

Secondary School Teachers' Perceived Self- efficacy in the Execution of School Counsellors' Roles in Tanzania

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Abstract

This study investigated secondary school teachers' perceived self-efficacy in executing school counsellors' roles in Tanzania. This was a descriptive survey research design study in which a stratified random sampling technique was employed to obtain 250 secondary school teachers whose responses were collected using the self-efficacy [SST-SE] scale. Data were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Findings revealed that secondary school teachers had low self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles. Moreover, no statistically significant difference was found in self-efficacy based on the teachers' gender, education level, teacher education training programme and in-service counselling training. However, the study revealed a statistically significant difference in perceived self-efficacy relative to teachers' teaching experience and as counsellors. The study recommends that secondary school teachers should be equipped with adequate counselling knowledge and skills to boost their perceived self- efficacy in handling diverse school counsellors' roles.

Keywords: *counsellor role, secondary schools, secondary school teachers, self-efficacy,*

Introduction

Teachers' perceived self-efficacy is fundamental in the execution of their tasks including school counsellors' roles. Self-efficacy lies at the core of human functioning despite pre-requisite knowledge and skills individuals could possess for performing definite roles (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Overall, perceived self-efficacy relates to job performance because it guides one's decisions whether to perform a particular assigned role or not, motivates an individual to perform particular assigned roles and determines the efforts to be directed for achieving the intended goals (Mullen, 2014). It also guides the choice of the roles to be performed and the degree of perseverance to exert during performance of the role (Seay, 2015). Self-efficacy determines the innovativeness and level of effectiveness in performing a particular professional duty (Odanga, Rabura & Aloka, 2018).

Self-efficacy is determined by different factors. According to Odanga, Rabura and Aloka (2014), self-efficacy is dependent on one's gender and qualification. Bakar, Zakaria and Mohamed (2011) consider graduate training programme curricula, participation in an in-service training, education level and counselling experiences as the major factors determining perceived self-efficacy. One's perceived self-efficacy is determined by scheduled time a particular task has to be performed, level of self-control and characteristics of the task such as difficulty level, demand, task environment and familiarity. On this basis, one's self efficacy is influenced by triadic relationship formed by personal, behavioural and environmental factors (Odanga et al., 2018). Thus, when environmental factors such as good leadership, good working conditions, adequate training, support and resources, personal factors including motivation and training and behaviour (inclination to perform a particular

task) are in equilibrium; secondary school teachers' self-efficacy may improve and, consequently, they could effectively execute school counsellors' roles for addressing students' needs and challenges.

Nevertheless, due to differences among individuals, perceived self-efficacies are exhibited varyingly and have diverging outcomes. For instance self-efficacy may be low or high, and is divided into efficacy expectancy and outcome expectancy (Atici, 2014; Bandura, 1986). Efficacy expectancy judges the belief in one's capability to achieve the intended outcome, while outcome expectancy focuses on the results or probable consequences of performing such a role (Haktanir, 2018). Hence, high efficacious teachers would have strong belief of their capability to execute school counsellors' roles and address students' personal or social, academic and career needs. High efficacious school counsellors have high efficacy expectancy level and spent most of their time handling students' personal or social, career and academic challenges than their counterparts who had low self-efficacy. On a conscious note, although efficacy expectancy and outcome expectancy work together in achieving the intended outcome, efficacy expectancy mediates an individual's behaviour in the performance of the given roles. Thus, one's belief to execute successfully a particular assigned role and yield the intended outcome increases preparedness to perform given responsibilities and leads to different outcomes.

Teachers with high levels of perceived self-efficacy are efficient and effective in their tasks. According to Bandura (1994) and Seay (2015), high efficacious teachers are more persevering, and can consider difficult roles as challenges to be mastered when chosen to serve as school counsellors. They are capable of planning and implementing diverse

school counselling programmes, set goals and have strong commitment to achieve the established goals (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Strong efficacious people tend to have confidence in accomplishing difficult tasks (Breyer et al., 2019). This confidence is very important among teachers because it could enable them to perform diverse school counsellors' roles despite the difficulties they might face upon appointment to a school counsellor's post. They could also be highly motivated to perform school counsellors' roles apart from teaching and other assigned school responsibilities.

Although counsellor self-efficacy has been fairly evaluated in different countries, in Tanzania studies conducted have not specifically focused on the teachers' perceived efficacy for execution of school counsellors' roles. This study, therefore, intended to unveil teachers' perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles by answering the following two specific questions. 1) What is the level of teachers' perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles? 2) Do teachers' 'perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles differ by gender, in-service counselling training and working experiences?

Conceptual and theoretical understanding of school counsellors' roles and self-efficacy

School counsellors' roles are as diverse as the needs of students being served. Regardless of the differences in context and school type, school counsellors are responsible for designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing comprehensive school counselling services. Counsellors in schools are also obliged to provide individual and group counselling; consult with parents, teachers, administrators, and community agency representatives; advocate for provision of counselling services; building

partnerships and teams within and outside the school and coordinating diverse school-wide programmes (Schumidt, 2008). Schumidt, (2008) adds that school counsellors are expected to focus on appraising students as well. Additionally, school counsellors have to serve as members of school committees and policy making groups (Sima, 2010). They should continually review the school counselling services, make thorough clients' assessment, promote equity, and appraise students' ability and interest to facilitate sound decision making for their placements and career decision making (Kumal, 2016). Regardless of the model that school counsellors should execute the roles that are intended to promote students' personal or social, academic and career development. However, this may be influenced by the perceived self-efficacy of the teacher.

Despite multiple school counsellors' roles, in Tanzania, the responsibility of performing school counsellors' roles is left in the hands of teachers who are equipped with counselling knowledge and skills during teacher education programmes. The counselling course is geared towards equipping prospective counsellors with knowledge and skills to help students solve or cope with diverse challenges. School counsellors are selected from regular staff members to execute school counsellors' roles as an additional responsibility to teaching and other duties. Although teachers are expected to be competent to perform additional professional counselling roles; often they have been reported to have limited counselling knowledge (Nkuba & Kyaruzi, 2015). Worse more, upon appointment to a school counsellor post, there is no formal training offered (Sima, 2010) to boost their self-efficacy (Schiele, 2013). This in turn, might lower the teachers' perceived efficacy and lead to ineffective delivery of counselling service in schools.

The theory of self- efficacy

In order to understand secondary school teachers' perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles, the theory of self-efficacy was adopted. Notably, self-efficacy is a theory by itself and a construct of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 1977b). By definition, self-efficacy is the belief in one's capability to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986). It is an assessment of one's capability in terms of knowledge and skills to successfully perform specific assigned roles and yield the expected outcome (Mullen, 2014). Accordingly, a school counsellor's self-efficacy entails the belief of capability to successfully execute counselling roles for students' welfare. The theory expounds that individuals perform roles which they are capable of successfully accomplishing and achieving the desired outcome while avoiding tasks that are beyond their capability (Bandura, 1986). Examination of one's capability is done by weighing the capability and the level of task difficulty (amplitude), scope of the task one is expected to perform (generability) and degree of conviction and probability to achieve the intended goal conceptualised as a force (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Strong belief in capability to accomplish the assigned roles is a major determining factor used by individuals to perform the given tasks (Mullen & Lambie, 2016).

On the contrary, weak efficacious individuals visualize failures and dwell on the challenges that could inhibit them from effectively accomplishing the assigned roles. Such individuals tend to give up quickly when faced with challenges and attribute failures to obstacles that impede them from being successful (Mullen & Lambie, 2016). To these individuals, challenging roles are intimidating which could cause stress and the risk of

depression (Seay, 2015). Weak efficacious outlook suggests unpreparedness to serve the school counsellor's post which could lead to ineffective intervention of clients' problem during counselling relationships.

According to Haktanir (2018), individuals' self-efficacy is not static, it is malleable and directed to specified roles and situations. An individual may have strong belief to perform a particular role in a certain situation but have low efficacy to perform the same role in a different situation. This is because self-efficacy is general and directed to specified competencies (Breyer et al., 2019) and is formed by interaction of four different sources, namely mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and emotional state (Bandura, 1994). Mastery experience is the most influential and effective determinant of one's self-efficacy (Haktanir, 2018). It is developed through effective training, practical experiences and workshops (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017) but it also depends on the quality of supervision offered during training. In this case, teachers could develop strong belief in capability to perform school counsellors' roles if they have already done a similar task well (Bandura, 1977b) and have had adequate supervised training.

Notably, individuals may develop and draw conclusions of their capability by observing successes and/or failures of other people (models) who are similar to them in terms of sex, age, education level, health condition and more globally in terms of level of competencies (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Vicarious experience is an effective source of self-efficacy for an individual who does not have past experience on the assigned role. Perceived self-efficacy may also develop through verbal persuasion which may be communicated verbally, non-verbally or both (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Through encouragement, support, advice and criticism,

teachers' self-efficacy may increase or decrease. Despite the importance of models in boosting others' self-efficacy, the level of persuasion may vary depending on the competence, attractiveness and reliability of the persuader. Another source of self-efficacy is emotional state. In this case, the emotional arousal and contemplation individuals make when assigned roles to perform have great influence on their efficacy. Individuals with weak self-efficacy connect the perceived failure of performing such roles with aversive emotional reaction such as fear, anxiety and the like, which in turn lead to ineffective execution of roles. On the other hand, strong efficacious people associate accomplishment of a particular task with pleasant affection and enthusiasm.

Different sources of self-efficacy are important for execution of school counsellors' roles. This is because different sources enable individuals to develop their efficacy which is very important for quality practice in the execution of school counsellors' roles (Scheile et al., 2014) and implementation of the school counselling programme. (Mullen & Lambie, 2016). Despite the importance of self-efficacy, high self-efficacy beliefs do not guarantee anticipation of positive outcomes from performance of particular roles (Bandura, 1986). Instead, they facilitate the possibilities for yielding positive outcome through the knowledge and skills that can be used in the delivery of service in the programme.

Research approach and design

This study adopted a cross section survey design in a predominantly quantitative research approach. Cross section survey design was preferred to provide descriptive, inferential, and explanatory information about secondary school teachers' sense of perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles. The design also facilitated the

collection of a large amount of data from a large sample within a short period of time (Cohen et al., 2018).

Study area and participants

This study was conducted in three districts, namely Lushoto, Ilala and Iringa Rural in Tanga, Dar es Salaam and Iringa regions respectively. The three districts were purposively selected because they belonged to the districts from the six regions involved in a pilot training of school counsellors in the establishment of school counselling service programme in secondary schools in the country (Sima, 2010). The training was done in 2003 by the Ministry of Education and Culture [MoEC] to prepare trainers of other secondary school teachers for school counsellor' roles. Besides, the regions benefited from training of school counsellors' conducted by the Ministry in collaboration with local and international education agencies and non-governmental organisations, which was geared towards promoting school counselling services and peer-education in secondary schools. The selected districts were expected to have teachers with strong belief in capability to execute school counsellors' roles because they were involved in different trainings done by multiple facilitators.

The sample for the study consisted of 250 secondary school teachers (121 males and 129 females) drawn from nine public secondary schools. Public schools were selected because counselling services are less effectively provided than privately owned secondary schools. Simple random and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select three secondary schools from every district.

Data collection and analysis

Secondary School Teachers Self Efficacy [SST-SE] Scale was used as a tool for data collection. The SST-SE was divided into two parts. The first part consisted of 10 closed ended items designed by the researcher to measure the respondents' demographic attributes, namely gender, level of education, working experience as a teacher and a school counsellor, as well as teacher education training programme and in-service counselling training attended. The second part had items which measured the secondary school teachers' perceived self-efficacy in execution of school counsellors' roles. The items in the second part of the SST-SE scale were adapted from the Counsellors' Self Efficacy [CSE] scale created by Sutton and Fall (1995) and modified by Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) to gauge public school counsellors' beliefs in their capability to execute their roles in schools. Twenty-five items were composed and the respondents were prompted to indicate the confidence of their capability in five Likert scale levels: 1= completely unconfident, 2 = slightly unconfident, 3 = moderately confident, 4 = confident and 5 = highly confident. The items in this scale were subdivided to measure specific school counsellors' role. The reliability of the SST-SE Scale was established through computation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient and a pilot study that involved 80 secondary school teachers in Iringa Municipality.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 facilitated the coding and analysis of data. Descriptive analysis was computed to determine frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations. Independent t-test and analysis of variance [ANOVA] were run in inferential statistics to ascertain the respondents' self-efficacy differences based on their demographic attributes. Post hoc Turkey HSD test was further computed to ascertain the magnitude of the differences between

group means in the variables with the statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level. During data analysis, negative worded items were reversed and the five Likert levels of SST-SE scale used during data collection were transformed into two categories: low and high efficacious (confident) levels to simplify analysis and interpretation of results. The minimum scale score for SST-SE was 25, while 125 was the maximum scale score. All respondents who scored below the mean score (62.5) were considered to have low or weak self-efficacy. High efficacious respondents scored above the mean score. The maximum scale score for specific school counsellors' role was 25, while 5 was the minimum scale score. Respondents who scored below the mean score were considered to have low self-efficacy and those who fell above 17.5 had high self-efficacy in that particular role.

Results

This section presents the findings which are categorised into two segments. Presented first is the teachers' perceived self - efficacy level in execution of school counsellors' roles, and the demographic attributes of respondents are presented in the second sub-section.

Teachers' perceived self – efficacy level in execution of school counsellors' roles

This part presents the teachers' perceived self-efficacy level in the execution of school counsellors' roles upon appointment to the post of a school counsellor. The general efficacy level was understood in two levels: Low and high efficacy as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: *Teachers' Perceived Self-Efficacy Level in Execution of School Counsellors' Roles*

Construct	Respondents		Mean	Media n	Standard Deviation
	N	%			
Low self-efficacy	135	54	1.46	1.00	.49
High self-efficacy	115	46			

Findings in Table 1 indicate that majority 135(54%) of the 250 secondary school teachers had low self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles regarding students' social or personal, career and academic challenges. That means, they had low belief in their capability to successfully carry out school counsellors' roles. However, since self-efficacy is subjective and specific to a specified role, it was imperative to further examine the secondary school teachers' self-efficacy on the specific school counsellors' roles teachers had to perform. In this regard, counselling service provision, coordination, collaboration, consultation, assessment and advocacy were the school counsellors' roles measured as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Teachers' Perceived Self-efficacy on Specific School Counsellor Role

School Counsellors' Role	Self-efficacy				Mean	Media n	Standard Deviation
	Low self- efficacy		High self- efficacy				
	N	%	N	%			
Counselling service provision	59	24	191	76	1.76	2.0	.425
Coordination	67	27	183	73	1.73	2.0	.443
Consultation	153	61	97	39	1.38	1.0	.488
Assessment	175	70	75	30	1.47	1.0	.436
Advocacy	171	68	79	32	1.31	1.0	.465

From Table 2, the findings indicate that a large number of secondary school teachers scored below the mean score in assessment 175 (70%), advocacy 171 (68%) and consultation 153 (61%) roles. Counselling

service provision was the leading school counsellors' role that the majority of the respondents 191 (76%) out of 250 scored above the mean score. This implied that they had strong belief in their capability to provide counselling services geared towards addressing students' challenges.

Teachers' perceived self-efficacy and demographic attributes

In this subsection, findings on whether teachers' perceived self-efficacy in execution of school counsellors' roles differed or not based on their background information is presented. Teachers' gender, attendance to in-service counselling training and whether working experiences as a teacher and school counsellors contributed to perceived self-efficacy level to execute school counsellors' roles were examined. Table 2 summarises the findings.

Table 3: *Teachers' Perceived Self-efficacy and Demographic Information*

Demographic Variable	Source	N	Mean	Std.	t-value	Df	Sig
Gender	Male	110	1.454	.500	-.153	248	.75
	Female	140	1.464	.500			
ICT	Attended	43	1.488	.505	.409	248	.57
	Not attended	207	1.454	.499			

Demographic Variable	Source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-value	Sig
Teacher working	Between groups	3.792	6	632	2.634	.01*

experience	Within groups	58.308	243	240		
Working experience as school counsellor	Between groups	.58	3	.195	42.6	.00*
	Within groups	13.636	51	.256		

Note: * means significant at 5 per cent

ICT; In-service counselling training

As indicated in Table 2, there was no statistically significant difference in perceived self-efficacy in execution of school counsellors' roles between male [$M = 1.454$, $SD = .500$] and female teachers [$M = 1.464$, $SD = .500$], $t(248)$, $p = .75$. This implied that male and female teachers had low belief in their capability to execute school counsellors' roles. This could be attributed to the fact that both male and female teachers have had the same opportunity for teacher training education. Although results from independent t-test showed no difference between male and female teachers, mean scores indicated that female teachers were slightly more efficacious [$M = 1.464$] than male teachers [$M = 1.454$]. This could imply that female teachers were somehow more effectively executing school counsellors' roles than male teachers.

The findings further revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in perceived self-efficacy among respondents who attended in-service counselling training [$M = 1.488$, $SD = .505$] and those who did not [$M = 1.454$, $SD = .499$], $t(248)$, $p = .57$. The results suggested that all respondents who attended in-service counselling training and those who did not attend had low confidence in their capability to carry out diverse roles of a school counsellor. Nevertheless, the mean score revealed that teachers who attended in-service counselling training were slightly more efficacious $M = 1.488$ than those who did not attend $M = 1.454$. The significance of in service training can therefore, not be ruled out since

there was some level of improvement in efficacy on the teachers that received the training. Ultimately, with slight improvement in the level efficacy, this may also imply that efficacy in the execution of school counsellors' roles may also improve.

Ideally, it was assumed that due to varied years of working experiences as secondary school teachers and school counsellors, teachers might have differed in perceived self-efficacy to perform school counsellors' roles. Analysis of variance was computed to ascertain differences between six different groups with reference to their teaching experience. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles based on their teaching experience [$F = (6, 243) = 2.634, p = .01$]. Teachers with long working experience had stronger belief in their capability than those who had few years of teaching. The implication is that, students who could seek counselling services from school counsellors with low perceived self-efficacy might not be effectively assisted to address their needs and challenges. However, despite achieving the statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was 0.06; denoting a moderate difference.

Similarly, the analysis from ANOVA indicated statistically significant difference in perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles based on working experience as school counsellors at [$F = (3, 51) = 42.6, p = .00$]. Group mean differences indicated that practising school counsellors with long working experience differed significantly in belief of their capability to execute school counsellors' roles with school counsellors who had few years of working experience. School counsellors with long working experience demonstrated a strong sense of

perceived self-efficacy. This suggested that, in the course of executing their roles. They might have been encountering diverse students' challenges, and, hence, honed their skills on possible mitigating ways which, in turn, boosted their perceived efficacy.

In general, the findings revealed that teachers have low belief in capability to execute school counsellors' roles. Majority of the teachers demonstrated low self-efficacy to carry out assessment, consultation and advocacy roles. They had high efficacy to provide counselling services. This suggested that, they could not effectively carry out school counsellors' roles to address students' needs and challenges. Nonetheless, teachers' low self-efficacy level did not differ by gender and in-service training. They differed significantly based on working experience as teachers and counsellors.

Discussion

This study investigated secondary school teachers' perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles in secondary schools. The findings revealed that teachers had low perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles. Low self-efficacy has implication for teachers' belief in their capability to successfully execute school counsellors' roles to address students' needs and challenges. Low belief in capability suggests that counselling services were not effectively offered in schools. Thus, students may be directly or indirectly impacted with diverse challenges which may not be addressed effectively by teachers through the counselling sessions. Impliedly, teachers' lacked adequate counselling knowledge and skills to boost their efficacy and effectively execute the assigned roles besides counselling (Mullen & Lambie, 2016).

The findings from this study are consistent with Hofman and Kilimo (2014) who found that primary teachers in Tanzania had low self-efficacy to implement inclusive education practices in schools due to limited knowledge that as a result led to poor practices. Atici (2014) establishes that school counsellors who lack relevant counselling knowledge and skills in what they should perform, lack confidence and consequently poorly perform the assigned roles. The same sentiment was also reflected in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory that, individuals could effectively execute the assigned roles when equipped with adequate knowledge to boost their perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). School counsellors with strong sense of self efficacy have high efficacy expectancy level and spend more time to deliver counselling services. Individuals with high self-efficacy are satisfied being school counsellors and they effectively perform the assigned roles to address students' challenges and needs.

Teachers' low self-efficacy was revealed in execution of assessment, advocacy and consultation roles while counselling service provision was the role the majority of teachers had high efficacy to execute. This is consistent with Atici (2014)'s study which establishes that majority of school counsellors were efficacious to provide counselling services. They spent most of their time offering counselling services, which as a result, led to better cooperation and collaboration with other staff members, counselling practitioners and community agencies. Additionally, Mullen (2014) revealed that high efficacious school counsellors provide a high level of counselling services to students and other stakeholders. They are also prepared to execute the assigned school counsellors' roles.

Low belief in capability to assess clients' cases or problems, consulting other counselling professionals', community agencies and advocating for counselling services suggests that counselling services is not effectively offered in schools despite the strong belief in capability to provide counselling services. This is due to the fact that assessment sets the stage for any counselling relationship (Halgin & Whitebourne, 2010; Schmidt, 2008). Assessment further helps the counsellor to identify, describe the nature of the clients' challenge and plan for intervention techniques. Thus, without accurate assessment, the school counsellor could lack relevant and necessary information for assisting the client make informed choices (Schmidt, 2008).

In Tanzania, despite its importance, psychological testing and assessment is taught as an optional course to Bachelor of Education in Psychology students only at the University of Dar es Salaam Mwalimu Nyerere Campus as shown in the University of Dar es Salaam Undergraduate Prospectus of 2018. This may suggest that school counsellors are offering counselling services without having prerequisite knowledge and skills on assessment of clients' challenges. Halgin and Whitebourne (2010) caution that counsellors who provide counselling services without accurate assessment due to limited knowledge may plan for intervention methods based on their own motives or personalities, which at times may not be effective.

As revealed in this study, female and male teachers did not differ significantly in their perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles. These revelations are similar to the findings from the study by Hofman and Kilimo (2014) who also reported gender as not being related to teachers' self-efficacy to implement inclusive practices in Tanzanian

primary schools. However, studies by Bakar et al. (2011) and Odanga et al. (2015) show a significant difference in self-efficacy between male and female teachers in Malaysia and Kenya respectively. Despite the differences in perceived self-efficacy between male and female teachers, descriptively, female teachers were found to have a slightly strong sense of perceived self-efficacy than their counterpart males. This implies that female teachers had more strong belief in their capability to execute school counsellors' roles than males. This difference was attributed to the fact that females had inborn nurturing and helping attributes, and, thus, they felt confident and pleased to work as counsellors and carry out helping roles more than males.

Despite the importance of in-service counselling training, this study found no statistical difference in perceived self-efficacy to carry out school counsellors' roles between teachers who attended in-service counselling training and those who did not. This was ascribed to limited in-service counselling training as Sima (2010) reports that there is no in-service counselling training offered to teachers upon appointment for a school counsellor post. Accordingly, the service is ineffectively offered in schools. This is unlike what is done in Namibia, where in-service training is offered to school counsellors upon appointment to boost their efficacy level and update them with evolving issues in the counselling field (Mushaandja et al., 2013; Wako, 2013). Additionally, in-service counselling training equips participants with adequate knowledge and skills to effectively perform the assigned responsibilities.

Additionally, differences in perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles based on teaching experience align with Kok's (2013) study which reported that, in Singapore, retired teachers are recruited to

work as school counsellors because they are thought to have high perceived self-efficacy to handle diverse students' needs and challenges developed through prolonged interaction when they were teaching. This is also confirmed by Mander (2013) who found out that students sought counselling services from long working experienced teachers than those with few years of teaching experience because they believed that the former had comprehensive counselling related knowledge and skills to facilitate effective handling of their problems than the latter. Additionally, Kamau, Wachira and Thinguri (2014) identified professional working experience as one of the critical factors to be considered during the appointment of school counsellors. This explains the reason why teachers with long working experience were more qualified for appointment as school counsellors than those with few years of teaching.

Furthermore, differences in belief of capability to execute school counsellors' roles based on working experience as school counsellors was linked to mastery experience as a source of self-efficacy which postulates that repeated successful performance of a particular task enhance self-efficacy. Thus, through repeated handling of diverse students' needs and challenges, school counsellors' with long working experience improve their efficacy level than those with few years of working experience. This notion was supported by Ooi et al. (2017) who found a significant relationship between performance experience and strong self-efficacy. School counsellors with long working experiences were more confident than the newly appointed ones because they had broad knowledge of students' problems and handling techniques. This implies that, through practice, teachers acquire more knowledge on how to perform the assigned roles as there is strong correlation between one's perceived self-efficacy and working experience.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings which show that teachers have low perceived self-efficacy to execute school counsellors' roles, this study concludes that students are persistently experiencing social or personal, career and academic challenges despite the presence of counselling units and school counsellors in schools. Unaddressed students' needs and challenges affect their learning and achievement of their life goals directly and indirectly. Thus, this study recommends the government and education stakeholders at large to boost the teachers' self-efficacy through improvement of pre and in-service training programmes. This improvement ought to deliberately integrate counselling studies in the courses offered to student teachers.

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