



Empowering the School Counselling Department

Thomas N O Achia

Institute of Mathematical
Sciences, Strathmore University

Statistics Lead, DGHT, US CDC-
Kenya

The purpose of education

- **“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.** Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.” -Martin Luther King, Jr. Teaching one to think critically is no small task.
- **Every youth, every child, has a work to do for the honor of God and the uplifting of humanity.** “Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the pursual of a certain course of study. E. White

Give us men!

Give us men!

Men-from every rank, Fresh and free and frank;

Men of thought and reading, men of light and leading,

Men of loyal breeding, The nation's welfare speeding;

Men of faith and not of fiction, men of lofty aim in action;

Give us men-I say again, Give us men!

The 5 Types of Men/Women: Which One are You?

Joe Martin (<https://www.allprodad.com/the-5-types-of-men-which-one-are-you/>)

Give us Men!

1. The Whiner: Give us men!

paralyzed by his past.

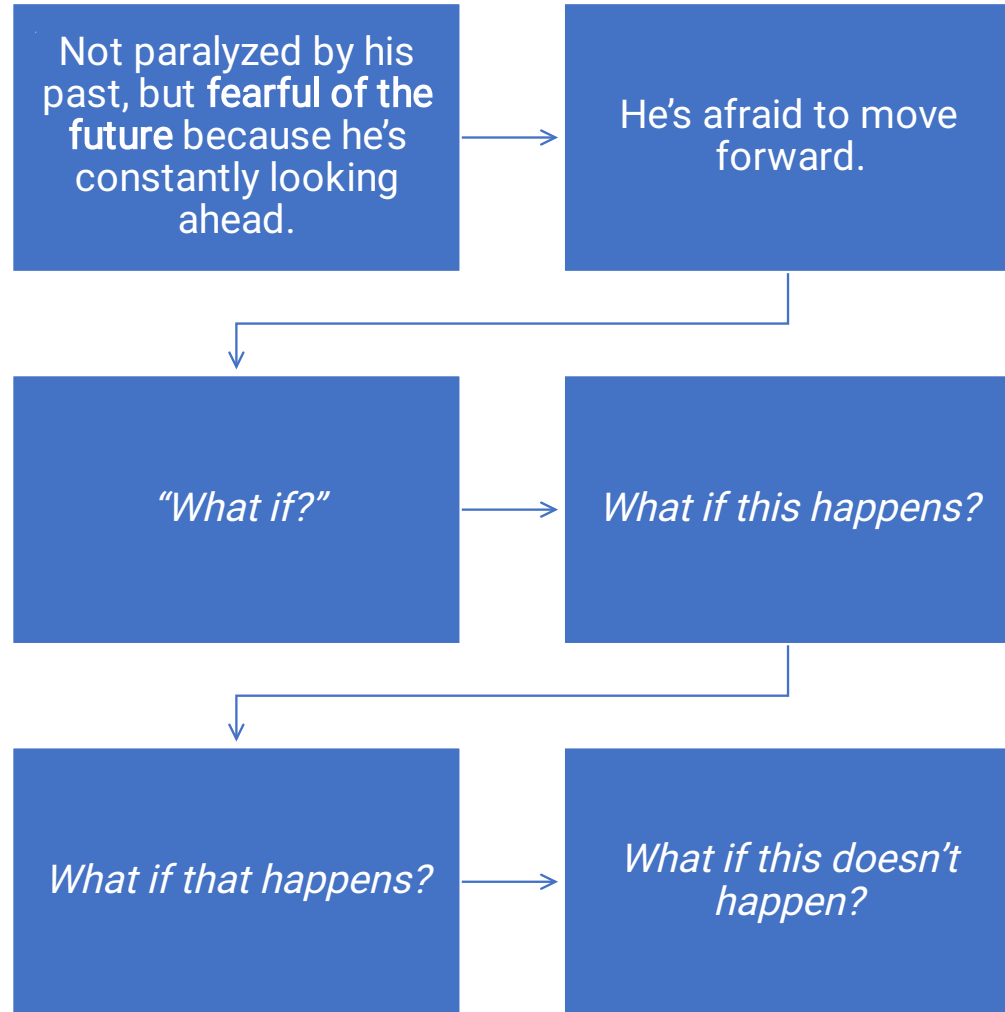
finds it difficult to move forward in life because he's constantly looking backward.

blame his present struggles on his past problems.

A "Why Baby." He asks questions like:

*Why did that happen to me?
Why didn't that happen for me?
Why him (or them) and why not me?*

2. The Worrier: Give us men!



3. The Waiter: Give us men!

indecisive in the present.

isn't satisfied where he is,

he wants things to change but he's not willing to make any changes.

He's waiting for a miracle or act of God to change his circumstances or situation.

expects to be rescued and reap the rewards with little or no effort on his part.

4. The Wounded: Give us men!

- lives in isolation, solitude, and suffers in silence.
- still hurting from his past
- feels helpless in the moment
- feels hopeless about his future.
- stuck in shame and guilt
- it's difficult for him to talk about it because he finds it very difficult to trust anyone.
- Too angry, too afraid, or too ashamed to move forward

5. The Warrior: Give us men!

- **doesn't whine** about his past
- **doesn't worry** about the future,
- **not waiting** to be rescued from his present situation,
- **not afraid of being wounded again** because he's more concerned about leaving a legacy.
- concerned more about **his character than his circumstances,**
- **his destiny than the detours** in his life,
- **his legacy more than his losses.**

The want of men

- “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

School counselling program

School counselling-For all students

- *From a historical perspective, school counselling was introduced with the aim to help the **students left behind** (lower academic performance, students with vulnerable socioeconomic backgrounds or students belonging to minority/immigrant groups).*
- *However, recent research shows that the School Counsellors must play **a role for all students**, since it is traditionally within the mandate of the School Counsellor to support the development of **non-cognitive skills** that are demonstrated to play a key role in school attendance, school longer paths and better school outcomes (“data show these non-cognitive skills matter as much as or even more than cognitive or academic skills in predicting positive life outcomes”).*

• UNICEF (2021)

Modern school counselling

- *Modern school counselling is more and more geared towards all students, taking into account that each student may face various barriers in his/her school life and has different academic and personal needs.*
- *Professional school counsellors serve a vital role in maximizing students' achievement.*
- *Incorporating leadership, advocacy and collaboration, professional school counsellors promote equity and access to opportunities and rigorous educational experiences for all students.*
- *Professional school counsellors support a safe learning environment.*
- *Collaborating with other stakeholders to promote student achievement, professional school counsellors address the needs of all students through prevention and intervention programs that are a part of a school counselling program.*

• UNICEF (2021)

Outline

- School counseling in Romania
- School counseling in developed countries
- School counseling in developing countries: The case of Kenya
- The empowered school counseling program



In Romania,
by law,
school
counsellor
must
ensure:

1. Participation to, and retention in, the compulsory education system of all children/youth, regardless of their socio and psycho-individual particularities;
2. Providing additional support necessary for the provision of a quality education based on the bio-psycho-social potential of each child/youth;
3. Providing information and counselling **for the teachers** in order to optimize the didactic-educational activity;
4. Cooperation with **educational stakeholders** involved in the development of the personality of students/youth for their optimal integration into the school, social and professional life;

In Romania,
by law,
school
counsellor
must
ensure:

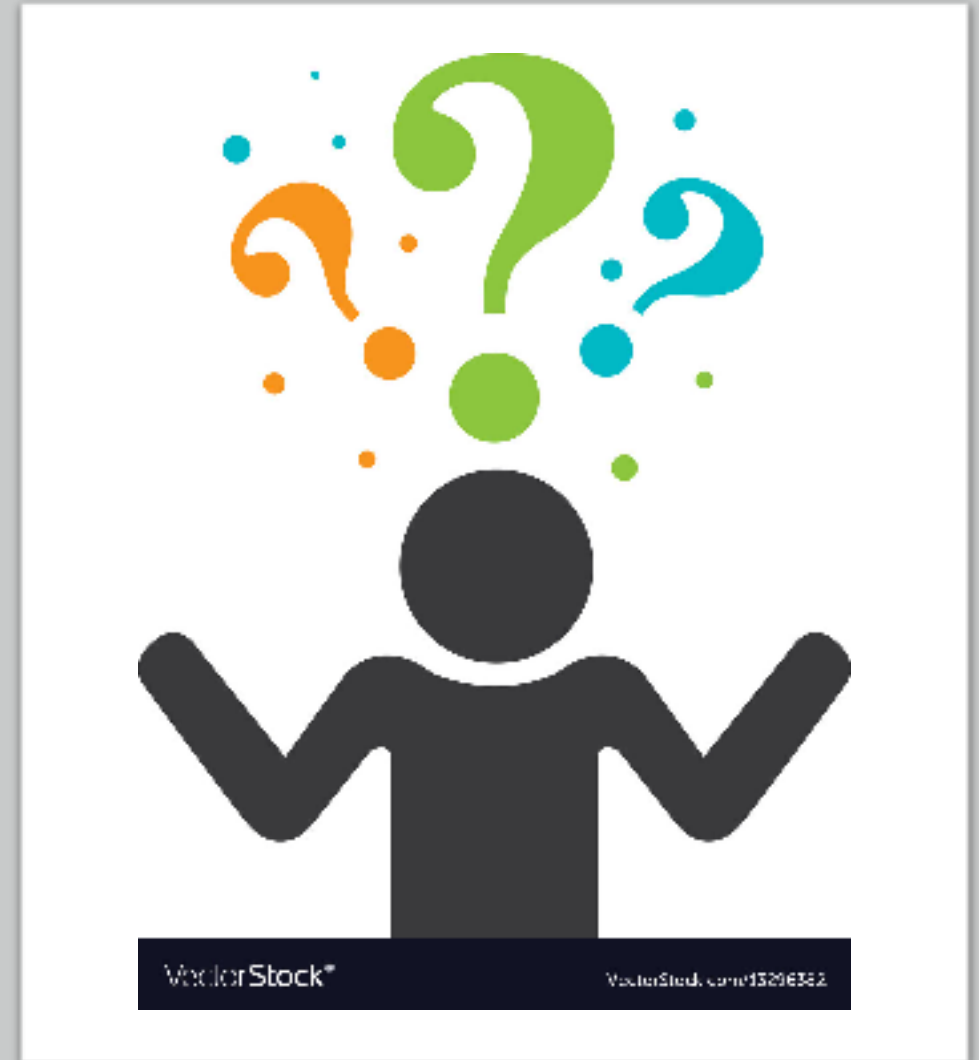
5. **Involvement of parents** in specific activities for an efficient school-family community relationship, as the foundation for the school adaptation and social integration of the children/youth;
 6. Organization of the **development of studies** on school dropout, juvenile deviant behavior, negative entourage, extracurricular activities/leisure;
 7. Organization of antiviolence programs and projects in the school environment.
- UNICEF (2021)

In Romania

- *“That is why schools and communities rely heavily on the work of school counsellors for boosting access and participation to education, enhanced rates of compulsory school completion, improved school outcomes, improved student resilience and socio-emotional skills, reducing school dropout and absenteeism and for contributing to a quality inclusive education approach and a safe learning environment.” UNICEF (2021)*
- *Empowered school counselors*

Key question to defining empowered school counseling programs

- Are school counsellors in every school?
- Are there sufficient school counsellors to match the school needs?
- Is the norm of the school counsellors adequate for implementing properly the extensive mandate of the school counsellors?
- Is the school counsellor-student ratio adequate for attending the needs of all children?



Key question to defining empowered school counseling programs

- Are school counsellors adequately trained and empowered to play the various roles in counselling students, parents and teachers and in liaising cross-sectionally with their counterparts in the child protection, social assistance, and health or county/local government sectors?
- Do they work in a school and management environment which is conducive for their work?
- Is there at county or local level a cross-sector cooperation culture and procedure?



Status of school counseling departments

- School counseling programs differ considerably by culture, education system, continents and countries
- Variations by nature of the services delivered
- Cultural or social differences
- Variations by expectations and history



In Hong Kong and Chinese mainland

Teachers use innate counseling skills and knowledge when handling students with problems and when working with the students' parents.

Many teachers in counseling departments don't not have sufficient training.

Insufficient supervision of the guidance professionals.

School counseling in China/Hong Kong

In Hong Kong and Chinese mainland

- Mental health education training, career development issues and vocational psychology are not included in the school counseling training program.
- Few counselor educators and counselor supervisors.
- Lack of evaluation research into school counseling
 - (Yuen et al., 2008)



In Hong Kong and Chinese mainland

Strategies have been laid to address these concerns

Associations/Organizations holding supportive supervision

A scheme to be established to train professional supervisors.

School counseling in UK/Australia/Singapore

Lessons from the UK, Australia and Singapore

- Combating the **depersonalization of education**.
- Counselling department focus on **social and emotional needs of pupils**, which helps to individualize education.
- Schools provide children the chance to listen to others more, assess facts, and make their own decisions.
- **A whole-school guidance strategy** is encouraged to satisfy the personal-social needs of both students and instructors.



Lessons from the UK, Australia and Singapore

- **Involving teachers and counselor in building positive learning communities**
- **Nurturing attachment to school, and promoting social-emotional development of all students and teachers.**
- **More full-time guidance professionals placed in schools**
- **Implement a life skills guidance curriculum**
- **Curriculum to prepare students for transition from school to work**
- **Provide individual and group counseling support to students in need.**





School Counseling in Kenya



Status of guidance and counseling-Kenya

- School guidance and counseling in Kenya is a relatively new profession in search of an identity.
- A “position” model: a majority of school counselors are teachers appointed to the position of guidance and counseling teacher, with no relief from their teaching duties and with no additional pay.
- These guidance teachers are given a list of duties to perform in addition to their regular teaching duties.
- In addition, counseling services are conducted without any formal organizational structure (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001).

Status of guidance and counseling-Kenya

- School counselors are identified first as teachers, and second as counselors
- The term **school counselor** has not been adopted in Kenya; instead school counselors are referred to as “**teacher-counselors**”, “**guidance counselors**,” or “**guidance and counseling teachers**.”
- School counseling is yet to be recognized as a profession in its own right: a service ancillary to other educational programs.
- Lack of professional identity: Kenyan school counselors are struggling with role definition.
 - Wambu, G. W., & Fisher, T. A. (2015)

Challenges and lessons from Kenya

- The role of school counselors is unclear to the consumers of counseling services.
- A majority of school counselors still have teaching responsibilities over and above counseling duties.
- Dual responsibility leaves the school counselor with very limited time to provide counseling services to students.
- Wambu, G. W., & Fisher, T. A. (2015)



Challenges and lessons from Kenya

- Ethical violations of dual relationships with students: a student in a counseling session, while the same teacher is in charge of evaluating the student's academic achievement.
- Some schools still have a teacher appointed locally either by the school principal or the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) to fill the position of school counselor with no appropriate training.
- Many of these teachers have only attended workshops and/or short courses (Nyutu, 2007; Tumuti). Lack of training has been identified as a major challenge in the delivery of counseling services
 - Wambu, G. W., & Fisher, T. A. (2015)



Questions based on low income country experiences

- Teaching of positive psychology concepts like increasing self-efficacy and connectivity been introduced into the life skills guidance curriculum?
- How to develop guidance professionals' professional identities, and how to effectively strengthen partnerships among these experts and school teachers?
- How to improve guidance professionals' and teachers' abilities in conducting school counselling through enough resources, effective supervision, and ongoing professional development?
- How to create an indigenous framework for school counselling program creation, implementation, and assessment?
- How worldwide publication and research may best improve evidence-based methods in school counselling. (Yuen et al., 2008)



Possible solutions

- The role of school counselors needs to be clearly spelled out to the consumers of counseling services.
- There is need for dedicated school counselors with minimal or no teaching responsibilities over and above counseling duties.
- Recruit professionally trained school counselor
- Develop opportunities of untrained school counselor to receive on vocation training
- Develop e-learning counseling courses; enrol school counselor to these module with manadtorty annual or regular refresher trainings
- Minimise situations where school principal or the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) fill the position of school counselor with no appropriate training.

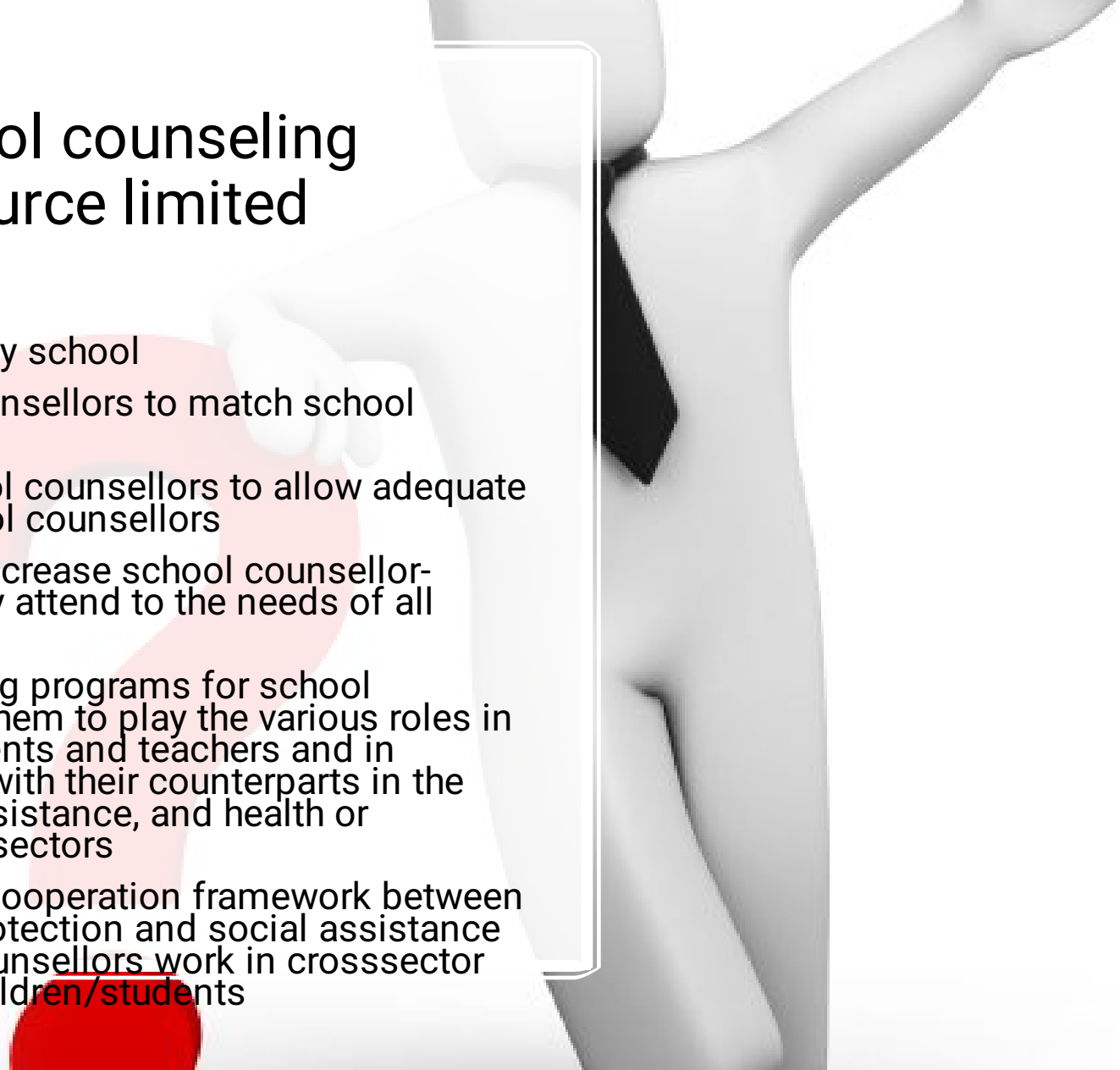


Key question to defining empowered school counseling programs

- Are school counsellors in every school?
- Are there sufficient school counsellors to match the school needs?
- Is the norm of the school counsellors adequate for implementing properly the extensive mandate of the school counsellors?
- Is the school counsellor-student ratio adequate for attending the needs of all children?
- Are school counsellors adequately trained and empowered to play the various roles in counselling students, parents and teachers and in liaising cross-sectionally with their counterparts in the child protection, social assistance, and health or county/local government sectors?
- Do they work in a school and management environment which is conducive for their work?
- Is there at county or local level a cross-sector cooperation culture and procedure?

Empowered school counseling programs in resource limited settings

- School counsellors in every school
- Train sufficient school counsellors to match school needs
- Change norm of the school counsellors to allow adequate and appropriate use school counsellors
- Implement strategies to increase school counsellor-student ratio to adequately attend to the needs of all children
- Implement relevant training programs for school counsellors, empowered them to play the various roles in counselling students, parents and teachers and in liaising cross-sectionally with their counterparts in the child protection, social assistance, and health or county/local government sectors
- Develop the cross-sector cooperation framework between education, health, child protection and social assistance sectors, so that school counsellors work in crosssector teams in support of all children/students



The purpose of education

- **“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.** Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.” -Martin Luther King, Jr. Teaching one to think critically is no small task.
- **Every youth, every child, has a work to do for the honor of God and the uplifting of humanity.** “Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the pursual of a certain course of study. E. White

The want of men

- “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

References

-
- Brewer, J. M. (1922). *The vocational guidance movement: Its problems and possibilities*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
 - Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2001). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A rich history and a bright future. *Professional School Counseling, 4*(4), 246.
 - Kottler, J. A., & Kottler, E. (2006). *Counseling skills for teachers*. Corwin Press.
 - Mbongo, E., Möwes, A., & Chata, C. (2016). Factors Impacting the Implementation Guidance and Counselling Services in Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research, 4*(5), 11–25. <https://doi.org/10.31686/ijer.vol4.iss5.537>
 - Romano, J. L., Goh, M., & Wahl, K. H. (2005). School counseling in the United States: Implications for the Asia-Pacific region. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 6*(2), 113–123. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03026779>
 - Starr, M. F., & Gysbers, N. C. (1997). *Missouri comprehensive guidance: A model for program development, implementation and evaluation (1997 Rev.)*. Jefferson City: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
 - UNICEF (2021). *School counsellors. UNICEF quality inclusive education model's. Perspective on school counsellors. Position paper*. UNICEF office in Romania. <https://www.unicef.org/romania/media/8556/file/School%20Counsellors.pdf>
 - Wambu, G. W., & Fisher, T. A. (2015). School Guidance and Counseling in Kenya: Historical Development, Current Status, and Future Prospects. *Journal of Education and practice, 6*(11), 93-102.
 - Wolfe, D. M., & Kolb, D. A. (1980). Career Development, personal growth, and experimental learning. In J. W. Springer (Ed.), *Issues in career and human resource development* (pp. 1-56). Madison, WI: American Society for Training and Development.
 - Yuen, M., Gysbers, N., Lau, P., Chan, R., Shea, P., Hui, E., Leung, T., Ke, S., Lu, Y., Fong, R., & Westwood, P. (2008). School Counseling: Current International Perspectives. *Asian Journal of Counselling, 15*(2), 103–116.