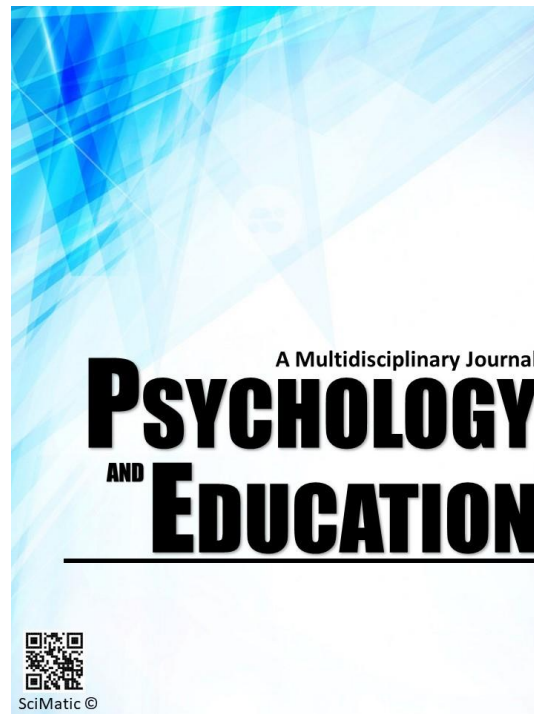


# **EXPERIENCES OF DESIGNATED TEACHER AS GUIDANCE AND COUNSELOR IN SECONDARY SCHOOL OF MAGUINDANAO I DIVISION**



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## Experiences of Designated Teacher as Guidance and Counselor in Secondary School of Maguindanao I Division

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### Abstract

This study intended to gain a better understanding of the phenomena and its influence on those who experienced it. The focal insights rose from the following: What are the experiences, challenges and aspiration of the Designated Teacher as Guidance Counselor in administering Guidance and Counseling Services. The study revealed that valuable experiences and problem mediator were expressed by the counsellors in rendering their services to their respective schools in Maguindanao-I Division. Valuable experiences involve offer advice that significantly impact students' lives by altering their view on school, family, and the future, a source of personal development and career advocates. The problem mediator on the other hand involves assistance in problem resolution. There were numerous issues reported to the guidance office. These issues were both academic and personal in nature. According to the theme, these issues were crucial to tackle because they had no idea what pupils or teachers would do at any given time. For the challenges/ problems encountered by the teacher designated as a guidance counselor, there were four challenges emerged such as Proper Alignment of Expertise, Proper Guidance office and Facilities, Multitasking and Resistant/Reluctant Client. These challenges may hinder the success of the services by the program that is vital in every school system. Lastly, regarding the teacher's aspirations designated as a guidance counselor. The study revealed that school should hire licensed guidance counselors; attend and provide training and seminars on guidance counseling; allocate a budget for a guidance office; have a proper guidance office, and fulfill their duties as designated guidance counselors.

**Keywords:** *challenges, experiences, aspiration, designated teacher, phenomenology study*

### Introduction

One of the most important services that a school must provide is guidance and counseling. Most countries have welcomed guidance and counseling in schools since it is a program designed to assist school-aged students in adjusting meaningfully to their surroundings, developing the ability to set realistic goals, and improving overall education programs (Egbo, 2015). Providing guidance and counseling within the educational system is becoming increasingly important for learning and development (Hearnen et al., 2017). There have been studies on the difficulties of implementing guidance and counseling in schools. Guiding and counseling would greatly increase if they could receive good training, as thorough counseling is essential for psychological counselors, and counselor supervisors should not be school principals (Sahin, 2016).

Furthermore, A sufficient number of school counselors should be available and suitable and appropriate facilities. Owino (2015) found that most guidance and counseling teachers stated that no guidelines were followed in delivering guidance and counseling, while others were unsure whether guidelines existed. Furthermore, teachers complained about severe

teaching loads that prevented them from consulting with others on program-related issues, resulting in the program's collapse. Furthermore, teachers complained about heavy teaching loads that prevented them from consulting with others on program-related issues, resulting in the program's collapse. Because they don't know what to do in a therapy session, some therapists are self-critical in practice and have unpleasant reactions to clients (Pereira & Rekha, 2017).

In the Philippines, because the Department of Education does not have enough certified counselors to provide one (1) counselor for every 500 students, teachers are appointed as "Guidance Designates" or "Guidance Teachers" to continue providing critical academic support to children without breaking the law. They are, however, recruited as teachers rather than counselors in these circumstances. The guidance designates anxiety about juggling teaching, administrative, and guidance responsibilities. The Guidance Designates' battle cry for the well-being of students is continuous support for the improvement of the guidance profession in the Department of Education, particularly in elementary schools (Ushiyama, 2019).

The Division of Maguindanao I have also adopted the idea of guidance and counseling in both elementary

and secondary schools, recognizing the relevance of these services in schools. Even though the primary goal of a school guidance and counseling program is to support each student's total holistic and full development in enriching his or her intellectual, vocational, emotional, and personal-social resources, guidance, and counseling in schools is fraught with difficulties. Designated guidance and counseling teachers in high school face challenges in efficiently administering the program. However, there is no existing research on the experiences of designated Teachers as Guidance counselors in Secondary schools in the Maguindanao I Division. As a result, this research is being carried out.

### Research Questions

Generally, this study aimed to explore the experiences of designated Teachers as Guidance counselors in Secondary schools in Maguindanao I Division. Specifically, this study sought to find the answer to the following questions.

1. What are the experiences of the Designated Teacher as a Guidance Counselor in administering Guidance and Counseling Services?
2. What are the challenges/problem encountered by the designated teacher as Guidance Counselor?
3. What is the aspiration of the designated teacher as a Guidance counselor to improve the administration of the school Guidance and Counselling?

### Literature Review

#### Experiences of Guidance Counselors

Like any other educational program, the guidance Program requires careful and consistent development. This ensures that the program responds to the unique needs of its clients. It benefits students by addressing their intellectual, emotional, social, and psychological needs. Today's guidance and counseling program must be developmental to assist students growing up in a complex world. It should help them develop into full human beings, capable of maximizing their potential in all personal, educational, social, or career-related aspects. The following is a review of related literature on guidance and counseling. The article "significance of imparting guidance and counseling programs for adolescent students" revealed the need to develop a guidance and counseling program to enhance life competencies and solve problems. The article indicated that guidance and counseling play a vital role in preventing school students' educational, personal,

social, mental, emotional, and other similar problems (Kumari, 2013). Takakjy (2020) explained that counselors do not work in isolation. Counselors work in groups with others, regardless of the setting. Counselors work in various settings, including neighborhoods, schools, mental health organizations, inpatient mental health hospitals, colleges, residences, homeless shelters, assisted living facilities, jails, and so on. All of these fields of study are found in communities. As a result, as counselors, we must be aware of the challenges that affect the communities in which we work. Moreover, counselors can play a pivotal role in building resilient communities through outreach. Counselors have the knowledge, experience, and training to assist communities in developing programs to address and resolve the negative consequences of events in their communities.

In a study conducted to investigate the educational guidance services at secondary schools in Rawalpindi, the main findings of the study were: that most teachers did not provide any opportunity for students to share their problems with them, teachers did not guide the students for further study, and the parent-teacher meetings were not organized regularly in schools. In the transition stage of the study, the state may create and fill the posts of student counselors at secondary schools (Asaf et al., 2010). According to Counsellors Together CIC Organization (2022), when clients share problems, counselors should listen and determine the solution to a problem shared during the conversation. The organization added that counseling is a sort of talking therapy that allows people to discuss their concerns and feelings in a safe and confidential setting. They emphasized that a person is encouraged to express feelings and emotions during counseling sessions. By discussing concerns with the issue, the counselor can help the student or teachers better understand his/her feelings and thought processes and identify ways of finding his/her solutions to problems.

While listening to them, the counselor thinks of a solution to relieve the emotions felt by the students or teachers. Just like, it can be a great relief to let his/ her share worries and fears with counselors, acknowledge feelings, and help reach a positive solution. Amoah et al. (2015) concluded that school counselors play a significant role in the total development of students regarding career choices. Because of that, career development interventions are provided to support the provision of information to guide students to make well-informed choices in personal, academic, and social aspects. Therefore, guidance counselors have an important role in advocating for broad-based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities,

which will give students increased future career options. Debriefing is powerful event support to the students or teachers is usually carried out within three to seven days of the critical incident, when students or teachers have had enough time to take in the experience. Debriefing is not counseling. It is a structured voluntary discussion to put an abnormal event into perspective. It offers workers clarity about the critical incident they have experienced and assists them in establishing a process for recovery. It elaborated that a critical incident is any event or series of sudden, overwhelming, threatening, or protracted events. This may be an assault, threats, severe injury, death, fire, or a bomb threat. All school counselors are tasked to give debriefing to students who experience any incidents that will affect their behavior, especially from the negative actions. Therefore, all incidents that happened in school need to be trained in critical incident stress management. Critical incident stress management aims to help students/ teachers/workers deal with emotional reactions that may result from involvement in or exposure to unusual workplace incidents. Hence, it is desirable that as many counselors like school teachers as possible are trained in Psychological First Aid. At least one in every school section has specialist critical incident stress management training (Better Health Channel, 2022). The concept of counselors focusing exclusively on their interactions with clients and letting change happen on its own is key to the successful management of resistance and the pivotal point of effective therapy, says Mitchell.

Conventional thought defines resistance as something that comes from within the client. In other words, says Mitchell, "If you're not buying what I'm selling, you're resistant. Those definitions have existed for years in the mental health literature. The problem with that is it makes it difficult to do something about it."

He explained that when counselors label a client's behavior as resistant, typically, one of two things has occurred, Mitchell says. "Either we do not have a technique to manage what is going on in the interaction, or we do not understand enough about the client's world to understand why they are responding the way they are. So, we label them as resistant due to our inability and lack of therapeutic skills. There is always a reason the client is responding the way they are. Our job is to understand the client's world to the degree we see their behavior for what it is and not as resistance."

Another shift in thinking that can benefit counselors is to accept that resistance isn't always inappropriate,

says Robert Wubbolding, director of training for the William Glasser Institute and director of the Center for Reality Therapy in Cincinnati. "It is a client's best attempt to meet their needs, especially their need for power or accomplishment," said Wubbolding (2022), an ACA member and professor emeritus at Xavier University. "Resistance is a universal behavior chosen by most people at various times. Sales resistance helps practice thrift and save money."

To overcome reluctance, he employed a reality therapy technique. In this technique, the counselor must assist clients in seeing that their resistance is counterproductive. The teacher and practitioner of reality therapy recommended that the counselor starts by asking clients how other people in their surroundings oppress, reject, make unreasonable demands, and control them. Counselors should interact with clients based on the client's reality rather than the counselor's agenda. In other words, the counselor may desire the client to make better decisions. Still, if the counselor does not connect with the client's perspectives early in the therapy session, the counselor may instead enable more resistance.

### Challenges in the Guidance counseling program

UNESCO (2001) prepared a Module on 'Guidance and Counselling Programme Development' in Botswana. It is designed to provide help in starting a Guidance and Counselling Programme. It stresses the importance of planning in program development and the need to conduct an initial survey to facilitate the definition of goals and objectives. Advice is given on how to design, implement and evaluate programs effectively. Teachers have multiple roles to perform nowadays. To fulfill their roles professionally, teachers need to be competent in their responsibilities towards their students inside and outside the classroom. One important teacher's role inside and outside the classroom is to provide guidance and counseling to students. Therefore, teachers as counselors need to familiarize themselves with their competencies by attending training, seminars, and workshops. He added that teachers are entrusted with many responsibilities apart from subject teaching nowadays. Guidance and counseling are some of their major duties. These two words generally take on different meanings in the guidance and counseling literature. The former refers to helping students' whole-person development, while the latter is frequently targeted at helping students with problems (Yueng, 2013). In other words, guidance work is preventive and developmental, whereas counseling is more of supportive, remedial work. Since all teachers are involved in student guidance and

counseling at school to varying degrees, there is a definite and important need for guidance and counseling training for all teachers. Some guidance teachers have indeed demanded such training for all teachers. They even thought this was "the basic requirement of a teacher (Yuen, 2002, p.175). Bilkent Laboratory International School (2022) believed that school counselors need to have an office for it believed that Guidance Counseling Services present professional, systematic, and psychological help to the students. The major aim of Guidance Counseling Services is to encourage students' academic, social, emotional, and personal development. To reach this aim, guidance counseling services help students get to know themselves better and find effective solutions to their daily problems. They also help students improve themselves in all areas and be full-functioning individuals. Counselors monitor students' development, and according to their needs, they give students necessary support such as helping them understand themselves and their needs, solve their problems, make realistic decisions, improve their abilities and skills, and healthily adjust themselves and their environment. According to the counseling Center (2022), Save time, be more productive and focus on things that matter. Time management leads to increased productivity, meeting deadlines, less stress and anxiety, more free time, improved quality of life, increased energy and achieved goals. Youth with school attendance problems (SAPs) report lower academic efficacy, poorer academic performances, more anxiety, more symptoms of depression, and less self-esteem (Kearney, 2008; Reid, 2014). This problem is also evident in the statement of School Psychologists and Counsellors (2022) that counseling is the most effective implementation to reduce absenteeism. According to the research findings of Ozcan (2022), poor academic outcomes, parental involvement, school management, school schedules, health issues, and a lack of social activities are the main factors influencing school absenteeism. School counselors can offer potential solutions, including increasing family involvement, improving the school climate, addressing health issues, planning new social activities, and offering flexible syllabus options for students.

### Guidance and Counseling Program

Teachers are appointed as "Guidance Designates" or "Guidance Teachers" in the Philippines because the Department of Education does not have enough certified counselors to provide one (1) counselor for every 500 students. This allows teachers to continue providing critical academic support to children without

breaking the law (Ushiyama, 2019). According to Better Team Counselling (2021), licensed guidance counselors are certified professionals employed by schools or institutions to assist and advise students about academic and personal decisions. They provide private counseling to students, assess their ability and potential, and coordinate with fellow professionals on student matters. Moreover, counselors are responsible for working with students who need help managing their behavior, keeping up academically, or planning for the future. Counselors also work with administrators, teachers, and parents to develop a comfortable, healthy school environment free of bullying or illegal activities. Therefore, it is necessary to attain training and seminars for counseling students. The adequacy of physical facilities is a significant component in enabling the optimization of counseling service implementation in schools. This condition is influenced by a variety of elements, including the principal's responsibility in providing adequate infrastructure in the school so that the counselor can provide optimal counseling services. The phenomena that emerges from the research findings shows that the adequacy level of infrastructure and the implementation of counseling services is low enough that it impacts the Counselor in maximizing the provision of counseling services at school. This situation necessitates an effort by the school administration to improve infrastructure quality and alleviate the inaccessibility of counseling services in schools (Verlanda et.al, 2017). There is a need and pivotal to have a guidance office in every school. According to Bilkent Laboratory International School, the major aim of Guidance Counseling Services is to encourage students' academic, social, emotional, and personal development. To reach this aim, guidance counseling services help students get to know themselves better and find effective solutions to their daily problems. Even though teachers are not hired as counselors, counseling is one of the major roles of teachers inside of the classroom or school. A teacher as a Counsellor help our student to develop a positive attitude toward all kinds of work. This can be done by pointing out the positive aspects of various occupations and negative points in all of them. This will help inculcate dignity of work and positive work values in students (Sigh, 2018) .

### Guidance and counseling in the k to12 Education Program

The Philippines, under Republic Act No. 9258, otherwise known as the "Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004," provides for a policy of promoting the "improvement, advancement, and protection of the



guidance and counseling profession by undertaking measures that will result in professional, ethical, relevant, efficient and effective guidance and counseling services for the development and enrichment of individuals and group lives. The Philippines is the last country in Asia to implement the K-12 education program.

Department of the Education Memorandum No. 25, series of 2003, states that the main goal of the K-12 education programs is to produce graduates who are ready for higher education. Guidance and counseling are essential elements in the attainment of this goal.

According to Cox (2017), the role of a teacher is to assist students in learning about concepts and teach them to apply it in real life using instructional materials. However, the role of the guidance counselor is to render their services to cater to the needs of a client/student during each developmental stage. In addition, guidance counselors have a vital role in maximizing the students' achievements by integrating leadership and collaboration. Also, guidance counselors support a safe learning environment for students and serve as an advocate to safeguard the rights of the member of the school community (West Virginia Department of Education, nd).

Furthermore, The major goals of counseling are to promote personal growth and prepare students to become motivated workers and responsible citizens. Educators recognize that students encounter personal/social, educational, and career challenges in addition to intellectual challenges. School guidance and counseling programs need to address these challenges and promote educational success. The guidance and counseling program is an integral part of a school's total educational program; it is developmental by design, focusing on needs, interests, and issues related to various stages of student growth. The scope of the developmental guidance and counseling program in today's school includes the following components (Cooley, 2010; Coy, 2004) Personal/social. Besides providing guidance services for all students, counselors are expected to do personal and crisis counseling. Problems such as dropping out, substance abuse, suicide, irresponsible sexual behavior, eating disorders, and pregnancy must be addressed. Educational, Students must develop skills that will assist them as they learn. Through classroom guidance activities and individual and group counseling, the counselor can assist students in applying effective study skills, setting goals, learning effectively, and gaining test-taking skills. Counselors also may focus

on note-taking, time management, memory techniques, relaxation techniques, overcoming test anxiety, and developing listening skills. Career, Planning for the future, combating career stereotyping, and analyzing skills and interests are some of the goals students must develop in school. Career information must be available to students, and representatives from business and industry must work closely with the school and the counselor in preparing students for the world of work.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The qualitative-phenomenological research design was employed in the study. It is explored based on the administration of the school guidance and counseling. The purpose of the phenomenological approach was to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how the actors in a situation perceive them. In the human sphere, this normally translates into gathering in-depth information and perception through qualitative methods such as interviews, discussion, and participant observation and representing it from the perspective of the research participant(s) (Creswell, 2013 as cited in Mohamad & Parcon, 2022).

### Research Locale

This study was conducted at the Division of Maguindanao I of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which consists of ten secondary schools these are Datu Piang National High School, Dimaukom National High School, Datu Unsay National High School, Mamasapano National High School, Ampatuan National High School, Sapakan National High School, Guindulungan National High School, Maulana National High School, Maguindanao National High School, and Hadji Salik Kalaing National High school. Furthermore, these schools were in Municipality of Datu Piang, Datu Saudi, Shariff Saydona Mustapha, Shariff Aguak, Datu Unsay, Guindulungan, Rajah Buayan, Mamasapano in the province of Maguindanao where the different National High School are located. In each schools, Key Informant Interview (KII) will be done.

### Research Subject

The target respondents of this study were the ten secondary schools designated as teacher guidance counselors in the Division of Maguindanao I. They were from Datu Piang National High School,

Dimaukom National High School, Datu Unsay National High School, Mamasapano National High School, Ampatuan national High School, Sapakan National High School, Guindulungan National High School, Maulana National High School, Maguindanao National High School, and Hadji Salik Kalaing National High school. The researcher utilized the Key Informants in this study. The purposive sampling method was utilized in this study. The informants of this study were ten secondary teachers designated as Guidance counselors from the Maguindanao I Division. The list of the school guidance counselors was completed with the help of their respective school heads and the approval of the school division superintendent of the Maguindanao I Division. This helped the researcher have easy access to gathering the necessary information for this study.

### Research Instrument

Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide Questions elicited data from the participants' responses utilizing the steps of Alquizar, (2018) and Mohamad & Parcon, (2022). The participants' names were coded for ethical considerations. The researcher sought a validity test for his interview questions. They were composed of 3 persons, two from outside campus, one from private and one from public school, and one from inside campus as instructed by his adviser.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher wrote a formal letter expressing his earnest desire to conduct the Key Informant Interview to qualify for his study and asked for a recommendation for secondary schools. He conducted this research study with the Schools Division Superintendent. The approved letter was sent personally to the Secondary school head and at the same time to the respondent of this study. Before conducting this study, the researcher asked for the participants' permission. Furthermore, the anonymity and their responses were treated with full confidentiality.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis started with extracting the recorded answers in the Key Informant Interview Guide question for full completion, the gathered raw data accuracy and usefulness. The data were then coded and transcribed. After which, the data as participants' responses to KII guide questions were analyzed and classified into different themes.

### Ethical Considerations

It was with utmost confidentiality and respect that this study was dealt with. The researcher had solicited the consent of the participants before the conduct of this study. The purpose was to observe and consider sensitive issues that might hamper one's personality and ego. With due respect, the school superintendent was accorded a courtesy call before the researcher was able to penetrate the locales. Anything unusual heard was just taken in silence and acceptance as this can cause harm to the informants being studied. Picture taking on the actual interview was done carefully and with their consent to show respect. Coding was also applied in the transcription and the analysis so as not to divulge the identity of the informants.

### Results and Discussion

The significant dialogue were transcribed as factual data to support this interpretation. The researcher used coding to protect the name of the participants.

#### Experiences of the Teacher Designated as Guidance Counsellor in Administering Guidance and Counselling Services

##### Theme 1. Valuable Experiences

Data revealed that all participants described their valuable experiences in rendering services to their clients. Rendering services made meaningful as they offer advice that significantly impact students' lives by altering their view on school, family, and the future, a source of personal development and career advocates.

The responses revealed that participants offer guidance to students in need during the focused group discussion. Giving students guidance encompasses not only professional choices but, more importantly, life decisions. Participants assist students in deciding what career to pursue, academic advice, personal decisions, deciding what to study, and assisting students in overcoming issues in their lives.

Participant 10 said “ *The role of the teacher guidance counselor in our school is to guide and give advises to our student on their academic and personal decisions, assist students to decide for their studies on what they want to be, to help them on solving problems that comes with their lives.* ”

Participant 5 mentioned “ *...academic advise* ”.

While Participant 8 added “ *the one who gives advices* ”

on their course choice.”

Moreover, participant 9 said *“Guidance gives assistance to the students in making wise choices, plans and adjustments as he faces the many life crises.”*

However, delivering counsel can stifle a client's development. Giving clients advice on what to do can do more harm than good. Giving guidance can make the client more reliant on the counselor. The client learns that they are incapable of making their own judgments by relying on the advise of a counselor. This prevents the client from growing since the counselor serves as a rescuer. Clients' confidence can be increased by encouraging them to trust in their own decision-making abilities (Pretelini, 2021).

Personal development was mentioned as one of the valuable experiences in rendering guidance and counseling services delivered by the designated guidance counselor.

Participant 1 stressed *“I consider this experience as my personal development and additional knowledge on dealing different behavior.”*

Participant 6 mentioned *“I considered as challenging and also it is personal development and additional skills as classroom teacher.”*

While Participant 8 expressed *“This experience gives a lot of judgements and so far I am happy that my judgement came equally to both parties as well as this experience consider as my personal development and making fair decisions.”*

In counselling, we use ourselves as the primary tool for assisting clients. It will be impossible to provide high-quality counselling to clients if we have not examined ourselves thoroughly. We require self-awareness to aid clients: embracing ourselves more fully allows us to accept them more totally (Lees-Oakes, 2019).

Career advocates was expressed as valuable experiences of designated guidance counselors in the focused group discussion. Helping students figure out their career plans is part of the job description of a guidance counselor. Whether they are heading to college or straight to work, determining their interests, capabilities, and preferences early on can assist counselors and students in charting a course through high school that will support their post-secondary ambitions. Counselors can assist parents in understanding their involvement in their children's

professional development and their children's overall growth and development.

Participants 3 explained that: *“ Ah experiences as designated teacher guidance counselor? hmmm Usually nagbibigay lang ng ano hmmm nagiging guidance advocate lang sya nagbibigay ng mga pointers sa mga bata specially grade 10, 11 1nd 12 para ma guide sila kung ano man yung path ang tatahakin nila either mag poproceed ba sila in college anong kukunin nila kasi merun kasi may training yung dati eh G110 G11 and G12 na career guidance so naka attend ako nun so usually yun lang yung ano na administered ko sa kanila when it comes guidance counselor hindi mo rin talaga masasabi na guidance counselor ka kasi hindi ka naman graduate ng guidance counselor so ang tawag sa amin dapat career guidance advocate.”*

Participant 6 said *“...career guidance.”*

Another experience of the teachers designated as school guidance counselors was becoming a career advocate advocating guidance on students' career choices. This shows that being a guidance counselor of school, the best choice of students on the courses they would use in college for their future is in their guidance. Counselor is a career advocacy activity that refers to activities that will guide secondary level students in choosing the career tracks they intend to pursue.

This situation jived with the study of Amoah et al. (2015) concluded that school counselors play a significant role in the total development of students regarding career choices. Given that career development interventions are provided to support the provision of information to guide students to make well-informed choices in personal, academic, and social aspects. Therefore, guidance counselors have an important role in advocating for broad-based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities, which will give students increased future career options.

## Theme 2. Problem mediator

In some circumstances, the school guidance counselor can also assist in problem resolution as described by respondents. Disagreements among students are common. During the focus group discussion, the participants were mostly mentioned that there were lots of problems brought to the guidance office. These problems were school matters and personal. According to the theme, these problems were urgent to resolve,



for they did not know what students or teachers would do at every moment. School counselors are in charge of assisting students in recognizing and dealing with conflict. Children are developing their individuality, perspectives, and preferences and learning how to collaborate. Conflict is beneficial, but only when managed properly. That is why teachers and school counselors must be prepared to promote a conflict resolution culture. Being solution-oriented in dealing with problems was commonly experienced by the teachers designated as the school guidance counselor.

Participant 1 mentioned: *"Good morning. Ah, in our school, the designated teacher as guidance counselor based on my experienced, I'm the one who resolves the problem between the student vs. student, student problems and the one intervening."*

Participant 6 said: *"I experienced collecting data, mediation of any issues and concerns such as student to student, teacher to student, teacher to teacher, teacher to parent, and career guidance."*

According to Counsellors Together CIC Organization (2022), when clients share problems, the counselor should listen and determine a solution to a problem shared during the conversation. The organization added that counseling is a sort of talking therapy that allows people to discuss their concerns and feelings in a safe and confidential setting. They emphasized that a person is encouraged to express feelings and emotions during counseling sessions. By discussing concerns with the issue, the counselor can help the student or teachers better understand his/her feelings and thought processes and identify ways of finding his/her solutions to problems.

While listening to them, the counselor thinks of a solution to relieve the emotions felt by the students or teachers. Just like, it can be a great relief to let his/ her share worries and fears with counselors, acknowledge feelings, and help reach a positive solution.

### **Challenges/ Problems Encountered by the Teacher Designated as Guidance Counsellor**

Guidance counselors are critical in ensuring that children have positive educational experiences. They are part of a school support team that provides both academic and social-emotional help. During the focused group discussion, the guidance counselors were asked about the challenges/ problems encountered as guidance counselors designated in the school. There were several challenges encountered in rendering service to the students. These challenges

refer to the phenomenon that counselors experience and hinder the attainment of the counseling objectives, Igi. Global (2022).

### **Theme 1. Proper Alignment of Expertise**

The lack of training was the most common issue experienced by the teachers designated as Guidance Counsellors in the school. This means that the designated school counselors did not master the competences required to be counselors. Due to a lack of training, guidance counselors were sometimes contaminated with skepticism in their duty performance. Participants highlighted the absence or lack of trainings as an issue.

To support the claim, Participant 1 mentioned: *"The problem I encountered since I was designated to this position is lack of training and seminars they do not give more emphasizes on this matters."*

Participant 8 said *"In any position there's a difficulties Yes I also encountered difficulties in dealing with this designation of course it is hard to perform counselling without licensed also a training I used to research for me to cope up this difficulties."*

Participant 10 expressed: *"In administering guidance counselling is a great challenge for me I am designated to the position without professional training and I find it quite difficult since I don't have trainings attended fit in guidance and counselling."*

School counselors, as members of the overall educational team, have valuable information to give about students' needs. Their knowledge, skills, and expertise are critical for our future leaders, employees, and citizens' success. School counselors can assist students in building a bridge to the future as part of the overall educational team. Professional development is critical in both counseling and education to stay current with trends, new research for effective practice, and learning about new and successful strategies. Staying current with evolving counseling models and enhanced approaches is critical in delivering services. Ultimately, it is the school counselor's responsibility to design and implement a school counseling program that best meets the needs of their students (<https://onlinecounselingprograms.com>, 2022).

### **Theme 2. Proper Guidance Office and Facilities**

During focused group discussion, respondents expressed no proper office for guidance counselors. This implies that clients with serious problems need to

be treated properly with privacy and minor cases. Therefore, since counselors are dealing with clients' problems, they should have an office situated in a not public place for some problems are sensitive.

Participant 5 expressed: *"The designated room of guidance counselling partly becomes reproduction center, set as office to other coordinators or shall we say it becomes a multi purpose room."*

Participant 2 said that: *"Kailangan din yung proper place talaga proper office na kumbaga as guidance counselor na proper office talaga na siya lang talaga yung andun dealing different behaviors, parents follow up and monitoring."*

As the importance of counseling grows in educational systems, so does the planning and design of appropriate physical facilities. A space for a Counsellor is an absolute necessity for any efficient counseling service. Without a counseling and guidance room, counselors or teachers will likely be unable to provide counseling services effectively and efficiently.

Bilkent Laboratory International School (2022) believed that school counselors need to have an office for it believed that Guidance Counseling Services present professional, systematic, and psychological help to the students. The major aim of Guidance Counseling Services is to encourage students' academic, social, emotional, and personal development. To reach this aim, guidance counseling services help students get to know themselves better and find effective solutions to their daily problems. They also help students improve themselves in all areas and be full-functioning individuals. Counselors monitor students' development, and according to their needs, they give students necessary support, such as helping them understand themselves and their needs, solve their problems, make realistic decisions, improve their abilities and skills, and healthily adjust themselves and their environment.

### Theme 3. Multitasking

According to the findings, respondents mentioned multitasking. Due to conflicting schedules, guidance counselors were not well planned to meet with learners for guidance, according to respondents. Counselors were burdened by other teaching loads and designations in addition to their Guidance Counselor designation, making it difficult for them to render their duties and responsibilities to their clientele. This implies that teachers assigned as school counselors have other designations aside from being the school's counselors. It also revealed in the study of Mohamad

& Parcon, the Multiple Ancillary Functions of Teachers (2022) This means their productivity was affected, for they could not focus on one task.

Participant 3 stated that: *"Ang career guidance kasi usually yun talaga ang ginagawa ang career guidance mahirap siya ma ah maaa matuloy tuloy na ma administer kasi nga yun time oo nga sa class schedule ganito may oras siya pero pag nataon naman na parang may activity halimbawa malapit yung intramurals sa time na yun malapit na ang intramurals so more on preparation so how can you administer ng ano tsaka kawawa naman sila mag praktis sila ng intramurals and then pagdating ng bahay or ano gagawin nila yung activity although madali lang naman na activity pero alam mo yun?..."*

Participant 7 stated that: *"Multiple designations is one of them. I cannot focus on guidance and counseling when I had my advisory then no seminars on guidance and counseling."*

According to the counseling Center (2022), Save time, be more productive and focus on things that matter. Time management leads to increased productivity, meeting deadlines, less stress and anxiety, more free time, improved quality of life, increased energy and achieved goals.

### Theme 4. Resistant/Reluctant Clients

The last theme for the challenges encountered assigned as the school's guidance counselor is handling non-cooperative or resistant clients. Occasionally, despite the greatest efforts of a counselor, some clients fail to behave in their best interests and respond unfavorably to all counseling interventions. Client resistance is one of several issues that counselors deal with regularly. Counselors must recognize that client resistance is typical. Its participation in the session should be expected and not surprising.

During the focused group discussion, participants exclaimed that clients are sometimes resistant because the counselor asks them to deal with an undesired agenda. They said that resistance is important that counselors connect with the resistant client to find the right problem. This means that it is suggested to connect based on clients' perceived locus of control. Many clients resist because the counselor focuses too quickly on the clients' feelings, behaviors, or sense of responsibility. If a client resists because they feel everyone else has the problem, focusing on the client presents a miscommunication.

Participant 2- *“Ok Assallamo Allaykomwarahmatollahi taala wabarakatuho and goodmorning the first question is regarding the experience of the teacher as designated as guidance counselor ah first is very challenging, bakit? Kasi ah may mga cases na yung client mo ah hindi makikinig may mga time na yung mga client mo ah wala sa mood making kung ano yung advises na binibigay mo sa kanya and at the same time may mga client din na hindi nagcocooperate, ah they are not following the instruction they are not listening at the same time ah hindi nila ah ina apply kung ano yung advises na binibigay sa kanila that's all.”*

Participant 9 said: *“It is difficult for me to discuss problem of others lalo pat hindi sila nakikinig at nag cocooperate but my strategies is to divert their attention by making some story just to motivate them.”*

Counselors must recognize that there is only so much they can do to counteract client opposition. A counselor cannot force change on a client who does not want to or is not ready to change. Excessive pressure used during a session may foster resistant behavior. However, the boundary line is not always evident, and in many circumstances, counselors will have to figure it out on their own, influenced by years of experience (<https://onlinedegrees.bradley.edu/>, 2022).

Counselors should interact with clients based on the client's reality rather than the counselor's agenda. In other words, the counselor may desire the client to make better decisions. Still, if the counselor does not connect with the client's perspectives early in the therapy session, the counselor may instead enable more resistance (Meyers, 2014).

### **Aspirations of the Teacher Designated as Guidance Counsellor**

This study found the aspirations of the teacher Designated as a Guidance Counsellor. They have their own aspiration to overcome the challenges and experiences as a designated guidance counselor, such as hiring a licensed Guidance counselor, basic counseling resources, such as files, desks, seats, a suitable counseling office, and an allocated budget. Moreover, there is a paucity of facilities, counseling offices, time, and resources. Respondents stated that students experience numerous challenges, particularly during counseling activities, that they do not respond to guidance and counseling services, and that

counselors face insufficient facilities and funding to provide efficient counseling services. Finally, guidance and counseling workers should be thoroughly trained in carrying out their responsibilities by sending them to seminars and workshops to develop their skills.

### **Theme 1. Align Hiring to the Field of Specialization**

A shortage of qualified counselors on guidance and counseling operations is significant; a lack of qualified staff forces school administrators to deploy non-professionals as counselors, which is not usual practice. The success of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools is dependent on the providers' knowledge and attitudes.

The most apparent aspiration of the teacher as a guidance counselor was the hiring of a licensed Guidance counselor. This implies that the school should request the division or region office.

Participant 5 emphasized as a request that: *“...should hire licensed Guidance counselor....”*

Participant 2 added: *“...To have an eligible Guidance counselor”*

According to Better Team Counselling (2021), licensed guidance counselors are certified professionals employed by schools or institutions to assist and advise students about academic and personal decisions. They provide private counseling to students, assess their ability and potential of students, and coordinate with fellow professionals on student matters.

### **Theme 2. Provisions of Trainings**

The second aspiration of teachers designated as guidance counselors was to attend and provide training and seminars. This implies that the guidance counselors are open to professional development and are willing to engage in counseling provided with proper training. To ensure that learners have access to guidance and counseling programs, counselors must be trained in counseling services to build knowledge in students who seek professional assistance. Untrained counselors are viewed as a barrier to learners when introducing advice and counseling services in secondary schools.

Participant 1 expressed: *“Just simply if the MBHTE didn't able to hire licensed Guidance Counselor at least they initiate seminar and trainings for guidance and counselors and also allocate budget intended for*

guidance and counselling."

Participant 6 shared that: "My aspiration as a designated guidance counselor is hopefully the higher person in the BARMM give ample attention to this areas because guidance counselor plays a more important role in the development of the students and give us training also a separate office."

Participant 8 added: "As designated Guidance counselor my aspiration is to have a smooth training and seminars related to the guidance and counseling process."

Batter team Counselling (2022) announced that counselors are responsible for working with students who need help managing their behavior, keeping up academically, or planning for the future. Counselors also work with administrators, teachers, and parents to develop a comfortable, healthy school environment free of bullying or illegal activities. Therefore, it is necessary to attain training and seminars for counseling students.

### Theme 3. Allocation of Budget for Guidance Facilities

The third aspiration of the teachers as guidance counselors emerged was the budget allocations for guidance counseling activities. Most of the respondents expressed the need for an exclusive guidance office. This implies that for the better implementation of the activities, there should be a specific budget intended for the implementation of the action plans of the office of the guidance. Expansion of the funding sources is also a critical step in resolving the challenges encountered in guidance and counseling programs. Adequate funds must be granted for guidance and counseling services to carry out most of the activities carried out by counselors. This is only possible if the program is appropriately supported. The government, stakeholders, and school officials must provide adequate funding to secondary schools.

Participant 2 pointed out that: "To have an eligible Guidance counselor and to have a permanent and conducive office and budget for career guidance and profiling of the students also to have a training in guidance counseling".

Participant 5 stated: "I wish to have a separate room exclusive for Guidance counselor in the soonest possible time, the BARMM should hired licensed Guidance counselor or else conduct training for all designated teacher guidance counselor."

The adequacy of physical facilities is a significant component in enabling the optimization of counseling service implementation in schools. This condition is influenced by a variety of elements, including the principal's responsibility in providing adequate infrastructure in the school so that the counselor can provide optimal counseling services. The phenomena that emerges from the research findings shows that the adequacy level of infrastructure and the implementation of counseling services is low enough that it impacts the Counselor in maximizing the provision of counseling services at school. This situation necessitates an effort by the school administration to improve infrastructure quality and alleviate the inaccessibility of counseling services in schools (Verlanda et.al, 2017). Since most schools have no budget allocated for guidance programs, the administrators should provide adequate funding to support the program. As indicated, this concern had been happening then.

### Conclusion

Based on the conclusion on the experience of teachers designated as a guidance counselor, it is therefore recommended as follows: (1) The School Heads should provide proper guidance office and facilities. (2) The Central Office (MBHTE) should hire Professional Guidance counselor assigned for every school. (3) Trainings and seminars should be provided for Guidance counselor to cope with the new trends and strategies. (4) Study on the teaching strategies by the designated teachers as guidance counselor. (5) Study on the career choice of the learners and its impact. (5) Coping mechanism of the teachers designated as guidance counselor.

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