifically designed for school although there are several courses in general counselling and therapy (Bor et. al., 2002).

School counselling has again begun to take a more prominent role recently. Teachers are under increasing pressure to teach, keep detailed records of their pupils and fulfil all the criteria of the National Curriculum. Consequently, teachers can often find it difficult to take on the added pastoral responsibility. Schools have, therefore, begun to realise the need to hire a counsellor. The usefulness is increasingly recognised of having a professional on the school campus whom all students can see for all their needs, including educational, emotional and psychological needs, thereby contributing to the emotional well-being of the whole school (Bor et. al., 2002).

International schools are private independent schools with little government regulation as they do not follow the national curriculum. They have the liberty to run their counselling services in a way that suits their needs. The websites of international schools in Lusaka, Zambia show that they attach importance to student well-being and employ school counsellors to offer counselling services to their students. This study hoped to fill the knowledge gap by establishing students' attitudes towards counselling in the selected international schools in Lusaka, Zambia. The study also intended to explore factors that contribute to students' attitudes towards counselling; investigate if there were differences in seeking counselling between male and female students; and

investigate if there were differences in seeking counselling among the grades in an international school setting.

## **2.4 Students' Attitudes Towards Counselling**

There is very little research carried out on students' attitudes towards counselling (Williams et. al., 2015). A review of literature shows that that there is still much to be learned about high school students' experiences in school counselling (Sackett, Farmer and Moran, 2016). Therefore, this study hoped to contribute to knowledge on student counselling by exploring the attitudes of students in the international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Saunders and Saunders (2001) conducted a survey on alternative school students' perceptions of their experiences and interactions with their former school counsellor. Saunders and Saunders (2001) reported that students rated their former school counsellor highest on the item 'My counsellor provided academic guidance when I had questions about my classes'. However, Devila (2003) found that Puerto Rican students had negative experiences with their high school counsellors regarding academic support issues. Devilla (2003) carried out a qualitative study in which college bound Latino students expressed negative experiences with their school counsellor, and lacked academic planning and guidance from their school counsellor. This study also found that students expressed frustration and disappointment concerning their lack of career exploration, planning and college preparation. Even though this study was not carried out in international schools, it provides vital insights of the diverse attitudes of culturally diverse students towards counselling. Therefore, it was important to explore students' attitudes in international schools in Lusaka, Zambia.

Counselling in schools is meant to meet different student needs, including academic, career and personal or social needs. Saunders and Saunders (2001) found that alternative school students ranked their former school counsellors lowest on the item 'My counsellor helped me to deal with personal needs (family or other problems)' and 'I felt comfortable going to talk to my counsellor last year'. In this study, it was found that students did not view their former school counsellor as being very approachable or helpful in helping students resolve their personal and family issues. Similar to thfound that Latino students were aware that they needed someone to talk to about their personal problems and disappointed by the lack of support services. It was found in this study that

students understood the role of the school counsellor and needed someone to talk to. However, it was found that students believed that the school counsellor did not have the time to them. More research was needed to find out students' attitudes towards counselling in general, especially in international schools with culturally and nationally diverse student populations. The above studies were conducted in a different cultural environment at a different. This study hoped to fill this gap by exploring the attitudes of students towards counselling in an international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008) conducted a qualitative study to explore Latino high school students' perceptions on the preferred characteristics of school counsellors. This study found that Latino students had specific ideas of what kind of qualities were for school counsellors to have. Students reported that they preferred school counsellors who were understanding; could relate to students; were patient; were trustworthy; tried to help with problems; took time to listen; were friendly; and spoke Spanish. This study also found that Latino students had specific characteristics or helping behaviours that they liked in their school counsellors. Students liked that the school counsellors helped them with their classes. One student reported that he liked that the school counsellor had patience and was able to 'spend a little more time.' Students were also aware of aspects of their school counsellors they did not like. One student reported that he did not feel the school counsellor was genuine in helping him make a decision about a class, while another student did not feel supported concerning a class conflict. The above study is helpful in understanding the diverse attitudes that students have towards counselling. However, the study was conducted in a different country at a different time. This study hoped to fill this gap by establishing the attitudes of students towards counselling in the selected international schools in Lusaka, Zambia. The study further intended to explore the factors contributing to students towards counselling in the selected international schools; investigate if there were differences in seeking between male and female students; and investigate if there were differences in seeking counselling among grades.

Another theme that emerged from the study conducted by Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008) was students' needs. This study found that students shared a variety of needs for a translator and the need for Hispanic school counsellors, or for the school counsellor to speak Spanish. This study found that students reported several reasons they needed a Spanish speaking school counsellor, including helping students transition to American schools; better ability to express emotions; being

understood; helping their parents understand the school system; helping with homework; and decreasing the responsibility the school places on the students to translate for other students, especially for those who are new to the USA. The participants in the study conducted by Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008) also expressed concern for other non-Hispanic foreign students who needed assistance with language. International schools comprise of students from many different countries. The above study focused only Latino students. This study hoped to fill this gap by exploring the attitudes of students towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008) also found that, with one exception, students did not feel the school counsellor genuinely cared about what was going on in their lives. Accessibility of the school counsellor and school counselling services were other themes that came out from the study conducted by Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008). This study found that students were inhibited from seeking school counselling services due to limited time to get out of class; lack of reconcilability, accessibility, and the location of the school counselling office; the school schedule not having breaks for students; and limited time for school counsellors. This study aimed at extending the above findings by exploring the attitudes of students' towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

On the other hand, Solmonson et. al., (2014) studied the perceptions of first year college students of their experiences with their high school counsellors through quantitative surveys. The results from this survey showed that students had positive perceptions of their high school counsellors regarding availability, confidentiality, trust, and guidance activities. Students perceived the school counsellor as available, trustworthy, and valued the advice from the counsellor. However, the same study found that students indicated that school counsellors needed to improve in providing financial information to parents, working with students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and in conducting classroom guidance lessons. The above study focussed on the first year college students. This study hoped to fill this knowledge gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling the selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) explored students' experiences in school counselling sessions using qualitative, phenomenological interviews. This study found that students described not seeing the counsellor much and not having much of a relationship with him or her. One student

described his relationship with the counsellor as a relationship to the extent of that it serves a purpose but lacking depth beyond that. Many other students in this study stated that they looked to the counsellor for information they needed, but not to feel a personal connection. Several other students had difficulty even defining the relationship with the counsellor in terms of a relationship, having seen their school counsellor for their individual graduation plan meetings. The above study was conducted to explore the perceptions of students regarding their school counselling experiences in a different country and in a public school. This study hoped to fill this gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) also found that other students felt a bit more of a connection and trust established with the school counsellor and looked to them for guidance on a variety of issues. On the far end of the spectrum Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) found that some students described having a very close relationship with their school counsellors. The above findings show that students may have different attitudes towards counselling. This study hoped to extend these findings by exploring the attitudes of students in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

The other major theme that came out of the study done by Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) was the characteristics of the school counsellors. This study found that students experienced their school counsellors as not only helpful but also accessible, and very meaningful to them. The third theme that emerged from the study conducted by Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) was benefits received from school counsellors. This study found that largely, students looked to school counsellors for information and advice and found that they received from them in this regard meaningful. Students also found it meaningful when school counsellors gave them encouragement. Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) finally found that students described their relationship with the school counsellor as a collaborative one. This study established that throughout the interviews, students consistently portrayed their interactions and sessions with their school counsellors as collaborative, rather than a unilateral exchange. The research carried out by Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) sheds light into how students feel about their counsellors. However, more research was needed to understand students' attitudes towards counselling in international schools. This study, therefore, hoped to fill this gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling in the selected international schools in Lusaka, Zambia.

In Africa, little research has been conducted to establish students' attitudes towards counselling. Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010) investigated the attitudes of secondary school students towards guidance and counselling services in River State, Nigeria using descriptive design of survey type. This study revealed that students' attitudes towards guidance and counselling services were significantly positive; that gender and school location significantly influenced students' attitudes towards guidance services. Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010) further report that there were significant differences between attitude of male and female students in rural and urban schools towards guidance and counselling services. The above study provides further insight into students' attitudes towards counselling. However, the study was conducted in Nigerian public schools. This study hoped to fill this gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia.

Mandera (2015) carried out a research on the perceptions of teachers and students towards guidance and counselling services in Kenya. Mandera (2013) found that students gave several reasons why they avoided seeking guidance and counselling services, including lack of confidentiality, lack of counselling rooms, unfriendly teachers (school counsellors), inadequate time, ignorance and lack of schedules. The above research provides further insight into the attitudes of students towards counselling. However, the study was conducted in Kenyan public schools. This study intended to fill this gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling in selected international schools in Lusaka, Zambia.

Arfasa (2018) examined the perceptions of students and teachers toward guidance and counselling services in South West Ethiopia Secondary Schools and found that the students' and teachers' mean perception scores to needs of guidance and counselling for students' learning was positive. This study also found that perceptions of both students and teachers toward school guidance and counselling services working on students' future career, personal problems, student empowerment and decision making were negative. The study by Arfasa (2018) was beneficial to this study as it gave further insight into students' perception toward counselling. However, it did not provide the actual attitudes towards counselling. This study, therefore, hoped to fill this gap by exploring the attitudes of students toward counselling in the selected international school.

Mwemba (2016) carried out a qualitative descriptive survey to determine pupils' perceptions of guidance and counselling services offered in secondary schools in Mazabuka district of Zambia.

Mwemba (2016) reports that pupils were dissatisfied with the provision of guidance and counselling services. The above study was helpful in understanding how students feel about the counselling services provided in their schools. However, the study was conducted in Zambian public schools. This study hoped to fill this gap by exploring students' attitudes towards counselling in selected international schools in Lusaka, Zambia.

## **2.5 Factors Contributing to Students' Attitudes towards Counselling**

Moore-Thomas and Lent (2007) carried out a study on adolescent students' expectations about counselling. In this study, 329 middle school students completed the *Expectations about Counselling Questionnaire Brief Form (EAC-B)* (Tinsley, 1982). Moore-Thomas and Lent (2007) subjected the EAC-B client and counsellor to a 2 (gender) by 6 (race/ ethnicity) analysis of variance. Each analysis yielded significant expectation differences as a function of gender, with girls reporting higher than boys for the client role (girls'  $M=4.73$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ; boys'  $M=4.24$ ;  $SD=1.19$ ;  $d=.42$ ) as well as the counsellor role (girls'  $M=5.55$ ;  $SD=1.17$ ; boys'  $M=5.16$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ;  $d=.32$ ). The main effects for race/ ethnicity, gender interaction were not significant. This study also revealed that prior experience explained a significant amount of variation in receptivity to future counselling; the addition of gender at the second step of the equation accounted for a small but significant in variation (1%); the EAC-B scales explained an additional 6% of the variance at the third step. In total, the predictors accounted for 39% of the variation in willingness to see a counsellor. However, with all the predictors in the equation, the only significant beta weights were produced by prior experience and client role expectations.

The findings of Moore-Thomas and Lent (2007) suggested that middle school students' expectations about counselling, as assessed by the EAC-B, may be structured more simply and in a less differentiated manner than is assumed to be the case with adults and older adolescents. Although the 53 items of the EAC-B were initially thought to fall within five conceptual groupings (Tinsely, 1982), and prior factor analyses with older samples revealed varying degrees of support for a three or four-factor structure underlying the 17-scale scores, a two-factor solution appeared to represent the counselling expectations of middle school students. The two factors involved expectations associated with, respectively, the counsellor's role (i.e. what he or she will do or offer to the client in counselling) and the client's role (i.e. what one as a client is expected in, and how

one benefit from, counselling). This study hoped to extend the study to explore students' attitudes towards counselling in an international school setting.

## **2.6 Differences Between Male and Female Students' Attitudes towards Counselling**

Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) carried out a field study survey among 342 high school students in Turkey to explore gender differences in help-seeking attitudes and the effects of counsellor gender and problem type on those attitudes. The study found that female students held more positive attitudes than did male students. Overall, subject gender explained between 3% and 9% of the variability in total attitude scores and subscales. This study also found that the effects of problem type and counsellor gender were found to differ for the two genders. For female students, neither problem type, counsellor gender nor their interaction had a significant effect on total attitude. Female students were found to be willing to disclose either personal or academic problems to either a same-gendered counsellor or an opposite-gendered counsellor. The study further found that male students had higher psychological distress and more confidence in mental health professionals while seeking help from an opposite gendered counsellor for academic problems than for personal problems. However, type of problem (academic and/or personal) made little difference in psychological distress and confidence towards seeking help with a same-gendered counsellor. Overall, the interaction of the problem type preference for counsellor gender explained approximately 4% of the variability in scores of psychological distress and confidence in mental health professionals. The above study by Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) revealed important findings to the current study. However, the study was carried in a Turkish government school. Therefore, it is important to extend a similar study in a Zambian international school with students from a diverse cultural background.

Rayle (2005) conducted a study among 22 middle school counsellors to find out school counsellors' perceptions of the same-gender and cross-gender student relationships. In this study, all the 22 middle-school counsellor-participants acknowledged challenges in their cross-gender student-counsellor interactions and reported that these were almost salient in their individual planning and counselling with students. The 14 female middle-school counsellor-participants in this study perceived female students as being more inclined to seek female counsellors' help in social/personal areas and to want female school counsellors' opinions, reactions and decisions. One female counsellor stated, "Female students are voracious in their curiosity about me as a

person and as a female and want to know everything I will disclose to them about ‘what it was like’ when I was in middle school.” Another female counsellor purported that “female middle school students are real with me and openly expose their fears, hopes, dreams, successes, and defeats with me.” Another stated, “We laugh easily, and at times, we cry.”

Rayle (2005) also found that they feel a natural affinity to spending time with female students because they know that they will have an opportunity to act as a role model and mentor to them both as adults and as females. Overall, the female counsellors agreed that they witness similar interactions when facilitating all-female small groups. However, when working in co-ed groups, the female counsellors noted that female and male students to be equally receptive and engaged depending on their individual levels of comfort with peers. Each of the female counsellors perceived that all students seem to place more importance on their interactions with one another versus their counsellor when in groups.

Rayle (2005) found that all the female counsellors in that study reported different experiences with their male students in individual counselling. One female counsellor shared that “my male students typically only voluntarily visit with when they are expected to or when they need guidance with their academic decisions.” Another stated, “Male students are more reserved with me and share less about their personal thoughts and feelings.” One female counsellor stated, “They challenge me to become more aware of my cultural competence as a counsellor and more aware of the potential differences in which I interact with female and male students. In counselling situations, the female counsellors reported that male students to take more time to ‘open up’, but the counsellors willingly noted the variance in the ways in which they approach female and male students. One counsellor stated, “It is challenging to me to ask open questions that engage female and male students in the same manner. It seems like my female students are more willing to participate but I know that the life experiences I have had to do not mirror the male students’ experiences, so maybe I’m not asking the ‘right’ questions.” Another noted, “I have noted that I always feel more comfortable with my female students.”

Rayle (2005) reports that the male counsellor-participants in this study reported similar experiences to those of female counsellors in the same-gender and cross-gender relations with students. For all of the male counsellors, working with female students brought perceived challenges than their working relationship male students. More specifically, several male

counsellors reported that they take specific precautions when working with female students individually. One stated, "Because my female students are not as open with me about their personal experiences with boys, sex, or drugs, I take care to have good boundaries with them when and if I need to ask them about personal situations at home or outside of school." Another male counsellor stated, "If I am working with a female counsellor and we begin discussing things that I am not comfortable with for one reason or the other, I will ask the student's permission to bring a female counsellor into the office." Yet another reported, "It seems that the female school counsellors have a natural ability to connect with female students; I have gone to them for consultation numerous times and they come to me if they need consult concerning one of their male students." One of the male counsellors reported that some of his female students appear hesitant to approach him about personal concerns before their working alliances are built. He stated, "The female students who know that I am their school counsellor will come to me with questions about teachers and academics but when they have a personal issue, they will seek out one of the female counsellors. This works both ways; male students seek me out for personal concerns." Another male counsellor noted, "I find that the female students tend to be more reserved than male students. No matter what topic we are discussing, male students are more involved than female students." Another male counsellor stated, "I find it much easier to connect with male students. They bring up issues I can easily relate to when we are discussing relationships, school experience, or even career plans."

Rayle (2005) reports that male counsellors were similar to female counsellors in their reports of ease and comfort in their relationships with female students. Male counsellors described working alliances with male students that formed naturally in individual counselling. One male counsellor reported, "I have found that male students come to me with anything that may be bothering them such as school, parents, friends, sports, bullying, etc. They have even told me that they come to me because I am a man." Another counsellor stated, "The boys are seeking adult mentors, especially those who have no fathers in their lives. They openly ask me questions about girls and want to know what sports I played when I was in middle school and if I got into fights. All eight male counsellors in this study reported that their male students looked to them with respect and sought help in being adolescent males. Unlike their more 'guarded' interactions with female students, male school counsellors reported feeling more comfortable with their male students and regretted that they were unable to experience this with female students. One male counsellor

reported, “I’m frustrated when I can’t connect with female students. I mean, they see me talking easily with boys and I think it may make them feel even less included.”

Overall, Rayle (2005) found that both male and female counsellors openly shared their perceptions of the challenges they face in their cross-gender working relationships with students. All of the 22 counselor-participants described how their counselling interactions differed in same-gender and cross-gender working alliances. Both female and male counsellors believed themselves to be genuine, caring school counsellors. However, while discussing cross-gender interactions with their students, several of the counsellors realized they approach male and female students differently. Eight of the school counsellors openly stated that they have varying social and personal expectations of female and male students. In addition, all 22 of the counsellors maintained that the specific challenges of cross-gender middle-school interactions seem to appear most often around the personal/social concerns of middle school students but also have appeared when working with students’ academic planning and career awareness planning. This study by Rayle (2005) highlighted the attitudes that male and female students have toward seeing counsellors of the same and different genders. However, the study was not conducted among the students but the school counsellors. It was, therefore, important to extend this study in order to find out the attitudes of male and female students towards counselling.

Female students of African-American decent have been found be a special group of students with specific needs and attitudes towards counselling. Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore (2001) report that since many African-American adolescent females may have experienced rejection, disapproval, and/or prejudice in and outside of school setting, they may approach counselling with a great deal of anxiety, distrust, and apprehension. School counsellors can minimize emotions by demystifying the counselling process and focusing on developing a trusting relationship with these young females. By briefly and simply describing the counselling process before initiating it, the school counsellor provides the African-American adolescent female student the opportunity to ask questions about what counsellors do, and to identify the limitations of counselling. Counsellors might also meet with these students in informal settings like the cafeteria, school courtyard or playground. African-American youths are more concerned with the counsellors’ interpersonal skills than with the counselling skills. It is imperative, therefore, for counsellors to develop rapport with African-American adolescents so that trust is gained for future counselling.

One area in which school counsellors can empower African-American female adolescent students is assisting the adolescents to develop an attitude that reinforces their willingness to take responsibility for changes that need to be made in their life or schooling. This attitude positions African-Americans to have a sense of control over their environment which is often seen as racist and hostile. This attitude also enhances the potential of African-American female adolescents to achieve in the context of a society that has historically their reference groups. According to Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore (2001), Young African-American adolescents who take responsibility rarely talk of luck or chance but have the attitude that expresses, “If I want it, I have to go for it, work for it.”

In order to instil this attitude that expresses personal responsibility for one’s success, school counsellors can assist African-American female adolescents in developing a procedural or goal sequences that lead to planned action. Although school counsellors and other school professionals assist all students in developing goals, African-American adolescent females seem to benefit from this intervention because of the seemingly overwhelming barriers they face due to their race and gender. To begin this intervention, school counsellors should ask African-American adolescents about their short term and long term goals, and how they plan to achieve those goals. By developing goals, organizing a plan to achieve the goal, implementing the plan, and then evaluating the outcome of the plan, an African-American adolescent has a useful approach to achieving success in not only her school work but also her personal life (Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore, 2001).

School counsellors can also empower African American female adolescent students by helping them manage the impact of others’ negative perceptions. While many African American adolescent female students may not dwell on their racial, gender or economic status, coping with others’ faulty perceptions based on stereotypes is an ongoing and difficult task that will likely impact adolescents’ lives. The goal then is for these students to avoid letting others’ negative emotions block their achievements (Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore, 2001). Assisting African American adolescent female students in managing the impact of others’ negative faulty perceptions can be done by using case scenarios depicting problems involving racism, sexism, and/or classism as catalysts for discussions. During these discussions, it is important for school counsellors to take a ‘none-expert’ role so that the adolescents feel comfortable expressing their

feelings. Counsellors can ask questions that provide the adolescents with an opportunity to not only articulate their feelings about racism but also brainstorm new ways of challenging and managing racist encounters. Examples of questions might include “What is your first reaction to the scenario?” “What do you feel as you listen to/read the scenario?” “What might happen next after your reaction?” and “How might others deal with the situation?”

Living in a society that devalues one’s race and gender can be devastating and challenging experience that impacts one’s self-esteem and self-concept. For this reason, instilling self-acceptance is a critical aspect of empowering African-American adolescent female students. School counsellors can assist this group of students by reminding them of their inner as well as outer beauty and the significant aspects of African-American heritage. School counsellors may invite African-American women from the community or community organizations like churches to serve as mentors or ‘buddies’ for African-American adolescents struggling with self-acceptance. School counsellors might also encourage these students to research their ethnic heritage by reading selected literature, attending cultural exhibits and interacting with African-American ‘experts’ on African-American history and culture. Students can also form groups as way of expressing and forming cultural identity. (Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore, 2001).

Incorporating spirituality and religion is another strategy suggested by (Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore, 2001) as a way of instilling positive attitudes towards counselling in African-American adolescent female students. Recognizing the importance of religion and spirituality in the lives of African-American enables school counsellors to fully appreciate indigenous support resources such as pastors, deacons and ministers in the adolescents’ communities. School counsellors may invite the support may of individuals to be part of open counselling groups, or the counsellors may develop professional alliances with these people to consult on specific cases, within the mandates of confidentiality. Counsellors who recognize and encourage the expression of religious and spiritual beliefs in counselling may provide African-American female students with an important source of empowerment.

The above strategies suggested by Holcomb-McCoy and Thomas-Moore, 2001 on how to improve the attitudes of African-American adolescent students show that different ethnic and gender groups may hold unique attitudes towards counselling in a school set up. Therefore, it was necessary to carry out a study on students’ attitudes towards counselling in an international school setting.

## **2.7 Grade and Students' Attitudes towards Counselling**

Yeh (2002) investigated 594 Taiwanese junior high, high school, and college students' gender, age, self-construal and collective self-esteem as predictors of professional psychological help-seeking attitudes. This study did not find age as a significant factor in help-seeking attitudes. This means that there were no significant differences in help-seeking attitude between junior high, high school and college students. The study by Yeh (2002) is relevant to the current study, but was carried out among students of different age range: junior high, high school and college students. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating if there are any differences in seeking school counselling among students of different grades in the selected international school.

Davies (2018) conducted a phenomenological study to examine 15 elementary school counsellors' perceptions of experiences in working with students with chronic illness diagnosis. One of the themes that emerged from this study was that of training experiences. Elementary school counsellors in this study perceived a variety of experiences related to the theme of training to work with students having chronic illnesses. The elementary school counsellors in this study expressed that there was insufficient training in working with students who have chronic diseases. Of the 15 participants in this study, 12 reported insufficient training in relation to chronic illness with responses including 'limited', 'minimal', 'no training' and 'weak'. While some of the participants (N=4) did mention some training during a graduate-level school counselling program, these experiences varied too. A significant statement came from participant 6 who stated that while she received training, she felt like that there was sufficient time spent on treating/ working with children.

As a consequence of the perceived lack of training, three participants in the study conducted by Davies (2018) noted the need for training beyond graduate school to prepare for this specific issue and population. Overall, a strong indication of significant training and preparation for needs for addressing chronic illness in the elementary school setting at graduate school level was found. Even though this study does not address the attitudes of students in lower grades (elementary), it sheds light on the training requirements of school counsellors working with students in lower grades. Therefore, it was important to carry out a study to find out if students' attitudes towards counselling are influenced by their grade level and if there were differences in students' attitudes towards counselling among the grades.

Pérruse, et. al. (2004) conducted a study on the perception of school counsellors and school principals about the National Standards for school counselling programs and the transforming school counselling initiative in the United States. Several findings came out of this study. One of the findings was on how elementary school counsellors, secondary school counsellors, elementary school principals and secondary school principals were alike or different in their perceptions about the degree of emphasis that should be given to the National Standards for School Counselling Programs. With three exceptions, school counsellors and principals at each level responded that counsellors should ideally emphasise all nine standards. The highest ranked stem item for elementary school counsellors, secondary school counsellors, and elementary school principals was 'Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others'. Secondary school principals rated this second highest. The highest rated stem item for secondary school principals was 'Students will complete school with academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial postsecondary options, including college.' The lowest rated item for elementary school counsellors and elementary school principals was "Students will employ strategies to achieve future career success and satisfaction." The lowest rated item for secondary school counsellors and secondary school principals was "Students will understand safety and survival skills."

In the same study by Pérruse et. al. (2004), results from Kruskal-Wallis test revealed significant differences between the means of for all four groups on all except three of the National Standards stem items. Pair-wise comparisons using Mann-Whitney *U* were conducted between elementary school counsellors and secondary school counsellors, elementary school counsellors and elementary school principals, secondary school counsellors and secondary school principals. Elementary and secondary school counsellors differed across all of the personal/social development standards, with elementary school counsellors rating each of them significantly higher than secondary school counsellors. However, secondary school counsellors rated one of each academic development and career development significantly higher than did elementary school counsellors. There were no significant differences between elementary school counsellors and elementary school principals. Secondary school counsellors rated three stems higher than secondary school principals: Career Standards A and C, and Personal/Social Development Standard C.

The other findings of the study by Pérusse et. al. (2004) were on how elementary school counsellors, secondary school counsellors, elementary school principals and secondary school principals were alike or different in their perceptions about appropriate tasks for school counsellors. Among these, the only non-significant among all four groups was for the stem item “Assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs, and problems.” Appropriate tasks that received the lowest endorsement from at least two groups included: “Counselling students as to appropriate school dress,” analysing grade-point average in relation to achievement,” “providing teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls,” “and ensuring student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations. The extent to which school counsellors performed these appropriate tasks varied by level. For example, lower numbers of school counsellors at each level counselled students as to appropriate school dress (41.3% of elementary school counsellors, 31.6% of secondary school counsellors) or provided teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls (15.6% of elementary school counsellors, 9.3% of secondary school counsellors). However, when compared with elementary school counsellors, more secondary school counsellors indicated that they analysed grade-point average in relation to achievement (19.3% of elementary school counsellors, 57.7% of secondary school counsellors) and ensured student records were maintained per state and federal regulations (27.5% of elementary school counsellors, 61.4% of secondary school counsellors).

Perruse et. al. (2004) found that more than 80% of secondary school principals identified the following inappropriate tasks as appropriate: “registration and scheduling of all new students,” “administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests,” and “maintaining student records.” Close to 50% of school counsellors at each level also identified administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests as appropriate. Whether school counsellors performed these tasks varied by level. With the exception of three inappropriate tasks, more secondary school counsellors indicated that they performed these tasks as compared to elementary school counsellors. The top three inappropriate tasks which secondary school counsellors performed were the same as those endorsed by more than 80% of secondary school principals: “registration and scheduling of new students.” (81.1%); “administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests” (65.5%); “and maintaining student records” (63.0%). The top three inappropriate tasks for elementary school counsellors were also the top three identified as appropriate by elementary school principals:

“administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests” (39.9%); “assisting with duties in the principal’s office” (30.3%); and “maintaining student records” (22.9%).

The third findings by Pérruse et. al. (2004) were on how elementary school counsellors, secondary school counsellors, elementary school principals and secondary school principals were alike or different or alike in perceptions about the degree of emphasis that should ideally be given to be given the TSCI domains. Ten (52.6%) of the 19 stems were rated as 4.00 or higher across all four domains. Results from the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed significant differences between the means for all four groups on all except four of the TSCI stem items. Pair-wise comparisons using Mann-Whitney *U* were conducted. Comparisons between elementary school counsellors and elementary school principals showed significant differences on six stem items, and comparisons between secondary school counsellors and secondary school principals revealed significant differences on seven stem items.

As was the case with National Standards, there were significant differences among the four groups about the degree of emphasis that should be given to each of the five domain stems. There were more significant differences between elementary school counsellors and secondary school counsellors than between counsellors and principals at each level. Despite these differences, the top three stem items across all the four groups were the same: “play a leadership role in defining and carrying out guidance and counselling functions,” “Brief counselling with individual students, groups, and families” “Promote, plan and implement school-wide prevention programs, career/college activities, course selection placement, social/personal management and decision making activities.” The lowest three were not as clearly agreed upon as across all four groups. One stem was ranked as 18 or 19 across all four groups: “Provide snapshots of student outcomes, show implications, achievement gaps, and provide leadership for school to view. Other stem items that received a position of 17, 18, or 19 by at least three groups by at least three groups were: “Make available and use data to help the whole school look at student outcomes” and “Coordinate staff training initiatives to address students’ needs on a school-wide basis.” “Use data to effect change, utilizing resources from the school and community” was ranked 17 by secondary school principals; and “Interpret student data for use in school-wide planning for change” was ranked 17 by elementary school counsellors.

The above findings by Pérruse et. al. (2004) are significant to this study as they reveal differences in perceptions or attitudes towards counselling in lower grades (elementary school) and higher grades (secondary school). However, this study was not conducted on students, but counsellors and principals. This study, therefore, hoped to fill this gap by finding out if there were any differences in attitudes towards counselling by students of different grades.

## **2.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the literature review relevant to the proposed study – Students’ Attitudes Towards Counselling in Selected International School in Lusaka, Zambia. There is little research on how students feel about counselling, especially in international schools. It was, therefore, important that more research was conducted to establish students’ attitudes towards counselling if counselling services were to be improved and students are to be helped. The next chapter will present the methodology of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. It includes the sub-divisions of methodology which are research design, population, sample, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection, data processing, and data analysis.

Methodology is the section of the study in which the researcher states clearly how the study was conducted; the data collected; where the data came from; research instruments used such as questionnaires, direct observation, interviews or experiments; and how the data was analysed (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). This study used a mixed method approach of quantitative and qualitative methods.

### **3.2 Research design**

According to Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013:34), "A research design can be thought of as the structure of research." It is the 'glue' that holds the elements of the project together. It is the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to the research problems (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This study employed a descriptive survey research design. A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalises or draws inferences to the population (Creswell., 2014). A descriptive survey design was used in order to collect data from a fairly large population of participants using semi-structured questionnaires. Also, a descriptive survey design was because it is simple and easily understood (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). This descriptive survey is envisaged to be cross-section as data was collected at one point in time.

### **3.3 Population**

In academic research, a population is the target group from which data is collected. It is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). Population refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common, for example, all mothers of children with cerebral palsy in Zambia. The population of this study consisted of all the secondary school students in the selected international school in Lusaka province of Zambia. This school had about 250 students in its secondary school comprising

of about 125 female and 125 male students. The school was targeted as had all the characteristics of an international school, including an international school curriculum, students from different countries and cultures, and teaching staff from different national and cultural backgrounds.

### **3.4 Sample**

In academic research, a sample is the actual number of respondents or participants in a study. It is a portion of the population (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). It is a portion taken from a group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. The sample of this study was 64 students in the selected international schools comprising 33 female students and 31 male students. The sample comprised of 14 Year 7s, 15 Year 8s, 16 Year 9s and 19 Year 10s. The sample was representative of the population as it consisted of about 25% of the population of the school selected. The sample also had characteristics typical of the population such as gender, age and grade levels.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

Sampling procedure or technique refers to the part of the research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for the study (Kasonde-Nga'ndu,2013). This study used stratified random sampling and simple random sampling. Stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into homogenous sub-groups and taking a simple random sample in each group. The sample is selected in such a way as to ensure that certain sub-groups in the population are represented in the sample in proportion to their number in the population. This technique is appropriate when dealing with issues related to gender, race or age disparities in the population. Stratified random sampling was used in order to target the equal number male and female students. Simple random sampling was then used as it provided each participant in the population to be equally selected. Simple random sampling as the name suggests involves no complexities. It is one in which every member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. This method involves the random selection of participants from a list of the total population or sampling frame. In simple random sampling, questionnaires were randomly distributed in each classroom of students.

### **3.6 Instruments for data collection**

Research instruments refer to the tools that the researcher uses in collecting the necessary data (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). This study used semi-structured questionnaires as instruments of data collection. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect data from a fairly large sample of participants. Semi-structured questionnaires were used because they were easy to administer and provided confidentiality (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). The questionnaires in this study consisted of questions on the three counselling domains: academic, social/personal, and career. The questionnaire comprised of Likert scale questions and open-ended questions to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

### **3.7 Procedure for data collection**

After permission was sought from the head of school and the secondary school principal, the researcher went to each of the classrooms with the potential respondents and ask for permission from the class teacher regarding the study at hand. The researcher further asked for permission from the students and explained the purpose of the study and the details of the study. The potential respondents were also notified that they are free to terminate their participation in the study at any time of their choosing. The questionnaires were then randomly distributed by hand to the respondents. Each respondent was given enough time to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. Once the questionnaires were completed, the respondents were asked to hand in.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

This study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 to run an independent t-tests in order to establish if there are any differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test to establish any differences among different grades. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis involved the following steps proposed by Creswell (2014):

- Step 1: Organise and prepare for analysis.
- Step 2: Read or look at all the data to gain general ideas.
- Step 3: Coding the data

- Step 4: Generation of descriptions, categories or themes for analysis
- Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be represented in qualitative narrative.
- Step 6: Interpretation

### **3.9 Delimitations of the study**

This study confined itself to only one selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia. The selected international school was a multicultural school with teachers and students from different countries of the world. This school was selected in order to establish students' attitudes towards counselling. Since the study focused on only one school, caution was taken in generalising the results to other international schools in Zambia and those around the world.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

The researcher sought permission from the head of school and the secondary school principal of the selected international school. The researcher ensured that the participants in this study were not in any way subjected to any physical, emotional or psychological harm. Participants were also asked for permission to respond to the questionnaire and free to terminate their participation in the study at any time of their choosing. Confidentiality was maintained as no details of the respondents or their schools were revealed. Moreover, this study and its findings were for academic purposes only.

### **3.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented the methodology of the study. It has described the research design, population, sample, sampling procedure, instruments of data collection, data collection procedure, data analysis, delimitation of the study and ethical considerations. The next chapter will present the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The findings are presented according to the following sub-headings: Demographic Data; Students attitudes towards counselling in the selected international school; Factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling; Differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling; and Differences among the Year/Grade groups' attitudes towards counselling.

### 4.2 Demographic Data

This part of the paper presents the demographic data of the respondents in this study.

**Table 1: Gender of respondents**

Male	31
Female	33
Total	64

The above table shows the gender of the respondents in this study.

**Table 2: Age respondents**

Age	Number
11	1
12	15
13	16
14	11
15	14
16	2
N/A	5

The above table shows the age of respondents

**Table 3: Year/ Grade of Respondents**

<b>Year/Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
7	14
8	15
9	16
10	19
N/A	
Total	64

The above table shows the Year/Grade of respondents

**Table 4: Nationality of respondents**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Number</b>
Zambian	28
British	6
Indian	11
Kenyan	1
Ethiopian	1
Malawian	1
Ugandan	1
Angolan	1
Zimbabwean	1
Slovenian	2

American	2
Lithuanian	1
Egyptian	2
Japanese	1
Chinese	1
Trinidad & Tobago	1
Serbian	2
Mauritian	1
Greek	1
Italian	1
Swedish	1
Italian	1
Lebanese	1
French	2
N/A	2
Total	64

The above table shows the nationality of respondents

**Table 5: Race/Ethnicity of respondents**

Race/Ethnicity	Number
Black	20
White	12
Mixed	10

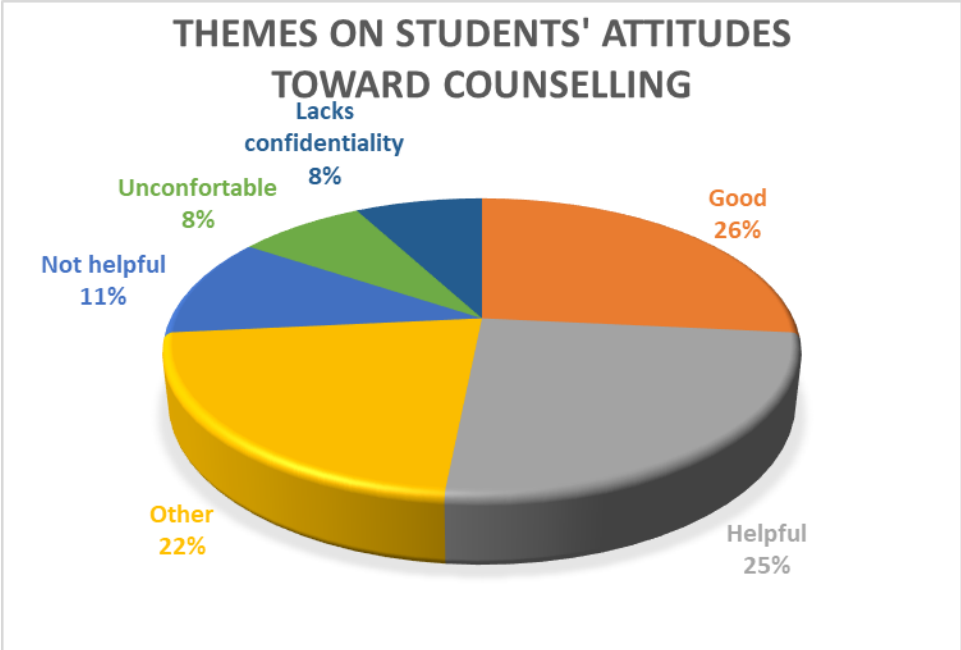
Indian	4
Arab	3
Chinese	1
Japanese	1
Other	7
N/A	5
Total	64

The above table shows the race/ethnicity of the respondents

### 4.3 Students’ Attitudes Towards Counselling in the Selected International School

This part of the paper presents the findings of the study on students’ attitudes towards counselling in the selected international school.

Pie Chart 1: Themes on students’ attitudes towards counselling



The above pie chart shows the major themes on students’ attitudes toward counselling. The chart shows that 26% of the students mentioned that it was good; 25% mentioned that it was helpful;

22% mentioned other; 11% mentioned that it was not helpful; 8% mentioned that it was uncomfortable; and another 8% mentioned that it lacked confidentiality.

### **Theme 1: Counselling in School is Good**

This study found that 26% of the respondents mentioned that counselling in school was good. The following were some of the responses from the respondents:

-Male respondent #7: Good because it makes the school better and will make all the children happy and feel home.

-Male respondent #11: I think it is a great thing to have a counsellor at school, especially in older age groups because some teachers give a tremendous amount of homework which stresses out students. Also, older students can become stressed and depressed and many autobiographies of authors who are depressed involve counsellors and I think it really helps.

-Female respondent #5: I feel good about school counselling because school counsellors know how to listen and help. They also help you cope.

-Female respondent #13: It is a good way to get your feelings out, especially for people who don't have anyone to talk to.

### **Theme 2: Counselling in school is helpful**

The second theme that emerged from this study is that students found counselling in school to be helpful. 25% of the respondents indicated that they found counselling helpful. The following are some the responses from the respondents:

-Male respondent #3: I think it helps with a lot of students who need aid, but I haven't really reached out for counselling.

-Male respondent #19: It is helpful in certain situations, but sometimes the counsellor should leave a student alone in very sad times.

-Female respondent #15: Counselling is very useful in schools - very important in schools as many people are coming from different places and have nowhere to seek help from.

-Female respondent #22: It is helpful if you really need it.

### **THEME 3: COUNSELLING IN SCHOOL IS NOT HELPFUL**

The third theme that emerged from this study is that counselling in school is not helpful. 11% of the respondents indicated that counselling in school is not helpful. The following are some of the responses:

-Male respondent #6: It's not something I acknowledge because I feel I don't need it and I can sort out my problems by myself.

-Male respondent #17: It's bad and never helps.

-Female respondent #14: I don't feel good about it because they don't actually solve your problems. They actually say that, "Oh! I'm sorry for you," and they try to help and it doesn't work out in the end.

-Female respondent #20: It is not helpful.

### **THEME 5: COUNSELLING IN SCHOOL IS UNCOMFORTABLE**

The fourth theme that emerged from this study is that counselling in school is uncomfortable. Eight percent of the respondents indicated that they found counselling in school to be uncomfortable. The following were some of the responses:

-Male respondent #8: I feel like it will be hard and I'll be under a lot of pressure.

-Female respondent #4: I have only been once and I don't think I would go again. It was not the counsellor's fault; I just felt uncomfortable.

-Female respondent #8: It's really hard to go to speak to someone about your issues because it's very hard to tell someone.

-Female respondent #29: To be honest, people will notice that you are being counselled, so I don't think it is a good idea because you look weird.

## **THEME 5: COUNSELLING IN SCHOOL LACKS CONFIDENTIALITY**

The fifth theme that emerged from the study is that counselling in school lacks confidentiality. 8% of the respondents indicated that counselling in school lacks confidentiality. The following are some of the responses:

-Male respondent #26: I am neutral because I would not go for counselling unless I am called in. I don't feel that I'm safe with the counsellor because they can spread the word.

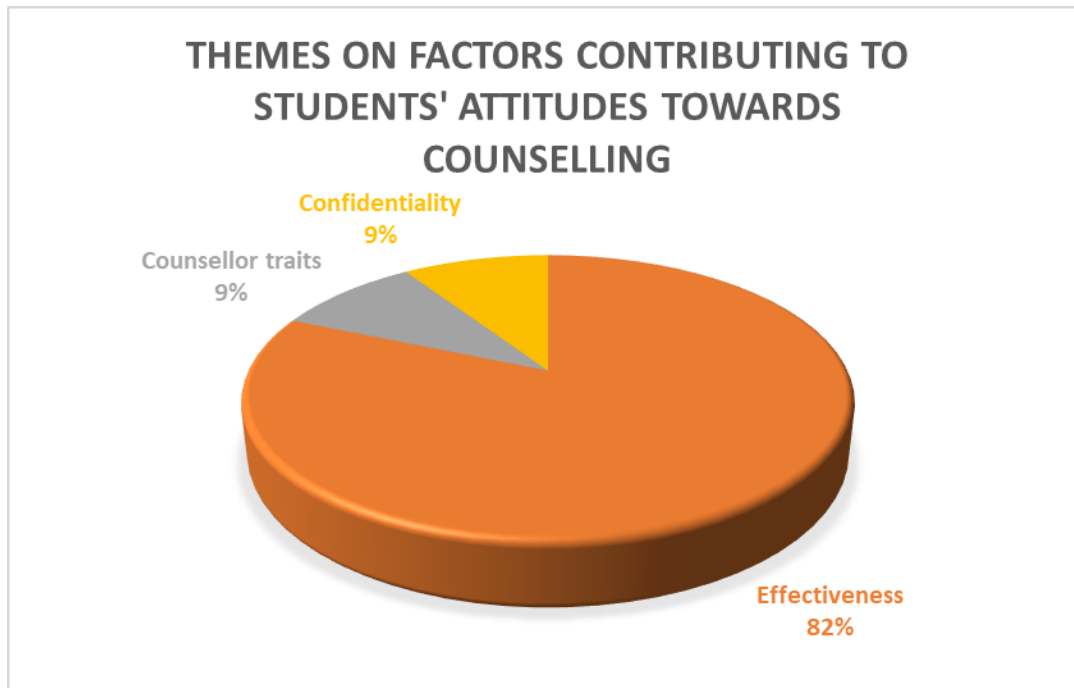
-Female respondent #2: It's okay but it has no trust.

Female respondent #18: I feel it's important to some extent. I am not a fan of it. I personally wouldn't seek school counselling because I feel like if I do tell the counsellor something, my parents and other teachers will probably find out about because I understand there is a thing that if a child is self-harming you have to tell the parents for the welfare of the parents, but it doesn't mean I agree when I go to a counsellor it means I don't want my parents to find out because if I wanted them to know, I would have gone to them, but I didn't, meaning I trust you. This means that I trust you not to break it up too. I have had bad experiences with school counselling because of this, so I am not a fan of it that much.

### **4. 4 Factors Contributing to Students' Attitudes Towards Counselling in School**

This part of the paper presents findings on the emerging themes of factors contributing to students' attitudes in the selected international school.

**Pie chart 2: Themes on factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling**



The above pie chart shows themes that emerged on factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling in school. The pie chart shows the 82% of the students mentioned effectiveness of counselling; 9% mentioned counsellor traits and another 9% mentioned confidentiality.

### **Theme 1: Effectiveness of counselling**

This study found that 82% of the respondents mentioned effectiveness of counsellor as a factor contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling. The following were some of the responses

-Male respondent # 1: That it will grow.

-Male respondent # 2: I just feel that it should help students.

-Male respondent #4: It should be good.

-Male respondent #5: It should really be good because [this school] is very expensive.

-Male respondent #11: I really hope that students and teachers can benefit from counselling and be able to with school. I think it's good to have psychological help at school and in other problems because stress and depression are underrated problems even though it's just a chemical imbalance

in the brain.

-Female respondent #3: That my problems and issues get told and are dealt with.

-Female respondent #5: School counselling is meant to help students resolve emotional, social or behavioural problems, and help the development of a clear focus or sense of direction.

### **Theme 2: Counsellor Traits**

This study found that 9% of the respondents mentioned counsellor traits as another factor contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling. The following were some of the responses from the respondents:

-Male respondent #3: Someone who is friendly, approachable, helpful, understanding and free to talk.

-Male respondent #16: No pushing forward counsellor's beliefs.

-Female respondent #7: They have to be very nice and good at their job.

-Female respondent #9: The counsellor must be able to relate to the students; the counsellor should be friendly and students should be comfortable around him/her; the counsellor should be counselling for all reasons (depression, anxiety, education/ college choosing etc). It should be a good programme.

### **Theme 3: Confidentiality**

The study found confidentiality to be another factor contributing to students' attitude towards counselling as 9% of the respondents mentioned this. The following were some of the responses:

-Female respondent #12: No judgement; no bias advice; guarantee whatever is spoken will not be retold in any way to anyone else at all!! Board of directors should not know about what a student is confessing to the counsellor during a session; and no pressure should be put on the student concerning anything.

-Female respondent #2: I don't expect much. They should just be more trustworthy.

-Female respondent #18: I expect counselling in school to be more private. I expect that students should be able to go to a counsellor and be assured that whatever they will talk about won't reach other people.

#### 4.5 Differences Between Male and Female Students' Attitudes Towards Counselling

This part of the paper presents findings on the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling.

**Table 6: Independent t-test on male and female students' attitudes towards counselling**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
The attitude of the respondents towards academic counselling	Equal variances assumed	1.571	.215	1.854	61	.069	.512	.276	-.040	1.065
	Equal variances not assumed			1.868	60.746	.067	.512	.274	-.036	1.060

The above findings show that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.45$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ) were not statistically significantly different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.97$ ,  $SD = 0.999$ ) towards seeking academic counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.854$ ,  $p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.069$ ), and the lower bound of  $-0.40$  and upper bound of  $1.055$  cross 0.

**Table 7: Independent T-Test on male and female students' attitudes towards personal counselling**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
The attitude of the respondent toward personal counselling	Equal variances assumed	4.581	.036	2.193	61	.032	.639	.292	.056	1.222
	Equal variances not assumed			2.224	58.631	.030	.639	.287	.064	1.215
	Equal variances not assumed			1.868	60.746	.067	.512	.274	-.036	1.060

The above table shows the findings on female and male students' attitudes towards personal counselling. The independent T-test findings show that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.73$ ,  $SD = 1.306$ ) were statistically significantly different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -1.37$ ,  $SD = 0.964$ ) towards seeking personal counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 2.193$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.036$ ), and the lower bound of 0.056 and upper bound of 1.222 do not cross 0.

**Table 8: Independent T-Test on male and female students' attitudes towards social counselling**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
The attitude of the respondent toward social counselling	Equal variances assumed	.948	.334	1.322	61	.191	.436	.330	-.224	1.096
	Equal variances not assumed			1.311	56.871	.195	.436	.333	-.230	1.103

The above table shows the findings on female and male students' attitudes towards social counselling. The Independent T-test findings show that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.36$ ,  $SD = 1.194$ ) were not statistically different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.80$ ,  $SD = 1.424$ ) towards seeking social counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.332$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.334$ ), and the lower bound of  $-0.224$  and upper bound of  $1.096$  cross 0.

**Table 9: Independent T-Test on male and female students' attitudes towards careers counselling**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
The attitude of the respondent toward careers counselling	Equal variances assumed	.076	.783	1.454	61	.151	.412	.283	-.155	.979
	Equal variances not assumed			1.456	60.724	.150	.412	.283	-.154	.978

The above table shows the findings on female and male students' attitudes towards academic counselling. The independent t-test findings show that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.12$ ,  $SD = 1.139$ ) were not statistically different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.52$ ,  $SD = 1.106$ ) towards seeking careers counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.454$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.783$ ). The lower bound of  $-0.155$  and upper bound of  $0.979$  cross 0.

#### **4.6 Students' Attitudes Towards Counselling Among the Grades/ Year Groups**

This part of the paper presents findings on students' attitudes towards counselling among the grade/year groups of 7, 8, 9 and 10. The findings are presented under the following sub-headings: Students' attitudes towards academic counselling; students' attitudes towards personal counselling; students' attitudes towards social counselling; and students' attitudes towards careers counselling.

**Table 10: One-Way ANOVA on students' attitudes toward academic counselling**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.333	3	.444	.349	.790
Within Groups	76.417	60	1.274		
Total	77.750	63			

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA findings on students' attitude toward academic counselling. The one-way ANOVA findings show that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking academic counselling,  $F_{2, 63} = 0.349, p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.790$ ).

**Table 11: One-Way ANOVA on students' attitudes towards personal counselling**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.189	3	1.396	.989	.404
Within Groups	84.671	60	1.411		
Total	88.859	63			

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA findings on students' attitude toward academic counselling. The one-way ANOVA findings show that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking personal counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 0.989, p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.404$ ).

**Table 12: One-Way ANOVA on students' attitudes towards social counselling**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.067	3	.689	.385	.764
Within Groups	107.371	60	1.790		
Total	109.437	63			

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA findings on students' attitude toward social counselling. The one-way ANOVA findings show that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking social counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 0.385, p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.764$ ).

**Table 13: One-way ANOVA on students' attitudes toward career counselling**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.346	3	1.449	1.153	.335
Within Groups	75.404	60	1.257		
Total	79.750	63			

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA findings on students' attitude toward academic counselling. The one-way ANOVA findings show that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes toward seeking careers counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 1.153, p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.335$ ).

#### **4.7: Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the study. The chapter has presented the demographic data of the respondents; findings on students' attitudes towards counselling; findings on factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling; findings on differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling; and findings on students' attitudes towards counselling among the grade/year groups. The next chapter will present the discussion of findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Overview**

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The findings are discussed under the following sub-headings: students' attitudes towards counselling; factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling; differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling; and differences among grade/year groups' attitudes towards counselling.

### **5.2 Students' attitudes towards counselling**

The following themes emerged from this study on students' attitudes towards counselling: counselling is good (26%); counselling is helpful (25%); other (22%), counselling is not helpful (11%), counselling in school is uncomfortable (8%); counselling in school lacks confidentiality.

#### **Theme 1: Counselling in school is good**

This study found that 26% of the respondents mentioned that counselling in school was good. This finding is similar to that of Solmonson et. al. (2014) studied the perceptions of first year college students of their experiences with their high school counsellors through quantitative surveys. The results from this survey showed that students had positive perceptions of their high school counsellors regarding availability, confidentiality, trust, and guidance activities. Students perceived the school counsellor as available, trustworthy, and valued the advice from the counsellor. However, Solmonson et. al. (2014) was conducted among first year college students and not secondary school students as was the case in this study.

The above finding of this study is also similar to that of Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010) investigated the attitudes of secondary school students towards guidance and counselling services in River State, Nigeria using descriptive design of survey type. This study revealed that students' attitudes towards guidance and counselling services were significantly positive. However, the study by Eyo, Joshua and Esuong was done in Nigerian public schools and not in an international school as it was in this study.

In addition, the above finding is consistent with that of Arfasa (2018) who examined the perceptions of students and teachers toward guidance and counselling services in South West

Ethiopia Secondary Schools and found that the students' and teachers' mean perception scores to needs of guidance and counselling for students' learning was positive. The study by Arfasa, however, was carried in Ethiopian public schools.

### **Theme 2: Counselling in school is helpful**

The second theme that emerged from this study on students' attitudes towards counselling was that counselling in school is helpful. Twenty-five percent of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that of Sackett, Farmer and Moran (2016) who found that students experienced their school counsellors as not only helpful but also accessible, and very meaningful to them. The other theme that emerged from their study was that of benefits received from school counsellors. This study found that largely, students looked to school counsellors for information and advice and found that they received from them in this regard meaningful. Students also found it meaningful when school counsellors gave them encouragement. This means that some students find school counselling to be helpful and beneficial. However, this study was carried in a different country and not in an international school.

### **Theme 3: Counselling in school is not helpful**

The third theme that emerged from this study was that counselling in school is not helpful. Eleven percent of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that of Ochoa (1994) carried out a study in which he interviewed Latino students on drop-out intervention services and found that forty-two percent of the students indicated that they were not getting the help they needed from school counsellors or that the school counsellor was unavailable. This means that some students find school counselling to be unhelpful. However, the study by Ochoa was conducted in different and not in an international school as it was in this study.

In addition, the above finding is similar to that of, Devila (2003) who found that Puerto Rican students had negative experiences with their high school counsellors regarding academic support issues. Devilla (2003) carried out a qualitative study in which college bound Latino students expressed negative experiences with their school counsellor, and lacked academic planning and guidance from their school counsellor. This study also found that students expressed frustration and disappointment concerning their lack of career exploration, planning and college preparation. This implies that some students find school counselling to be unhelpful and frustrating. The study

by Devilla (2003), however, focused on one ethnic group as opposed to a diverse student body as it was the case in this study.

The above finding is further similar that of Mweemba (2016). Mwemba (2016) carried out a qualitative descriptive survey to determine pupils' perceptions of guidance and counselling services offered in secondary schools in Mazabuka district of Zambia. Mwemba (2016) reports that pupils were dissatisfied with the provision of guidance and counselling services. This implies that some learners find counselling services in school to be unhelpful. However, Mwemba's (2016) study was conducted in government schools and not in an international school as it was in this study.

#### **Theme 4: Counselling in school is uncomfortable**

The fourth theme that emerged from this study on students' attitudes towards counselling was that counselling is uncomfortable. Eight percent of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that West et. al. (1991) who conducted a study to establish why students fail to seek counselling. Their study found that students gave the following reasons: they did not want to tell a stranger about personal issues and felt embarrassed to reveal real issues. This implies that counselling can be uncomfortable for some students. The study by West et. al., however, was conducted in a different learning institution and not in an international school.

#### **Theme 5: Counselling in school lacks confidentiality**

The fifth theme that emerged from this study was that counselling in school lacks confidentiality. Eight percent of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that of West et. al. (1991) who found that students were reluctant to seek counselling because they felt the counsellor might break confidentiality. Similarly, Manderu (2015) carried out a research on the perceptions of teachers and students towards guidance and counselling services in Kenya and found that students gave several reasons why they avoided seeking guidance and counselling services, including lack of confidentiality. This implies that confidentiality of counselling services is a significant factor that contributes to students' attitudes towards counselling. However, the studies of West et. al. (1991) and Manderu (2015) were carried out in different countries and not in international school settings.

### **5.3 Factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling**

This part of the paper discusses the factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling.

#### **Theme 1: Effectiveness of counselling**

The first theme that emerged as a factor contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling was effectiveness of counselling. Eight-two percent of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that of Ochoa (1994) carried out a study in which he interviewed Latino students on drop-out intervention services. This study found that forty-two percent of the students indicated that they were not getting the help they needed from school counsellors or that the school counsellor was unavailable. Similarly, the above finding is similar to that of, Devila (2003) who found that Puerto Rican students had negative experiences with their high school counsellors regarding academic support issues. Devilla (2003) carried out a qualitative study in which college bound Latino students expressed negative experiences with their school counsellor, and lacked academic planning and guidance from their school counsellor. This study also found that students expressed frustration and disappointment concerning their lack of career exploration, planning and college preparation. This implies that some students find school counselling to be unhelpful and frustrating. This shows that the quality of counselling offered contributes to the attitudes that students have towards counselling. However, the studies done by Ochoa (1994) and Devilla (2003) were focused on one ethnic group and in college settings while the current study was among secondary students in a culturally diverse setting. Furthermore, Boy (1974) identified the quality of the counselling rendered as another factor that affects students' involvement in school counselling. This implies that the effectiveness of counselling offered in schools contributes to students' attitudes towards counselling.

#### **Theme 2: Counsellor traits**

The second theme that emerged from this study on factors contributing to students' factors towards counselling was counsellor traits as 9% of the respondents mentioned this. This finding is similar to that of West et. al., (1991) who found that trustworthiness and competence were two major qualities of a counsellor which made it easy for students to seek counselling services. It seemed that students' attitudes towards their counsellor affected their ability or willingness to seek help.

However, the findings of West et. al., (1991) were from a different country in and in a different type of learning institution.

The above findings are also similar to those of Eckenrod-Green and Culbreth (2008) who conducted a qualitative study to explore Latino high school students' perceptions on the preferred characteristics of school counsellors. This study found that Latino students had specific ideas of what kind of qualities were for school counsellors to have. Students reported that they preferred school counsellors who were understanding; could relate to students; were patient; were trustworthy; tried to help with problems; took time to listen; were friendly; and spoke Spanish. This means that the traits that counsellors have contribute to the attitudes of students towards counselling.

Similarly, the above findings are similar to those of Mander (2015) who carried out a research on the perceptions of teachers and students towards guidance and counselling services in Kenya and found that students gave several reasons why they avoided seeking guidance and counselling services, including unfriendly teachers (school counsellors). This means that the traits, qualities or characteristics of school counsellors can contribute to the attitudes that learners have towards counselling.

### **Theme 3: Confidentiality**

The third theme that came out of this study on factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling was confidentiality. Nine percent of the respondents mentioned this.

West, et. al., (1991) carried out a research that examined student perceptions that inhibit the initiation of counselling and found out that students most frequently reported the following: they are afraid counsellors will break confidentiality. This shows that the confidentiality of counselling services contributes to students' attitudes towards counselling.

Additionally, the above finding is similar to that of Mander (2015) who carried out a research on the perceptions of teachers and students towards guidance and counselling services in Kenya. Mander (2013) found that students gave several reasons why they avoided seeking guidance and counselling services, including lack of confidentiality. This means that confidentiality is a factor that contributes to students' attitudes towards counselling.

#### **5.4 Differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling**

This part of the paper discusses the findings on differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling.

The independent t-test findings from this study showed that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.45$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ) were not statistically significantly different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.97$ ,  $SD = 0.999$ ) towards seeking academic counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.854$ ,  $p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.069$ ), and the lower bound of  $-0.40$  and upper bound of  $1.055$  cross 0. These findings are inconsistent with those of Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) who carried out a field study survey among 342 high school students in Turkey to explore gender differences in help-seeking attitudes and the effects of counsellor gender and problem type on those attitudes and found that female students had significantly different attitudes from male students towards academic counselling. This implies male and female students in the selected international school held relatively similar attitudes towards academic counselling.

The independent t-test findings from this study also showed that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.73$ ,  $SD = 1.306$ ) were statistically significantly different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -1.37$ ,  $SD = 0.964$ ) towards seeking personal counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 2.193$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.036$ ), and the lower bound of  $0.056$  and upper bound of  $1.222$  do not cross 0. These findings are consistent with those of Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) who carried out a field study survey among 342 high school students in Turkey to explore gender differences in help-seeking attitudes and the effects of counsellor gender and problem type on those attitudes and found the female students held more positively significantly attitudes than male students did towards personal counselling. This implies that female students were more willing to seek personal counselling than were male students.

The Independent T-test from this study further showed that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.36$ ,  $SD = 1.194$ ) were not statistically different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.80$ ,  $SD = 1.424$ ) towards seeking social counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.332$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.334$ ), and the lower bound of  $-0.224$  and upper bound of  $1.096$  cross 0. These findings are inconsistent with those of Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) who found that female students had more significantly attitudes towards counselling than did male students in Turkey.

This implies that male and female students held relatively similar attitudes towards social counselling.

The independent t-test findings from this study finally showed that the attitudes of female students ( $M = -0.12$ ,  $SD = 1.139$ ) were not statistically different from the attitudes of male students ( $M = -0.52$ ,  $SD = 1.106$ ) towards seeking careers counselling. (Two tail test  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $df = 61$ ,  $CV = \pm 2.00$ ),  $T(61) = 1.454$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.783$ ). The lower bound of  $-0.155$  and upper bound of  $0.979$  cross 0. These findings are inconsistent with those of Yilmaz-Gozu (2013) who found that female students were significantly more willing to seek counselling than their male counterparts. This implies that the male and female students at the selected international school held relatively similar attitudes towards careers counselling.

### **5.5 Students' attitudes towards counselling among grade/year groups**

This part of the paper presents findings on students' attitudes towards counselling among the Grade/Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 groups.

The one-way ANOVA findings from this study showed that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking academic counselling,  $F_{2, 63} = 0.349$ ,  $p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.790$ ).

The one-way ANOVA findings show that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking personal counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 0.989$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ( $p = 0.404$ ).

The one-way ANOVA findings from this study further showed that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes towards seeking social counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 0.385$ ,  $p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.764$ ).

The one-way ANOVA findings from this study finally showed that there were no significant statistical differences among the means of the Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 respondents' attitudes toward seeking careers counselling  $F_{2, 63} = 1.153$ ,  $p > 0.05$  ( $p = 0.335$ ).

The above findings are similar to those of Yeh (2002) who investigated 594 Taiwanese junior high, high school, and college students' gender, age, self-construal and collective self-esteem as

predictors of professional psychological help-seeking attitudes. The study did not find age as a significant factor in help-seeking attitudes. This means that there were no significant differences in help-seeking attitude between junior high, high school and college students. This also implies that the respondents from Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 held relatively similar attitudes towards counselling. The above findings are consistent with this study's theoretical framework of stimulus-response theory by Wrightsman (1985) who postulated that individuals learn to respond to phenomena based on how they are conditioned to them. In this study, students who had positive interactions with school counselling had positive attitudes towards it while those who had negative interactions with school counselling ended up with negative attitudes towards it.

## **5.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study. The chapter has discussed the attitudes of students' towards counselling; factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling; differences between male and female students' attitudes towards counselling; and students' attitudes among the grade/year groups of 7, 8, 9 and 10. The next chapter will present the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Overview**

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

### **6.2 Conclusion**

This study used a descriptive survey design to establish students' attitudes towards counselling in a selected international school in Lusaka, Zambia. The study found that the students held several attitudes towards counselling, including counselling being good; counselling being helpful; counselling being unhelpful; counselling being uncomfortable; and counselling lacking confidentiality. The study established that the effectiveness of counselling; counsellor traits; and confidentiality were the factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling. The independent t-test results from this study showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the means of male students and female students' attitudes towards counselling in the areas of academic, social and career counselling, but were statistically significantly different towards personal counselling as female students were more will to seek counselling in that regard. The one-way ANOVA test results showed that there were no statistically significant differences among the Grade/Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 students' attitudes towards academic, personal, social and careers counselling. This means that respondents in this study held relatively similar attitudes towards counselling and grade was not a factor. It is hoped that this study has added to the body of knowledge on school counselling, especially in multicultural independent schools.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on the above findings, the following has been recommended:

- Principals, teachers, school counsellors and parents have to sensitise learners on the benefits of counselling at the selected school.
- School administrators have to employ at least two school counsellors comprising of at least one male and one female counsellor at the school.
- School administrators have to encourage school counsellors to pursue continued professional development at the school.
- School counsellors have to belong to professional bodies and associations at the school.

## **6.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for students

**The University of Zambia in Collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University**

**Postgraduate Studies**

Dear respondent,

I am a student pursuing my Master of Science in Counselling at the University of in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. I am conducting a study entitled ‘Students’ Attitudes Towards Counselling in a Selected International School in Lusaka, Zambia’.

You are hereby selected to take part in this study. With your permission, please provide the required information in this questionnaire. The information you will provide will be for academic purposes only and will be treated with strict confidence. For this reason, you are not required to write your name or any other information to reveal your identity or that of your school in this questionnaire.

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Please circle the appropriate answer to each question. Where the question asks you to write the answer, please do so in spaces provided.

**Section 1: Demographic data**

Please circle or write appropriately

Gender: Male / Female Year/Grade: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 Age: .....

Nationality.....Ethnicity/Race:.....

Religion/Ideology.....

**Section 2 : Students’ Attitudes towards Counselling**

Please indicate by circling how likely you are to seek school counselling services over the following issues:

1) If you have academic issues.

Highly likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

2) If you have personal problems.

Highly likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

3) If you have social problems.

Highly likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

4) If you need help on career prospects.

Highly likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

**Section 3: Factors contributing to students' attitudes towards counselling**

5) What are some of the factors that would hinder you from seeking counselling in school?  
.....  
.....  
.....

6) What are some of the factors that would enable you to seek counselling in school?  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Section 4: Differences in seeking counselling between male and female students**

7) How likely are male students to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

8) How likely are female students to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....  
.....

**Section 5: Are there any differences in seeking counselling between the grades?**

9) How likely are the Year/Grade 7s to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

10) How likely are the Year/Grade 8s to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

11) How likely are the Year/Grade 9s to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

12) How likely are the Year/Grade 10s to seek counselling in school?

Highly likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Highly unlikely

Explain.....  
.....

**Thank you!**

## Appendix 2: Research timeline

The following table shows a summary of time allocation, activities and expected outcome.

Time Allocation	Activity	Expected Outcome
20 <sup>th</sup> March to 20 <sup>th</sup> April, 2019	Preparation of research proposal	Research proposal
1 <sup>st</sup> May to 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2019	Developing of research instruments.	Developed research instruments
16 <sup>th</sup> May to 30 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	Collection of data	Collected data
1 <sup>st</sup> June to 15 <sup>th</sup> June, 2020	Data analysis	Analysed data
16 <sup>th</sup> June to 30 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	Report writing	Written report
13 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020	Submitting of report	Report submitted

### Appendix 3: Budget

The following table shows a summary of the budget for the proposed study:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Unit cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
Internet bundles	K 500 per month	K6000
Airtime	K50 per month	K600
Binding of dissertation	K250 Per copy	K1000
Fuel	K16 per litter	K3200
Grand total		K10800