

# American Journal of Education and Practice (AJEP)



**The Perceptions of School Counsellors about Their  
Training and Its Influence on Their Practice in Selected  
Public Secondary Schools in Cameroon**

*Tantoh Mengwi Claudine*



## The Perceptions of School Counsellors about Their Training and Its Influence on Their Practice in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Cameroon

 **Tantoh Mengwi Claudine<sup>1\*</sup>**

Faculty of Education, Department of Counselling Psychology, Option, School Counselling



### Article history

Submitted 15.08.2024 Revised Version Received 20.09.2024 Accepted 27.10.2024

### Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of school counsellors about their training and its influence on practice in selected public secondary schools in Cameroon. The study aimed at examining the effects of counsellors' perceptions on practice.

**Materials and Methods:** The concurrent nested mixed-method research design was used. Quantitative data was collected through descriptive survey with the aid of a questionnaire while qualitative data was collected using an interview guide. A sample of 249 randomly selected school counsellors were recruited from secondary schools in Mezam and Mfoundi Divisions of Cameroon.

**Findings:** Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools; frequency counts, graphs, percentages and the Pearson test and regression analysis was used to test hypotheses. Thematic

analysis with the aid of themes and quotations was used for qualitative data. Findings showed a positive and strong influence between counsellors' perceptions of training and their practice ( $R$ -value=0.637\*\*,  $P$ -value=0.000<0.05). Implications are that the quality of training being offered to counsellors be intensified and improved.

**Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy:** It was recommended that school counsellors be trained to be multiskilled, the training be intensified with emphasis on practicum; appropriate and adequate programs are organized and appropriately delivered by those who master the content at divisional and regional levels for counsellors to upgrade their skills.

**Keywords:** *Perceptions, School Counsellors, Training, Practice, Secondary Schools, Mezam, Mfoundi Divisions*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

School counsellors have an enormous impact on student achievement and attainment. From the courses students take to the goals they set and paths they pursue, school counsellors are powerful forces in their schools and in the lives of students (Education Trust, 2007). Guidance and counseling is an important educational tool in shaping the orientation in a child from negative ideas that is planted in the child by his/her peers. Hence the need school for the counselors to assist the child in molding their future through counseling therapy. The school counselor is seen as a role model and highly respected by students. The counselors by their training are expected to be friends with the school child, listen to the child's complains, short comings and proffer guidance to the child in a quest of molding the child in the right part to take in their life pursuit. (Rayees and Najmha, 2021). They further opine that school counsellor education programs are designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to become competent professional school counsellors. In this light there is a need for school counsellor training programs which will equip school counsellors and school counselling students with the skills and competencies needed to practice effectively (McEachern, 2003). In the school counselling profession, competence includes the ability to provide a variety of counselling-related tasks and activities including one on one counselling, group counselling and academic support often through the facilitation of counselling services (ASCA, 2017).

According to Kozlowski and Huss (2013), school counsellors have unique, specialized training needs that differ from those of clinical mental health counsellors. They are licensed by state educational agencies. They must be ready to function in a variety of roles to support all students' academic, career, and personal/social development (Studer and Oberman, 2006). They further postulated that, school counsellors work in complex educational systems, have large case loads, and manage school counselling programmes. Their jobs encompass much more than individual and group counselling and the traditional training models are not keeping up with the needs of today's school counsellors (Studer and Oberman, 2006). School counsellors need clarification of their unique role on a school campus while learning how to manage an overwhelming number of referrals and student needs, how to manage the influences of teachers, how to maintain their own skills apart from teachers, how to implement counselling programs as well as how to integrate themselves and the counselling programs into the school system (ASCA, 2016; Kozlowski and Huss, 2013). In fact the American School Counsellor Association (ASCA, 2016) states that school counsellors should possess proficient skills in programme development, programme leadership, collaborative practices, as well as appropriate referral procedures.

In order to ensure that school counsellors are well-trained to meet the needs of students, various organizations have established standards and guidelines such as; the American School Counsellors' Association (ASCA), the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and the Council for the Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programmes (CACREP).

According to Walley (2009), school counsellor education programmes are expected to offer preparation in certain areas of knowledge and skills that encompass a range of issues faced by students today. To him the primary means through which school counsellors obtain (at least minimum) professional knowledge and skills is through completion of a school counsellor preparation programme. The ASCA School Counsellor Competencies outline the knowledge,

abilities, skills and attitudes that ensure school counsellors are equipped to meet the rigorous demands of the profession and the needs of students (ASCA, 2012). Brott (2006) opines that it is of critical importance that counsellors know what is needed from them and their professional abilities. According to Uttenthal and Brown (2006) perceptions play a large role when counsellors consider the best way to utilize their skills in practice. They opine that significant numbers of school counsellors believed that, as a result of their training course, they had a more positive attitude at work, and enjoyed better relationships at work.

Lee (2005) cited in Tantoh (2023) observed that present day school counsellors have post training needs due to the fact that schools are often forced to confront a number of significant issues that affect the psychosocial, emotional, and intellectual development of their students. Therefore, school counsellor training must adequately prepare future practitioners to meet the unique needs of today's school children. SavitzRomer (2012) states that in the face of these increasing inequities in schools, professional development (PD) for school counsellors is important. According to the ASCA (2016), PD for high school counsellors is mandatory to meet the 5-year renewal requirement as a certified counsellor. Also, counsellors are mandated to complete 200 hours of PD every 5 years from either of the following entities: workshops, staff development, institutes, seminars, or conferences. Despite these provisions it seems school counsellors still perform their duties with some difficulties (SavitzRomer, 2012). This study seeks to examine the perceptions of school counsellors about their training and its influence on practice.

## **Background**

According to Ogbodo (2020), the genesis of guidance and counselling can be traced back to the origin of man in society. She further opines that long ago, man has always sought guidance from persons he/she feels is in a position to help. Through traditional (informational) ways, the contribution of religious leaders, elders, priests, Imams, friends and well-wishers towards meeting the guidance needs of people in their societies have been highly eventful and impactful. She however states that, modern guidance and counselling began in the United States of America (USA) under Frank Parsons in 1908, and since then it has spread to various Countries and Continents. Guidance and counselling have grown worldwide acquiring a steady reputation as it meets the educational, vocational and personal/social needs of various recipient countries. In addition, he further states that factors such as; expansion of professionalization and specialization, the Philanthropic and Humanitarianism Movement, religion, the need for mental hygiene, increased student number in American schools and social change have helped in the growth of the counselling profession.

In relation to the history of the training and practice of counselling in schools, school counselling began as vocational guidance in the early 1900s (Gysbers, 2010). It was established in schools as a position occupied by administrators and teachers. No organizational structure was provided other than a list of duties. In the 1920s school counselling began to change, shaped by the mental hygiene, psychometric and child study movements. As a result, a more clinically oriented approach to school counselling emerged. He further states that this signaled a shift away from economic issues to psychological issues with an emphasis on counselling for personal adjustment.

Furthermore, Gysbers (2010) states that the development and implementation of school counselling programs across the country grew in the first decade of the 21st century. To him, this

growth was stimulated by the publication of the ASCA National Model in 2003 and its adoption by many states and school districts. A second edition was published in 2005, followed by a third edition in 2013 and the fourth edition in 2019.

### **The Growth of School Counseling in Cameroon**

According to Agbor (2016), the Cameroon government through Law No.98/004 of April 1998 instituted guidance and counseling services in secondary schools to add to the existing efforts aimed at enabling students attain their educational goals. According to this law, educational counseling and psychological activities shall be carried out during the child's period of schooling, at all levels of education. To make this law more effective and practical the government further promulgated a handbook called the Guidance Counselor's terms of reference (cahier de charge). This book carries the syllabus for guidance and counseling lessons in the secondary school, which is further divided into weeks and terms with respect to the various classes. According to section 29 of the Guidance Counselor's terms of reference educational counseling and psychological activities shall be carried out during the child's period of schooling at all levels of education. In this book we find interesting lessons like:

- Help to improve Academic performance
- Techniques of learning subjects taught
- Assistance to the academic performance of students
- Fields of studies and job opportunities etc, that directly informs the students on how to improve on their performance and attain success. The principal objective of this effort, is to enable individual students acquire academic achievement (Agbor, 2016).

School counseling services are offered as part of a comprehensive and developmental program, to address the development of academic/educational, career, personal/social skills and competencies. Based on this importance, school counseling is offered to every student, as well as school personnel, families, and the community at large. The program's services are aligned with the overall educational mission to initiate academic achievement in this milieu. Counseling in a secondary is offered by trained counselors from the Higher Teacher Training colleges (ENS) and Higher Technical Teacher Training Colleges (ENSET). School counselors develop a program plan based on the assessment of school improvement and needs-based data; they then coordinate, deliver, evaluate, and revise their program on a regular basis. The program also is shared with all stakeholders in the school and community.

Agbor (2016) further opines that the goal of the comprehensive program is to provide the most comprehensive opportunities possible to benefit every student, so as to enable them attain their academic objective which principally is success. Comprehensive programs employ strategies to enhance academics, provide career awareness, develop employment readiness, encourage self-awareness, foster inter personal communication skills, and impart life success skills for all students uses (Savage, 2004). Which are critical components of every student's school experience. This comprehensive school counseling program follows five primary steps: utilizes needs and school data to identify critical and important needs; implements clear assessments and purposeful program to address identified needs; aligns with educational Standards and National Model and district goals; evaluates progress of efforts; and identifies and communicates benefits to students

and stakeholders (Agbor, 2016). These steps as well as the coordination of services are valuable to students and the school community, because the efforts make a difference in the lives of all students by maintaining a comfortable and structured learning environment. By determining ways in which students will acquire the competencies for appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors, will assist them become productive members of school, family and society (Agbor, 2016)

### **School Counsellors Training**

Gibson and Mitchell (2008) define counsellor training as a license or certificate offered to an individual to perform a unique and needed service to fellow human beings after undertaking courses in counselling. According to them, professional school counsellors must be fully trained and qualified to meet the needs of the client population they are designated to serve. They further state that school counsellors are certified/licensed educators with a minimum of a master's degree in school counselling, making them uniquely qualified to address all students' academic, career and social/emotional development needs by designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing a comprehensive school counselling programme that promotes and enhances student success.

In addition, Gibson and Mitchell (2008) opine that school counsellors are employed in elementary, middle/junior high, high schools and universities; in district supervisory positions; and counsellor education positions. They recommend that school divisions should ensure that persons fulfilling the role of counsellor are adequately trained and should have completed a programme in counselling, including supervised practice in guidance and counselling. Once trained, the counsellors should then employ their knowledge, skills and understanding to draw up a procedure that is ample enough to include and cater for the various needs of individual pupils/students within the school framework.

Brott (2006) opines that the training of school counsellors should emphasize both program development and outcomes. In addition Brott (2006) is of the opinion that it is imperative for counsellor educators to structure the professional identity development of counsellors in training through guided learning experiences. School counsellors in training should become familiar with methods to implement comprehensive school counselling programs (Kozłowski and Huss, 2013). Two ways trainees traditionally become familiar with implementing counselling programs are in practicum and internship experiences. What is problematic about practicum and internship experiences for school counsellor trainees is that counsellor educators typically attribute more importance to concepts that fit within traditional training models, such as individual and group counselling, than they do to concepts outside the traditional counsellor training framework (Kozłowski, 2013).

To further expatiate, McEachern (2003) opined that the mission of graduate counsellor education programmes is to train students to be effective and competent counsellors. To him, school counsellor education programs are expected to offer preparation in certain areas of knowledge and skills that encompass a range of issues faced by students today. In order to ensure that school counsellors are well-trained to meet the needs of students, various organizations have established standards and guidelines. The views of these organizations regarding the training of school counsellors are discussed below:

## **The Council for the Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programmes (CACREP) and Counsellors Training**

CACREP advocates for training model which is developmental in nature, has a guidance/career component, highlights attention to individual differences within student populations (that is, race/ethnicity, culture, and socioeconomic status) and acknowledges the importance of individual and group counselling competence, consultation, and program development and evaluation (Steward et al., 2008).

According to CACREP (2009) standards for school counsellors focus on eight areas: foundations, counselling, prevention and intervention, diversity and advocacy, assessment, research and evaluation, academic development, collaboration and consultation and leadership. All of which, are important when training professional school counsellors (PSCs) to work in a school environment. However, CACREP Standards expect that PSC's should: Demonstrate self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and the skills needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms (CACREP, 2009); provide individual and group counselling and classroom guidance to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of students; understand curriculum design, lesson plan development, classroom management strategies, and differentiated instructional strategies for teaching, counselling, and guidance-related material; conduct programs designed to enhance student academic development; implement differentiated instructional strategies that draw on subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge and skills to promote student achievement; understand the school counsellor's role in student assistance programmes, school leadership, curriculum, and advisory meetings; plan and present school-counselling-related educational programmes for use with parents and teachers (for example parent education programmes, materials used in classroom guidance and advisor/advisee programmes for teachers). While PSC's continue to be called to facilitate classroom guidance lessons, there will also be a call for counsellor educators to provide effective training for them within their graduate programmes (CACREP, 2009).

Regarding the training of school counsellors, CACREP (2001) states that the standards require that graduates are knowledgeable about issues that may affect the development and functioning of students (e.g. abuse, violence, eating disorders, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, childhood depression, and suicide). CACREP requires counsellor education programmes to provide instruction pertaining to the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the development of school counselling comprehensive programmes (e.g., ASCA National Model for School Counselling Programmes, 2005). In addition, counsellor education programmes must include educational materials about various systems that affect students at school and home in order to be aware of the multitude of issues that affect academic success (CACREP, 2001).

### **The ASCA National Model and School Counsellors Training**

The American School Counsellor Association (ASCA) positions that school counsellors are best prepared through master's-level and doctoral-level programmes that align with the philosophy and vision of the ASCA National Model (2019), the ASCA School Counsellor Professional Standards and Competencies (2019), the ASCA Standards for School Counselling Programme Preparation (2019), the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (2014) and the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counsellors (2016).

These programs emphasize training in the implementation of a school counselling program that enhances student achievement and success. Students in school counsellor preparation programs need direct training and supervision in leadership and the implementation of a school counselling programme; Understand the organizational structure and governance of the educational system, as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices. Address legal, ethical and professional issues in schools. Understand developmental theory, counselling theory, career counselling theory, social justice theory and multiculturalism; Understand mental health and the continuum of services, including prevention and intervention strategies for addressing academic, career and social/emotional development to enhance student success for all students. Deliver effective instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counselling. Collaborate and consult with stakeholders (for example families/guardians, teachers, administration, and community stakeholders) to create learning environments promoting student educational equity and success for all students. Identify impediments to student learning, developing strategies to enhance learning and collaborating with stakeholders to improve student achievement. Ensure equitable access to resources promoting academic achievement, social/emotional growth and career development for all students. Use advocacy and data-informed school counselling practices to close achievement and opportunity gaps. Understand how the school counselling programmes relate to the educational programme. Understand outcome research data and best practices as identified in the school counselling research literature. Understand the importance of serving on school leadership teams and acting as educational leaders (ASCA National Model, 2019).

### **School Counselors Training in Cameroon**

Though guidance and counselling had received recognition and was gradually gaining grounds as an agent of change or an intervention tool in Cameroon, its impact on the society remained minimal for many reasons amongst them: The shortage of trained and qualified staff, insufficient national training institution for counselling and the high cost of training and the inadequacy of some practicing counsellors (Etape, 2022). However, the rapid innovations and advancement in science and technology as well as increased emphasis on the psychology of education present specialized needs which cannot be addressed without sufficient preparation and training. For these and other reasons, a section for training of school counsellors was established within the Department of Science of Education in the “Ecole Normale Supérieure”, Yaoundé in 1982 by Presidential Decree No. 79/309 of the 10th of August, 1979. Admission into the two-year programme is by direct competitive examinations (Etape, 2022).

Etape (2022) affirms that today many more counselling programmes have been introduced in other state universities in the country. There exists the department of counselling in the Universities of Yaounde 1, Maroua, Buea, Bertua, Ebolow and Bamenda precisely in the Higher Teacher Training Colleges of these universities. Counsellors are also trained in other schools like the Higher Technical Teachers Training Colleges of Kumba, Douala, Ebolowa and Bamenda. In addition, the Department of Counselling Psychology has gone operational in the Faculty of Education of the University of Bamenda while the Department of Educational Psychology in the University of Buea and that of Psychology in the University of Yaoundé 1 all run Masters training programs for counsellors. This has broadened the scope of the discipline hence many more people are beginning to see the need for counselling in our schools (Mungwa, 2013). The focal point of counselling in Cameroon has been to enable students understand and accept who they are, so that their innate



talents can be discovered and used efficiently to make life more meaningful. Graduates of these colleges are posted to work in universities and secondary schools (Etape, 2022). Tita-Nghamun (2016), further postulates that the history of guidance and counselling in Cameroon is divided into three main eras: Searching Era (1945-1968), Identity Era (1968-1982) and the New Direction Era (1982-2005).

### **School Counselling Practice**

According to ASCA (2005), the practice of counselling means rendering or offering to render to individuals, groups, organizations or the general public any service involving the application of principles, skills, techniques, methods or procedures of the counselling profession, including appraisal activities, counselling, consulting and referral activities. Ojo (2005) opines that there are three main ways through which counselling can be carried out:

**Directive Counselling:** Under directive counselling the counsellor issues certain instructions to the counsellee or he is directed to do certain things e.g he is asked to behave in a particular manner, asked to abstain from alcohol or drug, asked to respect his colleagues and superiors.

**Non Directive Counselling:** Under non directive counselling counsellor does not issue directions but observe the behaviour and attitude of the counsellee towards his work and his colleagues and superiors and subordinates. If he errs then counsellor comes to his rescue and corrects him realizing him that he was wrong. He will not issue him any instructions or will not direct him.

**Eclectic Counselling:** Eclectic counselling is a combination of directive and non-directive technique depending upon the situational factors. This approach in counselling is best characterised by its freedom to the counsellor to use whatever procedures or techniques seem to be the most appropriate to any particular time for any particular client. This counselling is one where one who is willing to utilize any procedures which hold promise even though their theoretical bases differed markedly. This counselling recognizes that each theory may contain some truth and that so long as a final decision between theories can't be made practical necessity justifiably takes precedence over orthodoxy. The counsellor in this counselling may start with directive technique but switches over to non-directive counselling if the situation requires. He may also start with the non-directive technique and switches over to directive techniques if the situation demands. So the counsellor in this counselling makes use of directive and non-directive counselling and also of any other type which may be considered useful for the purpose of modifying the ideas and attitudes of the counsellee. Ojo (2005) further state that counselling takes place in two major ways, namely: individual counselling and group counselling.

**Individual Counselling:** This is referred to as one-to-one counselling. It occurs between the trained counsellor (therapist) and his client (counsellee). The goal of this is to help the client to understand himself, clarify and direct his thought, in order to make a worthwhile decision. Through this, clients' problems are alleviated. Ojo (2005) remarked that it is mainly to bring about change in the client either by altering maladaptive behavior, learning the decision-making process or preventing problems.

**Group Counselling:** Also known as classroom guidance, large group counselling or a psychoeducational group is as an integral part of a school's counselling programme (Gonzalez, 2011). This is a counselling session that takes place between a trained counsellor and a group of people. The number of clients in a group should not be more than seven, or at least ten, in order to

have a cohesive group and an effective well controlled counselling session. Members of the group are clients/counselees whose tasks or problems that are meant for resolution are similar. During group counselling, a free atmosphere is allowed and freedom of speech is encouraged. The counselees are free to express themselves individually as counselling progresses so that problems to be resolved would be open for all to consider and benefit from. All counselees express their feelings and the counsellor during group counselling is to help remove the masks covering the problem. He helps open up the problem with the professional competence and knowledge he possesses. The counsellor is not just a member of the group; he is to direct the affairs and situations (Ojo, 2005). School counsellors serve a vital role in maximizing student success (Lapan, Gysbers, and Petroski, 2003). Through leadership, advocacy and collaboration, school counsellors promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students. School counsellors support a safe learning environment and work to safeguard the human rights of all members of the school community (Sandhu, 2000) and address the needs of all students through culturally relevant prevention and intervention programs that are a part of a comprehensive school counselling programme. The American School Counsellor Association recommends a school-counsellor-to-student ratio of 1:250. In reality this ratio is not respected as most school counsellors are often over loaded.

Egbo (2008) opines that the rationale for guidance and counselling in schools is based on the belief that prevention is always better than cure in every aspect of life. She therefore noted that counselling no doubt has the key for the prevention of almost all the problems associated with learning therefore the need to understand the services provided under the school guidance programme. The school should make arrangements to enlist the support of the parents and introduce them to the idea of guidance and counselling. Therefore, in an effective guidance and counselling programme, various guidance and counselling services are offered to assist students in personal development and psychological growth towards maturity. It takes a well-trained guidance counsellor to effectively implement a guidance and counselling programme, with its various guidance and counselling services which are offered to assist students in personal development and psychological growth towards maturity. According to TitaNghamun (2016), these services include:

**Orientation Services:** Orientation service is provided to new comers and those who go to a new class or new course in the school set up. It is a well-known fact that new students in a school or those who gain promotion into higher classes are heterogeneous in nature as they are from different family backgrounds, from different socio-economic status, from different areas, and from different abilities, interests, aptitudes and skills (Obinaju, 2011) cited in Tita-Nghamun (2016). Orientation service is normally meant for students to enable them to know school courses, rules, regulations, different facilities given to the students by school and to know the clear image of the school. On the same line school also keeps record of the students about their bio-data including identification, socioeconomic background, capacities and abilities, interest for courses etc.

**Assessment Services:** Appraisal involves the collection, administration, interpretation and clinical usage of variety of test devices in order to provide effective counselling services to both pupils and students in a given institution (Tita-Nghamun, 2016). This involves a teacher counsellor collecting, analysing and using a variety of objective data that can enhance better understanding of pupils/students related issues. A teacher counsellor without adequate and reliable information

of a pupil/student will have difficulties in assisting him/her (Tita-Nghamun, 2016). It is therefore important to collect and make available a variety of information through observation, interview, testing, history, and social adjustment data about each child so that they can be in a position to plan a satisfying educational, vocational and social program.

**Individual Inventory Service or Appraisal Service:** Is an important type of guidance service which may be recognized often as “pupil's” inventory service. It is very much essential for pupils as it enables the student to know “himself” at the time of taking any decisions regarding his education and career. Really the pupils or student proceeds in his educational set-up as he/she has made proper choice regarding concerned subject or courses according to his own abilities, interests, aptitudes, attitudes and skills. The adequate and accurate data are collected for the same purpose Egbo (2008).

**Educational and Occupational Information Services:** These services have the aim of providing students with better knowledge of educational, vocational and social opportunities that can be used to make better- and well-informed decisions. In universities and secondary schools, students need at all times to make decisions about their education, career and social life. Tita-Nghamun (2016) observe that students need information related to job opportunities, training opportunities, and academic qualifications. They further opine that students must not only be exposed to such information but must also have an opportunity to react to it in a meaningful way with others.

**Counselling Service:** Is designed to help an individual student analyze himself/herself by relating their capabilities, achievements, interests and mode of adjustment to what new decision they have to make (Tita-Nghamun, 2016). This service is very critical for the students because they need it to solve career, academic, personal and social problems which they encounter in life. The service is designed to facilitate self-understanding through individual or group relationships. They further support this by observing that effective guidance and counselling in secondary schools and other learning institutions has become extremely important in guiding students on the relationship between health and the environment, life-earning skills, the knowledge and attitudes that lead to success or failure in life. Effective counselling service should assist in improving the self-image of the students and facilitate better achievement in academic performance.

Other services include: referral service; collaboration service; consultation service; coordination service and the placement and follow-up service.

### **Challenges Faced during Practice**

Pereira & Rekha (2017) state that despite the counselling services in schools, counsellors still face challenges when exercising their functions. To them, some counsellors are self-critical in practice and have troubling reaction to clients since they do not know what to do in a counselling session.

Furthermore, Karatas and Kaya (2015) also stated that despite all job definitions for counselling, school counsellors sometimes have to do tasks that are not aligned with their professional responsibilities. This is because of prejudice of school administrators and teachers against guidance and counselling services.

As highlighted in studies by Bunce and Willows (2001) and McMahan and Patton (2001), external networks of peers and other allied professionals are key systems that school counsellors naturally approach and rely on for support. These systems also pose challenges, such as adhering to

professional ethics, ongoing professional development, and other professional requirements. The time needed to manage links with counselling networks and professional bodies is also a major challenge.

The community and social services is yet another set of systems that school counsellors often have to work with. Referral procedures for social services often differ from one agency or locality to another. Programmes and schemes such as financial subsidies and hardship scholarships may not be under the counsellor's control, so school counsellors may encounter particular difficulties in helping clients and/or families in accessing those services and resources..

### **Challenges Faced by Schools Counselors in Cameroon**

**Lack of trained counsellors:** Despite the fact that there are many holders of higher degrees in guidance and counselling in Cameroon today, not as many are qualified to be real counsellors because they lack the skills necessary for the practice. There is limited number of trained counsellors in Cameroonian schools and the ones already trained choose to go into non-school settings.

**Doubt about the efficacy of guidance and counselling:** Some people such as uninitiated colleagues, teachers, principals or administrators doubt the efficacy of counselling. They are skeptical about reliance on its use.

**Lack of commitment of Government officers:** although the Government entrenched the guidance and counselling programme in the Cameroon University education system, there is still much to do when it comes to practical support and its implementation. He noted that more committed action will help the growth of the profession.

The problem of lack of opportunities for ongoing professional development. Therefore, school counsellors often have to face challenges in receiving proper supervision, support, and ongoing education and training while practicing in schools.

Issues relating to personal well-being and professional development of school counsellors are important matters of concern for practitioners as well as other stakeholders. These issues may lead to a loss of professional identity as suggested by Bunce and Willower (2001).

From time to time, school counsellors are required to interact with the legal and healthcare systems. This is especially so when students or clients are involved in crime or 'at risk' behaviours or require mental health assistance. Counsellors find interacting with such systems challenging, as they themselves may not be regularly up-to-date on vital procedures and information due to their typical everyday separation from these institutions. Overall, school counsellors have to manage the differences as well as the inconsistencies that almost always exist between and among the many systems they have to work with. The main challenge is to ensure that they are sufficiently familiar with and able to work with different systems so that their clients and other stakeholders can benefit from the opportunities, services and resources available. This competence should therefore be instilled in the school counsellor during their training.

### **Counsellors' Perceptions of Training**

According to NOSCA (2012), school counsellors' perceptions of their training refer to counsellors' interpretation of their training. The way school counsellors will perceive the training which was given them will affect their practice on the field. If counsellors understand that the training which

they received is adequate and appropriate then they will practice with some confidence and certainty. On the other hand, if they understand or interpret that their training was inappropriate and inadequate; they will have doubts about themselves when exercising their duties in school (NOSCA, 2012). Furthermore, Moller & Rance (2013) state that views about the purpose and role of personal development groups (PD group) in the counsellor training process are varied. They said some argue they enhance self-awareness, self-exploration, the ability to be congruent and, ultimately, that they make for better practitioners. Others argue there is no clear evidence for such benefits and that they can actually be damaging to trainees.

Belser et al. (2018) define perception as the ability to derive information from the environment, interpret the information, and act upon it. They emphasize that, perception is the mediating link between individuals and their environment. Therefore in consideration to the explained facts, school-counsellors' perception of their training is reflected in the perceptions they have towards the counselling services they give to students in schools can influence the success or the failure in effective provision of this service in schools (Belser et al., 2018). In general perception depends not only on the physical stimuli, but also on the stimuli's relation to the surrounding field and on conditions within the individual. This fact imply that school counsellor's perception on what is currently happening in schools in line to guidance and counselling activities reflect the level of effectiveness and the nature of the required improvements and issues to address so as to make counselling services effective.

Furthermore, Belser et al. (2018) opine that many of the school counsellors experience feelings of self-doubt prior to the start of practicum. They also demonstrated that school counsellors started their practicum experience with a great deal of anxiety. Furthermore, Belser et al. (2018) argued that the extent to which counsellors implement any curriculum is largely dependent upon and influenced by their attitude and perception towards it. They recommended that counsellor' perception and attitude towards any program and the confidence in providing the said program should be assessed prior to engaging them in its delivery. Also, Beer et al., (2012) reported that trainees perceived significantly less incorporation of social justice in their training than they desired, while their select group of activist students expressed positive and powerful social justice training experiences in their study on counselling psychology trainees' perceptions of training and commitments to social justice.

Counsellor education programmes are influential in the development of school counsellors' roles by promoting interactions involving structural and attitudinal changes that contribute to the development of one's professional identity (Walley, 2009). Professional identity serves as a frame of reference to carry out one's professional role(s) by having students integrate their knowledge with their own thoughts and feelings. Professional counsellor identity is developed through learning the theoretical foundations and having clinical instructions and experience (Tang, et al., 2004). If school counsellors are involved in courses that pertain to their roles within the school milieu while in their training programme, they are likely to develop more confidence in assisting students solve their problems. In addition, they will be better trained to handle the conflicting duties and functions when working with adolescents (Walley, 2009).

## Objective

To find out the perceptions of school counsellors' about their training and its influence on their practice.

## Research Question

How do the perceptions of school counsellors about their training influence their practice?

## Research Hypothesis

H<sub>01</sub>: The perceptions of school counsellors about their training have no significant influence on their practice.

H<sub>02</sub>: The perceptions of school counsellors about their training have a significant influence on their practice.

## 2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The concurrent nested mixed-method research design was used in conducting this study. To collect quantitative data, the descriptive survey design with the aid of a questionnaire made up of closed ended items was used. Qualitative data was collected through the phenomenological approach with the aid of an interview guide made up of open-ended questions. This study was carried out in Mfoundi and Mezam Divisions of the Center and North West Regions of Cameroon respectively. Specifically data was collected from resident school counsellors from these two regions.

The population of this study consisted of all resident school counsellors of the Center and North West Regions of Cameroon. These two regions were chosen purposefully because they have the characteristics of the population under study. The two regions also have training institutions for school counsellors. Also, the researcher wanted to have respondents from the two subsystems of education in Cameroon. The North West Region has a total of 209 resident school counsellors spread over government secondary schools in its seven divisions. The Center Region has a total of 710 resident school counsellors who are found in the different government secondary schools of its ten divisions. The target population consists of all resident school counsellors of both sexes of the Mfoundi and Mezam Divisions. Mezam Division has a total of 108 resident school counsellors while Mfoundi Division has a total of 305 resident school counsellors. The accessible population consists of resident school counsellors of selected government secondary schools of the Mezam and Mfoundi Divisions of the North West and Center Regions respectively.

**Table 1: School Counsellors in the North West Region**

S/N	DIVISION	NUMBER OF COUNSELLORS
1	BOYO	20
2	BUI	25
3	DONGA-MANTUNG	15
4	MENCHUM	16
5	MEZAM	108
6	MOMO	11
7	NGO-KETUNJIA	14
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>209</b>

*Source: Data Base of Guidance Counsellors for the North West Regional Delegation for Secondary Education (2023)*

**Table 2: School Counsellors in the Center Region**

S/N	DIVISION	NUMBER OF COUNSELLORS
1	HAUT-SANGA	58
2	LEKIE	50
3	MBAM-et-INOUBOU	40
4	MBAM-et-KIM	20
5	MEFOU-et-AFAMBA	50
6	MEFOU-et-AKONO	102
7	MFOUNDI	305
8	NYONG-et-KELLE	30
9	NYONG-et-MFOUMOU	25
10	NYONG-et-SO'O	30
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>710</b>

*Source: Data Base of Guidance Counsellors for the Center Regional Delegation for Secondary Education (2023)*

The sample for this study was drawn from the accessible population of 262 resident school counsellors, 80 from Mezam Division and 182 from Mfoundi Division. Due to the limited number of counsellors in the 25 accessible schools in Mezam Division, the sample size constitutes all 80 counsellors in the 25 accessible schools and all 169 from the 182 counsellors in the 16 schools in Mfoundi division. In total, the sample size of the study consists of 249 counsellors out of the accessible of 262 counsellors in the 41 accessible schools in both divisions.

The sample size for the study was estimated directly using sample calculation for one proportion for survey study with the help of EpiInfo 7.0 using a higher design effect of 1.6 and not 1.0 used by the Krejcie and Morgan table which only estimated the minimum sample size of every given population for survey studies. Thus, using a higher design effect of above 1.0, it enabled the researcher to collect adequate information/data from respondents thus increasing the internal and external validity of the study and its findings. It also enables the researcher to confidently generalize the findings of the study to the population. Below is the formula used for the sample size estimation with the support of EpiInfo 7.0, a statistical software design by Center for Disease Control in USA.

Where:

$N$  = Total number of participants

$Z$  = Z value corresponding to the confidence level, =95%

$d$  = absolute precision =5% (It should be noted that the smaller the precision, the higher the sample size and the more reliable the findings). A precision value of 5% was then considered acceptable for a good statistical significance.

$P$  = expected proportion in the population =50% for optimal sample size estimation.

Design effect = 1.6 (By this, the sample gotten at 1.0 was multiple by 1.6).

The researcher used both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to get the sample of this study. For the target population of this study, the convenient and purposive sampling techniques were used. To select the accessible population for school counsellors, the researcher did simple random sampling of the public secondary schools within Mezam and Mfoundi

Divisions. This was to ensure that all the schools within the selected divisions had the probability of being included in the population of the study. After getting the schools from which respondents were drawn, the researcher did purposive and convenient sampling to get data from the counsellors within the schools selected. Purposive and convenient sampling were used here because some counsellors in the selected schools were on leave and some were not on seat so the researcher worked with those she met on seat. To get the required number of respondents, the researcher added more schools so as to get more respondents to replace those who were absent in the schools with the accessible population. Also, in Mezam since some of the schools chosen were not functional, the researcher had to do online delivery to the counsellors in those schools who then responded to the instrument. The research instruments used to collect data were the questionnaire and interview guide.

The data collected from the field was first processed using EpiData 3.1 whereby, all the participants' responses were keyed, in accordance with each of the test items. During this process of data entering, the demographic information and the test items were coded with numbers to facilitate the data entering and the questionnaires were also assigned with serial numbers. The reason for coding and trace the individual responses of participants and to carry out any verification in areas of uncertainty if need arise. After the data was completely entered for all the participants, the data base was exported to SPSS version 25 for further consistency, data range and validation checks with the purpose to first identify invalid codes (data cleaning) with the aid of exploratory statistics such as frequency count, and outliers.

After the data were thoroughly checked for possible errors, the quantitative data were analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The descriptive statistical tools used are frequency count, percentages and multiple responses set which aimed at calculating the summary of findings for each variable for a quick comprehension of the overall findings. Furthermore, to examine the skills acquired by school counsellors during training and its influence on practice, the Pearson's test was used because the data for the variables were approximately normally distributed for many of the variables based on the statistics of the test of normality assumption trend of the data. The testing for normality assumption of every data is very important in order to know the right statistical tests to be applied when computing correlation analysis to void committing type 1 or 2 hypotheses error.

On the other hand, the qualitative data derived from open ended questions was analyzed using the thematic analysis approach with the aid of themes and quotations. The themes refer to the umbrella words which captured the main idea of the participants' statements and the quotations are the direct words from the participants. Finally, findings were presented using frequency distribution and thematic tables and on charts with all inferential statistics presented at 95% level of confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels, accepting 5% margin of error.

### **3.0 FINDINGS**

#### **The Practice of School Counsellors**

Ten structured items were used to measure counsellors' opinion on their practice and the findings are presented on Table 3 below.



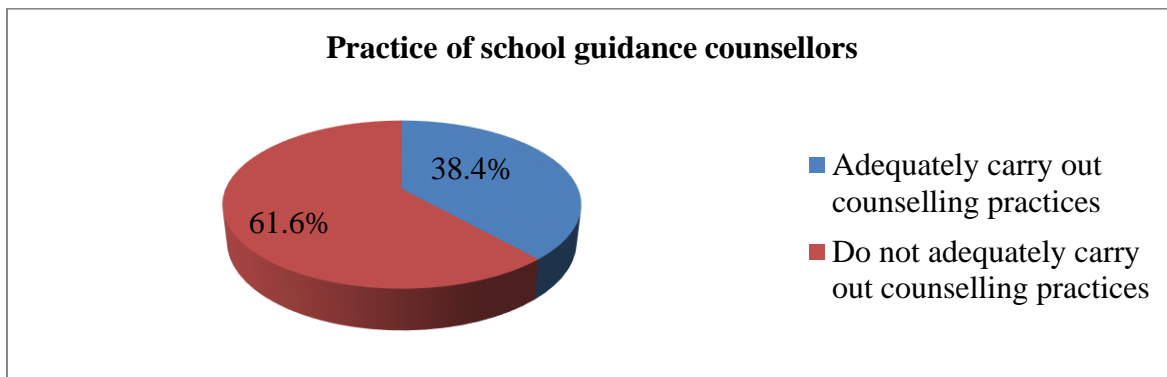
**Table 3: Counsellors Appraisal of their Field Practice**

Statements	Stretched				Collapsed	
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD
My training did not adequately prepare me to render orientation services in school	60 (24.4%)	123 (50.0%)	47 (19.1%)	16 (6.5%)	183 (74.4%)	63 (25.6%)
I am unable to effectively carry out assessment service towards my clients	48 (19.5%)	121 (49.2%)	71 (28.9%)	6 (2.4%)	169 (68.7%)	77 (31.3%)
I do not render educational and occupational information services effectively	52 (21.1%)	157 (63.8%)	30 (12.2%)	7 (2.8%)	209 (85.0%)	37 (15.0%)
My training did not equip me to effectively provide counselling services to my client	42 (17.1%)	158 (64.2%)	33 (13.4%)	13 (5.3%)	200 (81.3%)	46 (18.7%)
I do not satisfactorily carry out placement and follow-up service.	33 (13.4%)	76 (30.9%)	120 (48.8%)	17 (6.9%)	109 (44.3%)	137 (55.7%)
I do not adequately offer appraisal service to my clients	25 (10.2%)	87 (35.4%)	123 (50.0%)	11 (4.5%)	112 (45.5%)	134 (54.5%)
Follow-up, research and evaluation service I offer to my clients is not done sufficiently	16 (6.5%)	66 (26.8%)	149 (60.6%)	15 (6.1%)	82 (33.3%)	164 (66.7%)
I do not sufficiently render consultative services to my clients	32 (13.0%)	135 (54.9%)	66 (26.8%)	13 (5.3%)	167 (67.9%)	79 (32.1%)
My training did not adequately equip me to effectively do referrals.	36 (14.6%)	120 (48.8%)	79 (32.1%)	11 (4.5%)	156 (63.4%)	90 (36.6%)
I do not satisfactorily carry out coordination service.	25 (10.2%)	103 (41.9%)	107 (43.5%)	11 (4.5%)	127 (51.6%)	118 (48.0%)
<b>Multiple Responses Set (MRS)</b>	<b>368 (15.0%)</b>	<b>1146 (46.6%)</b>	<b>825 (33.6%)</b>	<b>120 (4.9%)</b>	<b>1515 (61.6%)</b>	<b>945 (38.4%)</b>

Table 3 shows counsellors' appraisal of their field practice. In aggregate, based on counsellors' opinion on practice, 61.6% of them said that their training did not adequately prepared them for practice while 38.4% said training adequately prepared them for practice. Specifically, majority of counsellors 183 (74.4%) accepted that their training did not adequately prepare them to render orientation services in school while 63 (25.6%) disagreed. Also, 169 (68.7%) counsellors accepted

that they are unable to effectively carry out assessment service towards clients while 77 (31.3%) disagreed. In the same trend, majority of counsellors 209 (85.0%) said they are unable to effectively render educational and occupational information services while 37 (15.0%) said they could effectively do that.

Again, 200 (81.3%) counsellors also opined that their training did not equip them to effectively provide counselling services to clients while 46 (18.7%) said it effectively equipped them. Furthermore, 109 (44.3%) counsellors also indicated that they do not satisfactorily carry out placement and follow-up services while 137 (55.7%) said they do. Findings also showed that 167 (67.9%) counsellors accepted that they do not sufficiently render consultation services to their clients while 79 (32.1%) disagreed to this. Similarly, 156 (63.4%) counsellors opined that their training did not adequately equip them to effectively do referrals while 90 (36.6%) said they were effectively equipped for referrals. Finally, 127 (51.6%) counsellors said they do not satisfactorily carry out coordination services while 118 (48.0%) of them does that satisfactorily. The overall finding on counsellors' practices is also presented on Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1: Counsellors' Appraisal of their Field Practice*

Figure 1 shows school counsellors' appraisal of their overall practice. In aggregate, 61.6% of counsellors admitted that they do not practice adequately while 38.4% said they do practice adequately.

Table 4 specifically compares counsellors' opinion on their practice by demographic information. This is to enable us know the opinion for each category of participants as concern the practice of counselling.

**Table 4: Comparing Counsellors Practice by Demographic Information**

Demographic data			Practice		Total based on MRS	
			Adequate	Inadequate		
Sex	Male	n	273	407	680	
		%	40.1%	59.9%		
	Female	n	672	1107	1779	
		%	37.8%	62.2%		
Age group	Below 36 years	n	237	522	759	
		%	31.2%	68.8%		
	36-45 years	n	566	784	1350	
		%	41.9%	58.1%		
	46-55 years	n	135	165	300	
		%	45.0%	55.0%		
	56 years and above	n	7	43	50	
		%	14.0%	86.0%		
Years of training	Below 2000	n	62	128	190	
		%	32.6%	67.4%		
	2000 to 2005	n	67	73	140	
		%	47.9%	52.1%		
	2006 to 2010	n	119	131	250	
		%	47.6%	52.4%		
	2011to 2015	n	388	522	910	
		%	42.6%	57.4%		
	2016 to 2020	n	298	572	870	
		%	34.3%	65.7%		
	Above 2020	n	11	88	99	
		%	11.1%	88.9%		
	Training institution	ENS Bambili	n	84	205	289
			%	29.1%	70.9%	
ENS Maroua		n	137	253	390	
		%	35.1%	64.9%		
ENS Yaoundé		n	357	463	820	
		%	43.5%	56.5%		
ENSET Bertoua		n	238	492	730	
		%	32.6%	67.4%		
ENSET Douala		n	7	43	50	
		%	14.0%	86.0%		
HTTTC Yaoundé		n	30.3	69.7	99	
		%	20.0%	80.0%		
ENSET Kumba		n	11	19	30	
		%	40.0%	60.0%		

**Table 4: Continuation**

Demographic data			Practice		Total based on MRS
			Adequate	Inadequate	
Years of practice	Less than 5 years	n	116	283	399
		%	29.1%	70.9%	
	5-10 years	n	579	861	1440
		%	40.2%	59.8%	
	11-15 years	n	116	154	270
		%	43.0%	57.0%	
16-20 years	n	66	84	150	
	%	44.0%	56.0%		
Above 20 years	n	68	132	200	
	%	34.0%	66.0%		
Highest qualification	DIPOCO	n	662	1048	1710
		%	38.7%	61.3%	
	Master's	n	283	466	749
		%	37.8%	62.2%	

Table 4 compares counsellors' practice by demographic information. Comparing the counsellors' practice by demographic data, findings showed that irrespective of their sex, age group, training institution, year of training, years in practice and highest qualification, many of the counsellors with percentage ranging from 52.1% to 88.9% do not adequately carry out the counselling practice which is above 50%.

### Research Question

How do the perceptions of school counsellors about their training influence their practice?

Ten close ended items were deduced to capture counsellors' perceptions about their training and the findings are presented on Table 5 below.

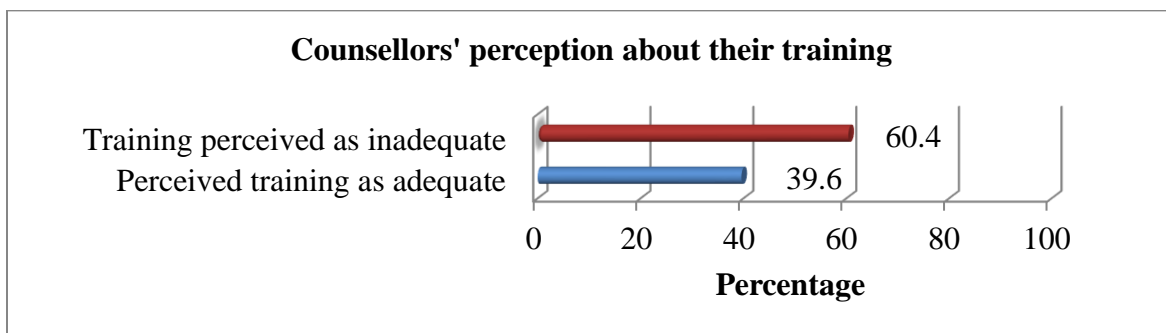
**Table 5: Counsellors Perceptions about their Training**

Statements	Stretched				Collapsed	
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD
My training did not adequately enable me to have good theoretical and conceptual knowledge of counselling	20 (8.1%)	51 (20.7%)	120 (48.8%)	55 (22.4%)	71 (28.9%)	175 (71.1%)
I am not adequately satisfied with evidence-based techniques in counselling acquired in training.	39 (15.9%)	120 (48.8%)	75 (30.5%)	12 (4.9%)	159 (64.6%)	87 (35.4%)
My training did not greatly enable me to be able to access school and community resources to make appropriate referrals.	36 (14.6%)	110 (44.7%)	84 (34.1%)	16 (6.5%)	146 (59.3%)	100 (40.7%)
My training did not sufficiently enable me to have awareness of multiculturalism during counselling	37 (15.0%)	80 (32.5%)	98 (39.8%)	31 (12.6%)	117 (47.6%)	129 (52.4%)
From experience, not all counsellors always take into consideration ethical issues when counselling clients	68 (27.6%)	117 (47.6%)	46 (18.7%)	15 (6.1%)	185 (75.2%)	61 (24.8%)
My training did not adequately prepare me to engage in group or individual counselling with clients	18 (7.3%)	55 (22.4%)	100 (40.7%)	73 (29.7%)	73 (29.7%)	173 (70.3%)
My training did not empower me to effectively use ICT in counselling	102 (41.5%)	103 (41.9%)	28 (11.4%)	13 (5.3%)	205 (83.3%)	41 (16.7%)
Training on how to administer and interpret psychological tests was not given.	104 (42.3%)	111 (45.1%)	20 (8.1%)	11 (4.5%)	215 (87.4%)	31 (12.6%)
I am unable to effectively do needs assessment in my school.	42 (17.1%)	110 (44.7%)	80 (32.5%)	14 (5.7%)	152 (61.8%)	94 (38.2%)
My training did not adequately enable me to develop and administer a school guidance program	50 (20.3%)	113 (45.9%)	67 (27.2%)	16 (6.5%)	163 (66.3%)	83 (33.7%)
<b>Multiple Responses Set (MRS)</b>	<b>516</b> <b>(21.0%)</b>	<b>970</b> <b>(39.4%)</b>	<b>718</b> <b>(29.2%)</b>	<b>256</b> <b>(10.4%)</b>	<b>1486</b> <b>(60.4%)</b>	<b>974</b> <b>(39.6%)</b>

From Table 5, based on counsellors' perception of training, in aggregate, 60.4% of them see their training as inadequate while 39.6% see it as adequate. Specifically, 175 (71.1%) counsellors accepted that training was more theoretical. Also, 159 (64.6%) counsellors are not adequately satisfied with evidence-based techniques in counselling acquired in training while 87 (35.4%) are satisfied. Similarly, 146 (59.3%) counsellors said their training did not greatly enable them to access school and community resources to make appropriate referrals while 129 (52.4%) of them

disagreed. Also, 117 (47.6%) counsellors accepted that their training did not sufficiently enable them to have awareness of multiculturalism during counselling while 129 (52.4%) of them disagreed.

Furthermore, 185 (75.2%) counsellors indicated that not all counsellors always take into consideration ethical issues when counselling clients but, 173 (70.3%) accepted that their training adequately prepared them to engage in group or individual counselling with clients. Majority of counsellors 205 (83.3%) also indicated that their training did not empower them to effectively use ICT in counselling while 41 (16.7%) of them disagreed. Again, 215 (87.4%) of the counsellors also accepted that their training on how to administer and interpret psychological tests was not adequately done while 31 (12.6%) said it was adequately done. Furthermore, 152 (61.8%) of the counsellors opined that they are unable to effectively do needs assessment in their school while 94 (38.2%) of them said they effectively do needs assessment. Finally, 163 (66.3%) of the counsellors said their training did not adequately enable them to develop and administer a school guidance program while 83 (33.7%) of them disagreed. The overall finding on counsellors' perceptions is also presented on the figure below.



*Figure 2: Counsellors Perception about their Training*

Figure 2 shows the overall finding on counsellors' perception of training. From the figure, 60.4% of counsellors perceive their training as inadequate while 39.6% perceived the training as adequate.

Table 6 specifically compares counsellors' perception about their training received by demographic information. The purpose for this comparison is to depict what each category of counsellors by demographic information hold about their training.

**Table 6. Comparing Counsellors Perception of Counsellors Training by Demographic Information**

Demographic data			Perception about training		Total based on MRS
			Inadequate	Adequate	
Sex	Male	n	435	245	680
		%	64.0%	36.0%	
	Female	n	1051	729	1780
		%	59.0%	41.0%	
Age group	Below 36 years	n	405	355	760
		%	53.3%	46.7%	
	36-45 years	n	809	541	1350
		%	59.9%	40.1%	
	46-55 years	n	234	66	300
		%	78.0%	22.0%	
	56 years and above	n	38	12	50
		%	76.0%	24.0%	
Years of training	Below 2000	n	157	33	190
		%	82.6%	17.4%	
	2000 to 2005	n	104	36	140
		%	74.3%	25.7%	
	2006 to 2010	n	168	82	250
		%	67.2%	32.8%	
	2011 to 2015	n	552	358	910
		%	76.8%	33.2%	
	2016 to 2020	n	668	202	870
		%	53.8%	46.2%	
	Above 2020	n	81	19	100
		%	81.0%	19.0%	
Training institution	ENS Bambili	n	156	134	290
		%	53.8%	46.2%	
	ENS Maroua	n	233	157	390
		%	59.7%	40.3%	
	ENS Yaoundé	n	608	212	820
		%	74.1%	25.9%	
	ENSET Bertoua	n	370	360	730
		%	50.7%	49.3%	
	ENSET Douala	n	42	8	50
		%	84.0%	16.0%	
	HTTTC Yaoundé	n	83	16	99
		%	83.8.0%	16.2.0%	
	ENSET Kumba	n	18	12	30
		%	60.0%	40.0%	
Years of practice	Less than 5 years	n	227	173	400
		%	56.8%	43.3%	
	5-10 years	n	871	569	1440
		%	60.5%	39.5%	
	11-15 years	n	174	96	270
		%	64.4%	35.6%	
	16-20 years	n	105	45	150
		%	70.0%	30.0%	
	Above 20 years	n	163	37	200
		%	81.5%	18.5%	
Highest qualification	DIPOCO	n	1078	632	1710
		%	63.0%	37.0%	
	Master's	n	408	342	750
		%	54.4%	45.6%	

From Table 6, comparing the counsellors perception of counsellors training in Cameroon by demographic data, findings showed that irrespective of their sex, age group, training institution, year of training, years in practice and highest qualification, many of the counsellors with percentage ranging from 50.7% to 88.0% indicated perceived the training of counsellors in Cameroon as inadequate which is all above 50.0%. In fact, with reference training institutions, 53.8% of counsellors trained from ENS Bambili, 59.7% trained from ENS Maroua, 74.1% trained from ENS Yaoundé, 50.7% trained from ENSET Bertoua, 84.0% trained from ENSET Douala, 83.8% trained in HTTTC Yaoundé, and 60.0% trained in ENSET Kumba perceived the training of counsellors in Cameroon as inadequate.

**Verification of Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: School counsellors’ perceptions about their training have no significant influence on their practice.

H<sub>02</sub>: School counsellors’ perceptions about their training have a significant influence on their practice.

**Table 7: Perceived Impact of Perception about Training on Practice**

Test	Statistical parameters	Perception about training	Counsellors' practice
Pearson test	R-value	1	.637**
	p-value		.000
	n	246	246

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 7 which shows the perceived impact of perception about training on practice, statistically counsellors’ perception of training, has a significant, positive and strong impact on their practice (R-value =0.637\*\* , p-value= 0.000< 0.05). The positive sign of the correlation value implies that counsellors are more likely to be effective in practice when they perceive that their training is adequate and less likely to be effective in practice when training is perceived inadequate. Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between school counsellors’ perceptions about their training and their practice was accepted. This hypothesis results is further expatiated on the table 8 below using a cross tabulation approach.

**Table 8: Cross Tabulation Technique between Counsellors’ Perception of Training and Practice**

			Practice		Total
			Adequately carry out practice	Inadequately carried out practice	
Perception of training	Adequate	n	67	81	148
		%	45.3%	54.7%	
	Inadequate	n	28	69	97
		%	29.0%	71.0%	
Total		n	95	151	246



$\chi^2= 7.461, p\text{-value}=0.006$

Table 8 shows the cross-tabulation technique between counsellors' perception of training and practice. In support of the findings from this correlation table above, using the cross tabulation technique between perception of training versus practice, findings showed that counsellors who perceived their training as adequate are significantly better in their practice making a proportion of 45.3% than those who did not perceive their training as adequate 29.0% ( $p\text{-value} = 0.006 < 0.05$ ). However, irrespective of this difference, majority of counsellors do not still adequately carry out practice. In addition to the close ended questions, counsellors were asked to describe the training of counsellors in Cameroon and their responses are presented on Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Counsellors Opinion/Description of Training of Counsellors in Cameroon**

Themes	Groundings	Quotations
More theory than practice	Many	<p>“It is grossly insufficient. A lot of rush with courses and more emphasis should be laid on practicals than theory”.</p> <p>“The training is good but more emphasis be laid on practicals than theory”.</p> <p>“It’s more theoretical than practical. Student counsellors need exposure as an opportunity to carry out more practice”.</p> <p>“The training is lacking more because we dwell more on theory than practice”.</p> <p>“Little practical was given to us”.</p> <p>“The training is more theoretical than practicals”.</p> <p>“The training gives more room for theory than practicals”.</p> <p>“I think the training of counsellors in Cameroon should lay emphasis more on practicals and less theory”.</p> <p>“The training was short and more theoretical than practical”.</p>
Improvement of equipment for psychological testing	Many	<p>“The opinion I hold is that Cameroon needs to improve on its equipment so that psychological testing can be effectively carried out”.</p> <p>“A lot of skills has to be taught to enable counsellors acquire adequate skills to help students with their problems”.</p> <p>“I think so much improvement has been done in the years but more improvement in needed especially in the domain of psychological testing”</p> <p>“In general, we are all lacking in psychological testing”.</p>
Lack of qualified trainers	Many	<p>“There is lack of personnel in the training”</p> <p>“We lack trained counsellors to lecture student counsellors”.</p> <p>“The training is not up to standard maybe because of the quality of teachers”.</p> <p>“Not really satisfied with the caliber of some trainers as counsellors. Some of the trainers do not teach with passion”.</p>
Limited internship and training	Few	<p>“Lack of counselling clinics for internship”.</p> <p>“The training of counsellors is somehow superficial and the counsellors leave the school with the impression that they are going to rest in their office”.</p> <p>“The training is short”.</p>
Inadequate addressing of cultural diversity	Few	<p>“The training is stereotype because we talk of cultural diversity but fail to understand that sociocultural norms change over time”.</p>
Non-contextualisation of training	Few	<p>“The training of counsellors should be contextualized in respect to psychological testing. Tests from Western world might not work in our context”.</p>
Inadequate knowledge on psychology	Few	<p>“Some of the counsellors trained in Cameroon do not have knowledge on child psychology”.</p>
Less attention	Few	<p>“I think the training of counsellors in Cameroon is not adequate because the field is neglected and less value is given to it”.</p> <p>“Counselling in Cameroon is not given much value and those who are in the field practicing are discouraged”.</p> <p>“The training of the counsellors is not quite effective”.</p>
Good		<p>“I think the training of counsellors in Cameroon is good”.</p>

From Table 9, asking some of the interviewed counsellors to describe the training of counsellors in Cameroon, many of them said the training is more theoretical and less practical as depicted in

the statements *“The training is good but more emphasis be laid on practicals than theory”, “It’s more theoretical than practical. Student counsellors need exposure as an opportunity to carry out more practice”, “The training is lacking more because we dwell more on theory than practice”.*

Also, some counsellors said the training needs improvement in equipment for psychological testing as narrated in the statements *“The opinion I hold is that Cameroon needs to improve on its equipment so that psychological testing can be effectively carried out”, “A lot of skills have to be taught to enable counsellors acquire adequate skills to help students with their problems”.* Furthermore, some counsellors said the training is characterized by lack of qualified trainers as depicted in the statements *“There is lack of personnel in the training”, “We lack trained counsellors to lecture student counsellors”, “and the training is not up to standard maybe because of the quality of teachers”.* Again, some counsellors said internship is limited and training is short as depicted in the statements *“The training of counsellors is somehow superficial and the counsellors leave the school with the impression that they are going to rest in their office”, “Lack of counselling clinics for internship”, “The training is short”.*

Furthermore, some counsellors said the training does not adequately address cultural diversity as depicted in the statement *“The training is stereotype because we talk of cultural diversity but fail to understand that sociocultural norms change over time”.* Furthermore, some counsellors said the training is not contextualised as depicted in the statement *“The training of counsellors should be contextualized in respect to psychological testing. Tests from Western world might not work in our context”.* Furthermore, some counsellors said training is limited in knowledge on child psychology as narrated *“Some of the counsellors trained in Cameroon do not have knowledge on child psychology”.* Finally, some counsellors said the training of counsellors in Cameroon is not given adequate attention as reflected in their statements *“I think the training of counsellors in Cameroon is not adequate because the field is neglected and less value is given to it”, “Counselling in Cameroon is not given much value and those who are in the field practicing are discouraged”.*

On the contrary, some of the counsellors said the training of counsellors in Cameroon is good as depicted in the statement *“I think the training of counsellors in Cameroon is good”.*

In addition to counsellors’ description of their training in Cameroon, they were also asked to explain whether or not their training is of standard and how is affecting their practice. The responses are presented on Table 10 below.

**Table 10: Counsellors Opinion on the Standard of Training of Counsellors in Cameroon and How is Affecting their Practice**

Training standard			Justifications
	Themes		Quotations
Training not up to standard	Inadequate internship	Many	“The training is not up to standard because internship is not intensively done” “Internship is not adequate”. “The training is not up to standard because we do not do adequate internship and this is making it difficult for us to administer tests to our clients”. “The training is more of theory than practice” “Averagely because more of the training was theoretical and not practical”. “The training is not up to standard because more of theory is done”. “More practical work should be done rather than spending so much time on theory”. “Training is below standard because is more theory oriented and very little practicals”.
	Training more theoretical	Many	“Lack of qualified trainers” “It is not up to standard because the training is purely psychology of which the programme is guidance and counselling and this is because most of the teachers are teachers of educational psychology background and not professionals in guidance and counselling which are two different programmes”. “The training can be up to standard if those training the student counsellors are practicing counsellors.”
	Unqualified trainers	Many	“No, it is not and is affecting me as I am meeting so many new things. Everything seems new and what is happening in the field is different from that happening in the class”.
	Field work differ from classwork	Few	“The training is not effectively up to standard because classes were very limited and we do not learn many things”.
	Limited classes	Few	“Not quite because lack of knowledge in ICT, psychology and sociology is affecting my practice”. “The training is more conventional and limited in the use of ICT for digitalisation”.
	Lacking in ICT	Few	“Is not up to standard and thus is greatly affecting my transmission of knowledge to my clients. Very difficult to pass test to my clients”.
	Inability to carry out testing	Few	“The training is not up to standard especially with the lack of training equipment in developing world”.
	Lack of equipment	Few	“Training is not effective because at times we are faced with situations and problems that we are not able to effectively help the client”.
	Inability to effectively address problems	Few	“The training is not up to standard because I am unable to function fully as a counsellor since I am lacking in certain aspects of counselling. I still need to know how to fully follow up clients”.
	Inability to do individual counselling and follow up	Few	“No. As a newly trained counsellor in the field, I have lot of difficulties to do individual counselling and effectively following up clients. I feel inadequate in these areas and therefore focus more on group counselling”.
Training up to standard	Westernisation of training	Few	“The training is not up to standard. We are trained more on Western concepts and experiences which do not really reflect our context in Cameroon.”
	Exposed to counselling theories	Few	“Yes, because I was drill on counselling theories and it gives me the opportunity on how to use the theories during internship”.
	Practice in confidence	Few	“To some extent yes because I have been able to practice confidently as I left school and I upgrade with experience through the years, seminars and workshops”.
	Practice with less difficulties	Few	“The training is up to standard and affecting my practice positively because with the skills acquired during training, I am able to carry out individual and group counselling without so much difficulties”

Form Table 10, asking some of the counsellors interviewed if their training is up to standard, many of them said training is not up to standard while a few said training is up to standard. Among the many that said training is not up to standard, one of the reasons is that internship is inadequate as depicted in the statements “*The training is not up to standard because internship is not intensively*

done”, *“The training is not up to standard because we do not do adequate internship and this is making it difficult for us to administer tests to my clients”*.

Another reason given is that training is more theoretical as narrated in the statements *“The training is more of theory than practice”, “Averagely because more of the training was theoretical and not practical”, “The training is not up to standard because more of theory is done”*. Again, another reason is that trainers are not qualified as reported by some respondents *“It is not up to standard because the training is purely psychology of which the program is guidance and counselling and this is because most of the teachers are teachers of educational psychology background and not professionals in guidance and counselling which are two different programs”, “The training can be up to standard if those training the student counsellors are practicing counsellors”*.

Furthermore, some counsellors said training is not up to standard because field work differs from class work as narrated in the statement *‘No, it is not and is affecting me as I am meeting so many new things. Everything seems new and what is happening in the field is different from that happening in the class’*. Again, some counsellors add that training is not up to standard because classes are very limited as reported *“The training is not effectively up to standard because classes were very limited and we do not learn many things”*.

To elucidate, another reason advanced is that training is lacking in ICT as reported *“Not quite because lack of knowledge in ICT, psychology and sociology is affecting my practice”, “The training is more conventional and limited in the use of ICT for digitalization”*. Again, some counsellors said training is not up to standard because they are unable to carry out psychological tests as narrated *“Is not up to standard and thus greatly affecting my transmission of knowledge to my clients. Very difficult to administer test to my clients”*. Again, lack of equipment is reason training is denied to meet the standard as some respondents said *“The training is not up to standard especially with the lack of training equipment in developing world”*.

Furthermore, the inability of some counsellors to address problems is another reason some said training is not up to standard as depicted in the statement *“Training is not effective because at times we are faced with situations and problems that we are not able to effectively help the client”*.. Also, some counsellors said they are unable to carry out individual and group counselling thus making them to see training as not up to standard as depicted in the statements *“The training is not up to standard because I am unable to function fully as a counsellor since I am lacking in certain aspects of counselling. I still need to know how to fully follow up clients”, “No. As a new trained counsellor in the field, I have lot of difficulties to do individual counselling and effectively following up clients. I feel inadequate in these areas and therefore focus more on group counselling”*. Finally, some counsellors said their training is not up to standard because they are trained more on western concepts which do not reflect the Cameroonian context as depicted in the statement *“The training is not up to standard. We are trained more with Western concepts and experiences which do not really reflect with our context in Cameroon”*.

On the contrary, among the few counsellors that said training is up to standard, one of the reasons are that the training adequately exposed them to different counselling theories as depicted in the statement *“Yes, because I was drill on counselling theories and it gives me the opportunity on how to use the theories during internship”*. Another reason is that they are practicing with lot of confidence due to seminars and workshops attended as explained *“To some extent yes because I*

*have been able to practice confidently as I left school and I upgrade with experience through the years, seminars and workshops”. Finally, another reason is that they are practicing with fewer difficulties as narrated in the statement “The training is up to standard and affecting my practice positively because with the skills acquired during training, I am able to carry out individual and group counselling without so much difficulty”.*

### **Discussions**

The findings showed that majority of counsellors perceived their training as inadequate while a few perceived as adequate and, further analysis showed that counsellors’ perception of training, has a significant, positive and strong impact on their practice. The positivity of the correlation value implies that counsellors are more likely to be effective in practice when they perceive that their training is adequate and less likely to be effective in practice when training is perceived inadequate.

In support of the above findings using the cross-tabulation technique between perception of training versus practice, findings showed that counsellors who perceived their training adequate are significantly better in their practice than those who do not perceive their training adequate. Thus, the findings imply that the perception that many counsellors have about their training do have a significant implication on their practice. The reason many of the counsellors perceived their training as inadequate is because the training is more theoretical and less practical, lack of equipment for psychological testing, lack of qualified trainers, limited internship and short training, training does not adequately addresses cultural diversity, lack of contextualization of training, limited in knowledge on child psychology and inadequate attention given to the training.

Our findings tied with that of Na (2012) who completed a demographic study of school counsellors and found that school counsellors believed that their training experiences in a graduate program, the schools’ urbanity, and their age would be related to their own levels of effective counselling practice. Therefore, in relation to our study, this implies that the perceptions of counsellors can directly impact the practice whether accurate or inaccurate. Furthermore, in another study carried out by Scarborough and Luke (2008) with the purpose of exploring the personal perspectives of school counsellors having success in implementing a Comprehensive Developmental School Counselling Program (CDSCP), the researchers discovered that there is discrepancy between the actual practice of school counsellors and best practice which could be due to potential structural, personal and organizational variables. Again, the study of Scarborough and Luke revealed that the perception of counsellors toward training do have some implication on actual practice.

To elucidate, the work of Slaten, Scalise, Gutting and Baskin, (2012) has a bearing on this current research. Slaten and his team carried out a study on early career school counsellors’ perspective on their training and the results of their study provided an opportunity for professional school counsellors to reflect upon their experience of being an early career professional. Their research addressed the concern of counselling educators regarding counselling services in schools and to help shape the future of school counselling training and advocacy by the field of counselling.

As depicted in the findings of our study, many of the counsellors perceive their training inadequate / not up to standard and many reasons were advanced for that. The reasons mentioned by a good number of the counsellors who see their training as not up to standard are due to inadequate internship, training more theoretical than practical, unqualified trainers, differences between field

work from class work, limited classes, non-exposure to ICT during training, inability to carry out psychological tests, lack of equipment, inability of some counsellors to address problems, inability to carry out individual and group counselling and because training is more on Western concepts which do not reflect the Cameroonian context. These above-mentioned factors constitute the reasons many of the counsellors perceive their training as inadequate.

In fact, with the findings from the inferential analysis, it revealed that when students see them as not adequately arm for actual practice, that alone affects their practice and this ties with the opinion of Morgan et al. (2014) whose findings indicated school counsellors who did not feel ready to go into the industry after completing their counsellor education programs felt underprepared when it came to helping students with post-secondary and career choices. This showed that the counsellors already saw the deficiency in their practice even before encountering them. As a result of that the authors recommended the implementation of career development courses in graduate level programs. The perceptions of counsellors as far their training is concern do have a strong effect on their psychology and finally practice.

However, according to the Client-centered theory of Rogers (1951), every individual (counsellor inclusive) is viewed as having the capability to change his/her own behaviour. If he misbehaves, it is because of inner emotional turmoil or a feeling of inadequacy. This theory justifies the reason why counsellors who perceived their training as inadequate were mostly those who were not effective in their practice. This is because such perception already creates some internal image in them thus limiting their abilities to maybe improvise during practice as some did.

Rogers believed that man has a natural capacity for growth and development, a strong desire to become mature, socially adjusted, independent and productive. As a result of this, despite the inadequate training, the counsellor must rely on the inner force, not upon his own influence, for therapeutic changes in self. By this, we imply changes in field practice. To Rogers, the true benefit of counselling lies in the therapeutic nature of the counselling relationship. He postulated that if the counsellor in discharging his duties shows a non-threatening relationship characterized by non-judgmental acceptance, warmth and respect, the counsellor will discover within him the capacity to use that relationship for growth and change, and personal development despite the inadequate training received from school (Rogers, 1951).

Thus, the counsellor in discharge of his/her duties needs to interact and to upgrade skills through training and seminars so as to overcome challenges. This is so because one of the reasons advanced by counsellors whose inadequate training is not affecting their practice is because when they have challenges, they relate with other colleagues for way out. However, this does not imply that high quality of training be undermine because of in-service training opportunities and collaboration from colleagues. Makewa (2008) asserts that for a successful counselling process the counsellor requires professional training to accomplish this task and this professional training must be of standard to enable the counsellors acquire adequate knowledge and skills. For instance, to further stress the importance of adequate knowledge and skills acquisition, Ndirangu (2000) cited in Tita-Nghamun (2016) concedes that the counsellor should be well grounded in clinical psychology but, on the contrary, lack of knowledge in psychology constitutes one of the factors some counsellors perceived their training inadequate.

In the opinion of McEachern (2003), the mission of graduate counsellor education programs is to train students to be effective and competent counsellors. To him, school counsellor education programs are expected to offer preparation in certain areas of knowledge and skills that encompass a range of issues faced by students today. In order to ensure that school counsellors are well-trained to meet the needs of students, various organizations have established standards and guidelines. Therefore, given that our findings showed that counsellors' inadequate practice is also due to perceived substandard training, it is imperative that our training schools should upgrade in the training offer to student counsellors.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Conclusion**

The purpose of the study was to find out the perceptions of school counsellors about their training and its influence on practice. From the primary data collected and analyzed, the findings showed that majority of the counsellors indicated that their training did not adequately prepared them for practice in that skills acquired during initial training were inadequate while few of them said training adequately prepared them for practice and skills acquired during initial training were adequate.

Again, the findings showed that many of the counsellors perceived their training inadequate implying that many of them have several post-training needs which need to be improved upon. In addition to the several post training needs reported by the counsellors, the professional development programs attended during services has been of great help to a majority of the counsellors. However, despite that, several weaknesses were also reported about the development program which is preventing them from gaining adequate skills and knowledge from the programs. The findings equally revealed that counsellors' perception of training have significant influence on school counsellors' practice. On this note, it is imperative that the quality of training being offered to student counsellors in training institutions in Cameroon be improved.

The job of a counsellor in contemporary times has been very demanding and as such, training needs to be of high standard to empower the counsellors to effectively address the various situations in the field. Baker and Gerler (2001) opined that guidance and counselling programmes in schools had significant influence on improving discipline, enhancing students' grades, strengthening social skills, helping students make wise decisions on career development and college choices and developing positive study habits and study skills. In line with Baker and Gerler (2001), Hearne and Galvin (2015) also stated that guidance and counselling provision is seen as a whole school responsibility to support the needs of their students. Therefore, this being the case the need for improvement in the quality of training in our training institutions need not be over emphasized.

##### **Recommendations**

Training programmes should be organized at the level of the Divisional and Regional Delegations for Secondary Education for school counsellors to upgrade their skills in the use of ICT in counselling. With the changing times it is expected that an efficient and effective practicing school counsellor should do all to be ICT savvy. Counsellors need ICT knowledge in carrying out psychological testing, research on various counselling skills, research on record keeping, research



on careers just to name these few indicated by school counsellors as areas in which they are needy. Moreover, through the use of ICT, school counsellors and counsellor educators with expertise in practice could create professional development webinars and other platforms for sharing expertise, addressing concerns, and answering questions about effective classroom management for school counsellors.

It is also recommended that school counsellors be provided with the adequate and necessary facilities to practice such as a convenient counselling office space and office logistics especially in this era where the client upholds his/her privacy. Also, school counsellors should be equipped with other skills such as marital counselling, management of drug addiction, mental health counselling skills through seminars and workshops so as to effectively carter for their clients.

## REFERENCES

- Agbor, O. T. (2016). The role of guidance and counseling services on the academic achievement of secondary school students: the case of some selected English schools within Yaoundé. [biblio.centrale.uyi@gmail.com](mailto:biblio.centrale.uyi@gmail.com)
- American School Counsellor Association (2019). *ASCA Standards for School Counsellor Preparation Programmes* (ASCA CAEP SPA). Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounsellor.org/getmedia/573d7c2c-1622-4d25-a5ac-ac74d2e614ca/ASCA-Standards-for-School-Counsellor-Preparation-Programmes.pdf>.
- American School Counsellor Association. (2014). *ASCA Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K–12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counsellor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counsellors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counsellor Association. (2017). *The School Counsellor and School Counselling Programmes*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounsellor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counsellor-and-School-Counselling-Programme>.
- American School Counsellor Association. (2019a). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counselling programmes (4th ed.)*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counsellor Association. (2019b). *ASCA school counsellor professional standards & competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Author
- American School Counsellor Association. (2019c). *ASCA Standards for School Counselling Preparation*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Belser, C. T., Wheeler, N. J., Bierbrauer, S. L., Solomon, C. S., & Harris, S. (2018). The experiences of counsellors-in-training in a school-based counselling practicum. *Journal of Counsellor Preparation and Supervision*, 11(2). <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jcps/vol11/iss2/8>
- Brott, P. E. (2006). Counsellor education accountability: Training the effective professional school counsellor. *Professional School Counselling*, 10(2), 179-188.
- Bunce, C. A., & Willower, D. J. (2001). Counsellor subcultures in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 39, 472–487. doi:10.1108/EUM0000000005814.
- Council for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programmes [CACREP]. (2016). 2016 CACREP standards.
- Council for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programmes. (2015). 2016 CACREP standards. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Education Trust (2007). *The foundation of the field*. <http://www.2edtrust.org>
- Egbo, A. C. (2008). *Organisation of guidance and counselling in schools*. Joe Best Publishers.

- Etape, E.N. (2022). *Introducing Guidance and Counselling Services in Primary Schools in Kumba Municipality of the South West Region of Cameroon. Teacher Perspectives*. GRIN Verlag.
- Geltner, J. A. (2007). *Curriculum components of classroom management training for school counsellors: A Delphi study*. [Dissertation Abstracts International Section A, 68]. EBSCOhost.
- Gibson R. L and Mitchell M. (2008). *Introduction to Counselling and Guidance*. Pearson Education Inc.
- Gonzalez, T. (2011). *Training professional school counselling students to facilitate a classroom guidance lesson and strengthen classroom management skills using a mixed reality environment*. Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019. <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/2040>
- Gysbers, N. (2004). Comprehensive guidance and counselling programmes: The evolution of accountability. *Professional School Counsellor*, 8, 1-14.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2006). Assessing the counselling needs of high school students in Kenya. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 8(2), 83–94
- Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2005). Professional school counselling in urban settings: introduction to special issue. *Professional School Counselling*, 8, 182-183.
- Holcomb-McCoy, C. C. (1998). *School counselling preparation in urban settings*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED 418343).
- Kozlowski K. A. & Susan H. (2013). *Training of School Counsellors*. Bowling Green State University.
- Kozlowski, K. (2010). Themes in secondary school counsellor development: Skovholt and Ronnestad revisited. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI 340581)
- Lee, C. C. (2001). Culturally responsive school counsellors and programs: Addressing the needs of all students. *Professional School Counselling*, 4, 257-261.
- McEachern, A. G. (2003). School Counsellor Preparation to Meet the Guidance Needs of Exceptional Students: A national study. *Counsellor Edu. And Supervision* 42, 314325. <http://doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978>
- McMahon, M., & Patton, W. (2001). Clinical supervision: The perceptions and experiences of school counsellors in Australia. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 23, 201–214. doi:10.1023/A:1013170011770.
- Moller, N. P. & Rance, N. (2013): *The good, the bad and the uncertainty: Trainees' perceptions of the personal development group*. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research: Linking research with practice*, 13 (4), 282-289.
- Mungwa, D. (2013). Guidance and counselling for students in Cameroon: A practical approach with lessons on morals. Douala NNAMBS

- NOSCA, (2012). *College Board National Survey of School Counsellors and Administrators Report on Survey Findings: Barriers and Supports to School Counsellor Success*. Peter D. Hart Research Associates
- Ogbodo, R. O. (2020); the Historical Development of Guidance and Counselling. *The Journal of counselling association of Nigeria (CASSON)* 70-83.
- Ojo, O.D. (2005). *A Guide to guidance and counselling practicum*. Concept Publications.
- Pereira, M. & Rekha, S. (2017). Problems, difficulties and challenges faced by counsellors. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, Volume 4, (3), DIP:18.01.127/20170403. [http:// doi:10.25215/0403.127](http://doi:10.25215/0403.127)
- Popham, W. J. (2010). *Educational assessment: What school leaders need to know?* Corwin Press.
- Rayees, A. D. & Najmha, P. Z. (2021). Importance of Guidance and Counseling in Effective Teaching and Learning in School. DOI: 10.31426/ijamsr.2018.1.9.332.
- Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). The gap between influence and efficacy: College readiness training, urban school counsellors, and promotion of equity. *Counsellor Education and Supervision*, 51, 98-111.
- Schmidt, C.D., Hardinge G.B., Rokutani L. J. (2012). Expanding the School Counsellor Repertoire through STEM-Focused Career Development. <https://doi.org/10.1002>
- Steward, R.J., Hill, M., Neil, D.M., Pritchett, T., & Wabaunsee, A. (2008). What does GPA in an urban high school actually mean? *Educational Considerations*, 36, 1, 11-16.
- Studer, J. R., & Allton, J. A. (2006). The professional school counsellor: Supporting and understanding the role of the guidance program. *NASSP Bulletin*, 80(581), 53–60.
- Studer, J., & Oberman, A. (2006). The use of ASCA national model in supervision. *Professional School Counselling*, 10(1), 82-87.
- Tantoh, M. C. (2023). Examining the skills acquired by school counsellors during training and its influence on their practice in selected secondary schools of Mezam and Nfondi Divisions of the North West and Center Regions of Cameroon. *International Journal of Inclusive and Sustainable Education*, 2(6), 166-197.
- Tantoh, M. C. (2024). The post-training needs of school counsellors and its influence on practice in selected secondary schools of Mezam and Nfondi Divisions of the North West and Center Regions of Cameroon. *Journal of Innovation in Education and Social Research*. Vol.2 No.4 (2024).
- Tatar, M. (2001). Counsellors' perception of adolescence. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 29(2), 213–231.
- Tita-Nghamun, B. (2016). An Appraisal of Effective Provision of Guidance and Counselling Services in Cameroon State Universities; Trends and Challenges. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)* 3(9), 75-90. ISSN 2349-0373
- Uttenthal, B. & Brown, A. (2006). *The Impact of Counselling Skills Training* [Unpublished Study].

Walley, C. T. (2009). "A Grounded Theory of School Counsellors' Conceptualizations of Their Training Regarding Adolescent Mental Health Issues."  
[https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/chs\\_etds/107](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/chs_etds/107)

**License**

Copyright (c) 2024 Tantoh Mengwi Claudine



*This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).  
Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work  
simultaneously licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC-BY\) 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) that allows  
others to share the work with an acknowledgment of the work's authorship and initial  
publication in this journal.*