

**EVALUATION OF PEER COUNSELLORS' COMPETENCIES ON PERFORMANCE
OF COUNSELLEES AT MOI UNIVERSITY, KENYA**

BY

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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university. No part of this thesis may be produced without prior permission of the author and /or Moi University.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Bilhah Ayieko

And

My late mother Mama Peres Ayieko

Women from whom I have learned what empathy is

ABSTRACT

This study was set to investigate the competence of peer counsellors at Moi University. This was based on the concern that despite the presence of peer counsellors at the university, anti social behaviour such as drunkenness, cheating in exams and stealing still persist among students. The study aimed at finding out whether the training background, methods of training, counselling skills and challenges that peer counsellors encountered had effect on the behaviour of the students they counselled. The objectives of the study were to investigate the training background of the peer counsellors, the methods used in the training, the duration of practicum; identify the counselling skills the counsellors were competent in and establish the performance of the counselees after counselling. The study was guided by two theories: Hull's Learning Theory and Kruger and Dunning's Competence Theory which posits that if knowledge is not used according to the rules the individual becomes less competent. The study adopted a Mixed Method Approach to collect and analyze data. The data instruments used were questionnaires for peer counsellors and counselees, self assessment questionnaire for students after practicals, interview schedule for informants and Focussed Group Discussions. The research population comprised undergraduate students at Main campus and Eldoret West campus, Moi University. Purposive sampling was used to select 135 peer counsellors from the schools of Education and Arts and Social Science. These were stratified according to the years of their studies. 87 participants were selected for data on counselees, 54 participants for observation method from counselling students during their practical and 24 peer counsellors for interviews. The data from questionnaires were presented in descriptive statistics in form of frequencies, percentages and standard deviation. Results from qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis method. The data from interviews were transcribed, read through for general meaning and themes and collapsed into major themes. The data was interpreted based on findings. The study revealed that peer counsellors had some knowledge about counselling; that most peer counsellors were conversant with basic counselling skills; that some counsellors were not practicing the skills they gathered from their trainings; that most of them were weak in empathizing, keeping counselling records, assessing clients in readiness for counselling and use of referral; that some had problem of observing professional ethics; that there was poor supervision from their tutors; that they were not recognized by the administration. The study concluded that peer counsellors were averagely competent in counselling

and needed more training in the areas they were weak at. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: that peer counsellors' trainers intensify the training; university administration to recognize and reward the peer counsellors for their services; policy makers intensify recognition of peer counselling in educational institutions. The researcher also made recommendations for further research in the area of peer counsellors' competence.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AA	Alcoholic Anonymous
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immuno deficiency Virus
ICL	I Choose Life
IR	Interpersonal Relationships
NACAC	National Association for College Admission Counselling
NALAG	National Association for Loss and Grief
PC	Peer Counselling/Peer counsellor
SENCER	Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter covers background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance and justifications of the study, assumptions, scope, limitations, theoretical framework and operational definitions of terms used in this study.

1.1 Background to the Study

The need for counselling has become a major concern for many people in the world especially due to the challenges and crises they face in their daily lives. For a long time, modern style of counselling was confined to few institutions that understood its role. In Kenya, concern for counselling in the educational institutions came into the limelight as a result of strikes and the culture drug abuse that were rampant in the educational institutions in the late 1990's (Standa *et al.*, 2000). The bomb blast at Nairobi (Daily Nation, 1998), plane crash (Daily Nation, 2007) and post election violence in 2007/08 (Daily Nation, 2008) have also made people realize the importance of counselling.

Since the last three decades, many parents began to realize the value of counselling in improving discipline in schools and for the development of their children (Ayieko, 1988). When the government of Kenya outlawed the use of the cane in schools, teachers were encouraged to engage counselling as a means of maintaining discipline in schools (Kenya Gazette, 2001). With the upsurge of HIV and AIDS pandemic, counselling is considered the best method through which the infected and affected persons can open up and be helped.

Lay counselling has existed in many communities from time immemorial. Many people have often turned to these non-professional counsellors (friends, colleagues or pastors) for help especially when they are in

crisis (Collins, 2007). For the youth, interpersonal relationships which is an avenue to peer counselling is a means by which they are able to express their feelings, gain unconditional support and promote their self-confidence (Beebe, Beebe & Redmond, 2006).

Since counselling is a voluntary exercise, an individual may opt not to disclose his/her need to the counsellor for personal reasons. S/he may instead confide the information to a safer person who may be a peer or any one close to her/him. This is what the author has observed from his counselling experience in the educational institutions where most young people are.

Students do help their friends who are in need all the time. A lot of this help is through interpersonal relationships which sometimes turn out to be more effective than that of professional counsellors (Hattie, 1984). Despite the help students offer their friends, they are usually careful that the assistance does not jeopardize their relationship. Any help offered in that case is often censored and ascertained that it is safe and appealing to the counsellee. That is the reason why friends cannot make good counsellors to their partners. This kind of help in a way is subjective, neither confrontational nor threatening. It may not assist where major decisions are concerned.

Helping in counselling context means assisting clients in exploring feelings, gaining insight and making positive changes in their lives (Hill & O'Brien, 1999). Helping is a broad and generic action that includes the assistance provided by a variety of individuals including physicians, nurses, counsellors, psychotherapists and human service. There are so many people who are in need yet they do not have people who would reach out to them with some help. Students are not exceptional.

At Moi University there are peer counsellors who have been trained to help their colleagues overcome or come to terms with some of the problems that affect them socially, academically or emotionally. The spread of HIV and AIDS and other developmental issues are some of the concerns that peer counsellors have dealt with among their colleagues. Although they have impacted their peers with the knowledge of awareness of HIV and AIDS, the change in behaviour is still wanting. Studies show that students still engage in risky sexual behaviour despite the knowledge they have (ICL, 2005; Othero *et al.* 2009). It is

this slowness to change that often leaves many to wonder whether there is any peer counselling going on among the youth.

Interpersonal relationships among students at Moi University are quite noticeable at a glance. By observing the way students relate to each other, one could easily conclude that there is healthy and active relationship in the student fraternity. But this is not so, because harmful behaviours such as drunkenness, stealing and cheating seem to be on the increase. The presence of the few peer counsellors in campus seem not to be felt at all. Students still engage in risky sexual behaviour despite vigorous campaigns by reproductive health clubs (Miller *et al.*, 2008). Studies on peer counselling among university students in USA and Europe on the other hand show positive results (Baker & Gerler, 2001; Tobias & Myrick, 1999) compared to what is noticed at Moi University. One is left wondering why this disparity.

This study therefore seeks to investigate the competencies of peer counsellors and the performance of the counselees at Moi University by looking at the counsellors training background, their ability to use the skills effectively, challenges and other factors that affect their counselling. The outcome of the counselling will be evaluated by examining the behavioural performance of the counselees (clients) who are the immediate consumers of the peer counselling services

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Students in the universities face many problems as they pursue their studies. These problems range from developmental, family, social, economic, financial, health to academics (Wangeri *et al.*, 2012 ; Onjoro, 2013) Whenever they are faced with such problems, they often look for help from the nearest person they can get hold of. In most cases, such people happen to be their peers.

Noticing the value of peer counselling, a report of the Vice Chancellors committee on causes of disturbance/riots in public universities recommend that peer counselling should be established in public universities (Standa *et al.*, 2000). Although counsellors employed by the universities are available, not many students make use of them. A survey conducted by Ayieko (1997), revealed that students prefer

peer counsellors to employed university student counsellors for the following reasons: their peers understand them much better than employed counsellors; they share the same environment and therefore associate with their problems easier than they would to an older person; the generation gap between the youth and adults becomes a hindrance for effective communication between students and university student counsellors; that the adult counsellors behave like their parents and are unable to communicate with them freely.

Although peer counselling has helped to create awareness of HIV and AIDS in the universities, it does not seem to have impact on students' change of behaviour. Socially students' behaviour seems to be degenerating day after day. Drinking, theft, cheating and risky sexual behaviour seem to continue within the students' community (Atwoli *et al.*, 2011; Onjoro, 2013; *et al.*, 2012). This may be interpreted to mean that peer counselling has very little or no effect on students' performance or change of behaviour. The peer counselling program that has existed in Moi University since 1995, leans mainly on reproductive health issues, and does not seem to handle other psychosocial problems among students. Study carried out by ICL (2005) on sexual behaviour among students at Moi University revealed that 76% of students were actively engaged in sex without use of condoms despite the presence of the reproductive peer counsellors. This reveals that peer counsellors seem not to be well equipped with adequate skills that they can use to help students solve their personal problems. They require more and better skills to effectively serve their colleagues.

The student leaders, to whom most students go for assistance and consultations, are not trained to handle sensitive issues that often trigger commotion among students. They do not look effective in dissuading their peers on destructive social behaviour, despite their influence in the student's community. Leadership and counselling skills embodied in the training programme that Moi University offers student leaders; Mureithi (2012) is not adequate enough due to time and the scope of the training. Thus, does not prepare them well enough to handle counselling issues that are often presented to them by the students. This partly explains why most student leaders are not effective in handling crises in campus (Kokul, 2010).

Although interpersonal relationship is seen to be thriving well on campus, the peer counselling aspect seems to be depleted. There are no outstanding student groups that engage actively in counselling their colleagues and to assist them overcome their anti social or self destructive behaviour. A report on findings of the causes of disruptive behaviour among students at Moi University, revealed that one of the contributory sources was the absence of or poor peer counselling (Kembo Sure *et al.*, 2004).

Observing how peer counselling is conducted in the Western countries (USA, Canada and Europe), one is left with the impression that it has a lot of impact in the students' life unlike the Kenyan Universities. It is documented that it helped in academic adjustment in colleges (Samuels & Samuels ,1975; Kauffman, Klein & Fraser,1999), improved discipline (Tobias & Myrick, 1999; Baker & Gerler, 2001), supported counselling services on campus (Frenza, 1985), educating fellow students (Bennet & Lehman, 2002) , and assisted peers on career choices among others (Diver ,1991). A question one would pause is whether it is the training, challenges or lack of competencies that make peer counsellors less effective at Moi University.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of competencies of peer counsellors on the Performance of counselees at Moi University, Kenya. The study sought to address the factors that could be affecting peer counsellors competence that could impinge on the client's behaviour.

1.4 Research Objectives

To achieve its purpose, the following objectives were formulated: 1. To find out students' opinion on the level of peer counsellors' competence at Moi University.

2. To investigate the training background of peer counsellors at Moi University.

3. To examine the duration of practicum and supervision of counselling at Moi University.

4. To identify the counselling skills that the peer counsellors are competent in.

5. To investigate the performance of counselees after counselling at Moi University.

6 To identify challenges that peer counsellors encounter when counselling their peers at Moi University.

1.5 Research Questions of the study

This study investigated the following research questions:

1. What is the students' opinion on the level of peer counsellors' competence at Moi University?
2. What training do university students undergo before they become peer counsellors at Moi University?
3. What is the duration of practicum and supervision of counselling at Moi University?
4. Which counselling skills are peer counsellors competent in?
5. What is the performance of the counselees after counselling at Moi University?
6. What challenges do peer counsellors face while counselling their colleagues at Moi University?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Although other studies have been carried out in relation to peer counselling (Arudo, 2008; Borsari & Carey, 2001; Cowie & Sharp, 1996; Frenza, 1985; Samuels & Samuels, 1975; Shreve, 1991), a study on peer counsellors competence on counselees performance in a Kenyan university had not been carried out. Standa *et al.* (2000) and Kembo-Sure *et al.* (2004) recommended that peer counsellors be utilised to reduce riots in universities. But this has yet to be realised because students continue to riot in the Kenyan public institutions (Kokul, 2010; KTN, 2012 and Ndeti, 2013) despite the presence of peer counsellors. This study provides some explanations why peer counsellors are not competent to handle such incidences in the educational institutions.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to help improve peer counselling among students. The data generated from this study would be of use to the improvement of general counselling in the university including the University students' counselling unit. The result of this study will therefore be used to motivate peer counsellors and other students who are actively involved in helping their fellow students with issues that

affect their learning. The results of this study will form part of the data bank for reference in the training of peer counsellors in Kenyan Universities. It is hoped that the findings will help the student fraternity to realize the significance of peer counsellors and hence make use of them. Continuous training of peer counsellors can be improved if there is enough evidence that they are less effective due to lack of training.

Destructive behaviour among students such as drinking, theft and drug use are as a result of peer influence (Heravi, 2004). It is hoped that the same peers can be used to instil positive and desirable practices among their colleagues if they are effectively trained. Report on causes of riots in Public Universities by the Standa Commission recommended that peer counselling should be encouraged in the Universities (Standa *et al.*, 2000). Senate report on causes of disruptive behaviour among students in Moi University also recommended that peer counselling should be expanded and carefully monitored to achieve its goals (Kembo-Sure *et al.*, 2004). A Study carried out in Masinde Muliro University indicated that students seek counselling mostly from their peers (Muango, 2008). Since evaluation of peer counsellors is important in determining the effectiveness of the service providers (Frisz & Lane, 1987), this study will generate new ideas that will be used to improve the competencies of peer counsellors when helping their clients. Suitable interventions will be made to strengthen weaknesses that are pointed out in this study. The ultimate goal is to equip the counsellors with proper skills that will help bring a desirable change of behaviour among their peers and thereby improve their performance. If this is ignored, students will continue with destructive behaviour that will jeopardize their academics and their lives. Lastly, the study will contribute to the international body of research that is concerned with the issues of human behaviour in developing countries. The study will also serve as a guide to researchers who may wish to examine the competence of peer counsellors and impact of peer counselling in higher institutions of learning.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study had the following assumptions; first, that all the participants involved in the study were trained in counselling skills; second, that the students were actively engaged in counselling their peers; third, that

all the peer counsellors provided truthful and honest answers to the items in the instruments used for data collection and fourth, that peer counsellors understood what counselling was all about. The researcher also presumed that the counsellors were competent but may be lacking some information which in turn renders them less effective.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study involved undergraduate students who have undergone training in counselling as a course in their schools or those who are in peer counselling clubs of Moi University and the clients whom they have counselled. The sample of the peer counsellors was confined to the Schools of Education and Arts and Social Sciences. The study focused on the competencies of the peer counsellors in counselling their colleagues. The factors which were considered included their confidence when counselling, training, counselling skills and ability to do referral. The study also focused on behaviour change or the outcome of the counselling from the performance of the counselees /clients. Other respondents who were involved in the study included student leaders, administrators and housekeepers.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

There were factors which under no control by the researcher could have affected the reliability of the data. Due to the confidentiality aspect of counselling, the researcher expected the caution the counselees would use when responding to the questionnaire on their performance/behavioural change. To hide their identity, the researcher could not rule out some of the responses that were not explicit as were expected. To overcome this, the peer counsellors were given many questionnaires to distribute to all the clients they had counselled. The questionnaires that were returned were the ones used for the study. The study was planned to be carried out before the participants sat for their end of semester exams, but due to changes of the exam dates, the administration of the questionnaire was carried out at the time when students were preparing for Continuous Assessment Tests. This time factor was beyond the researcher's control. The anxiety of the exams while responding to the questionnaires cannot be ruled out on its influence on some of the responses from the participants.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

Counselling theories provide a pool of ideas and helps to explain why people behave the way they do. Rycroft (1966), and Hall and Lindsey (1970) point out that theory helps to speculate reality which when confirmed becomes a fact. Theories therefore provide a way of interpreting events with the aim of understanding the reason behind that event that may necessitate counselling to take place (McLeod, 2003).

This study was drawn from Hull's (1943) theory of learning and Kruger and Dunning's (1999) theory on competence. The study was based on the following principle within the theoretical framework: that lack of knowledge/training results into lack of competence; that the more a person practices the skills acquired, the more competent the person becomes, and the less the practice the less the competence or none at all; that competency is measured by the product of what is noticed after the practice.

1.11.1 Hull's Learning Theory

Hull's (1943) theory on learning contends that learning takes place as a result of the drive (or motive), reward (or reinforcement) and the habit (connection between Stimulus and Response)

$$\text{Learning (L)} = \text{Drive (D)} \times \text{Reward (R)} \times \text{Habit (H)}$$

Drive relates to an internal condition of the need that can be initiated by several events. Habit relates to connection between stimulus and response which is learned through conditioning. Habit reflects how much has been learned. Reward refers to the presentation of an event accompanying the desired behaviour that strengthens the habit. In Hull's theory, stimulus gives rise to drive which when combined with habit (Stimulus and Response connection) arouses behaviour. When behaviour is accompanied by Reward (reinforcement) it leads to satisfaction of the need and the strengthening of the habit. When the need is met, it will enhance the possibility of repetition of the behaviour. Strengthening the habit enhances the possibility of repetition.

Hull's theory provides a good example of incremental approach to the role of practice in learning. He believed that learning increases gradually as a result of reinforced practice. This presupposes that if a person fails to practice what is learned, then chances of that person becoming competent in a desired behaviour is negligible. Using this theory in peer counselling, it can be hypothesized that if a person is not trained then s/he has no skill and is not competent enough to counsel. Further, if an individual is trained, but does not put into practice the skills s/he has acquired, the person may forget the skill hence lack competence to counsel or counsel poorly. On the other hand, if a counsellee has been counselled and is not changing the behaviour, the reason could be that the counsellor was not competent or the counsellee did not put into practice what was agreed upon. Competency in this context refers to the belief a person has that s/he is capable of executing a behaviour successfully after repeated attempts (Ormrod, 1999). A competent peer counsellor is inclined to engage in what s/he believes and can do. The counsellor in this case is motivated to do the activity by the interest s/he has. Competency in this sense promotes the interest (Deci & Ryan, 1985). A competent person is one who exerts effort in an attempt to accomplish a task persistently despite encountering obstacles.

1.11.2 Kruger and Dunning's Theory of Competence

Kruger and Dunning (1999) came up with an interesting theory on competence which states: "Success and satisfaction depend on knowledge, wisdom or savvy in knowing which rules to follow and which strategies to use."(p.1121).

In this theory they maintained that competence is based on three things: the knowledge that a person has in that domain; wisdom on how to go about an issue; and the ability to understand which rules to follow and which strategies to use. They argue that knowledge in any particular domain produces competence. In other words competence comes as a result of an individual using that knowledge effectively. If the knowledge is not utilised, competence will not be noticed. The theory further maintains that individuals with great understanding about the rules of a particular domain are referred to as skilled. The lack of skill leads to inability to perform completely as well as inability to recognize competence an individual has.

Kruger and Dunning's (1999) theory helps us to understand that if an individual has no knowledge of what s/he is expected to do, the person will not do anything. And if the person attempts to do what s/he has no knowledge of, s/he will make a mistake.

Peer counsellors who have undergone training were expected to have some knowledge and probably some skills that they could effectively use to counsel their fellow students. With this knowledge and skill they were therefore considered competent. This presupposed that those who did not have the knowledge of counselling were not competent to counsel. The study used this theory to find out whether lack of knowledge and skills in some areas of counselling did affect the competence of peer counsellors.

The researcher adapted the two theories to form the framework of the study. The peer counsellors' competence to counsel is realised when they possess knowledge, have skills, are motivated, have a strong belief or confidence and put into practice the knowledge and the skills they have learned. If they use only part/s of what they perceive to know about counselling, their competence will be incomplete. To be able to counsel effectively requires regular individual practice of what has been learned. Anderson (1990) posits that the more frequently information is used and practiced the more retention it gains and the more it will be associated with the memory and strengthen the association. The study was to find out if the peer counsellors at Moi University possessed the qualities stipulated in the theories that could qualify them to be considered competent in the way they offer their services to their colleagues. The study examined the level of knowledge, skills they possessed, and whether they practiced what they learned. Competency of an individual is measured by the product or the outcome of their effort. Assessment on the counsellee behavioural change (performance) also helps in the evaluation of the competency. In the case of this study the performance of the clients after counselling gave indicators as to whether the peer counsellors were competent.

1.12. Conceptual Framework

The model in figure 1 below illustrates factors that contribute to development of a peer counsellor's competence.

MODEL OF COMPETENCE

Figure 1.1 Factors that contribute to Peer counsellor's Competence

Source: (Ayieko, 2013)

The model illustrates how competence is developed. Competence is a combination of the following factors: knowledge through training, skills acquired through training, motivation to use the knowledge and the skills, the belief or the confidence in using the skills and the practice of the skills. Any one of the above alone cannot produce competence. Knowledge without application of skills cannot produce competence. Equally, if the skills are not put into practice they will not produce competence. It is the combination of all the factors that lead to competency. In the context of this study, the peer counsellors were expected to possess all the factors associated with competence to be able to counsel their clients effectively.

1.13 Operational Definition of Terms

The terms defined here apply specifically to the study and may not bear the same meanings as the ones found in the dictionary.

Counselee: A student who is being counselled by the peer counsellor.

Competence: This is the confidence, knowledge, skills and the belief a student possesses that assists him or her to help the other effectively.

- Evaluation:** This is the assessment of the information gathered about students and the programme for interpretation and making judgement for decision and future action.
- Helping Relationship:** A situation or a condition whereby a student who is experienced assists other who is not.
- Interpersonal Relationship:** This is the way in which two students relate with each other in terms of talking, sharing, socializing and communicate in general.
- Peer:** This is a student who is of the same age, year of study or of the same social status.
- Peer Counselling:** Peer counselling in this study is considered as the non professional helping relationship that students engage in during their interaction.
- Peer Counsellor:** This is a trained student who is able to advise as well as counsel his/her fellow students in a non- professional setting.
- Peer Educator:** A trained student in reproductive health from a specific target group and endowed with the task of educating his/her peers.
- Performance:** A change of behaviour that is noticed in the counsellee who has attended counselling sessions with a peer counsellor.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews literature by various authors on topics related to this study. First is a review on interpersonal relationships and its relevance to peer counselling in helping students resolve issues among themselves. Second, is general literature on peer counselling in areas related to this study: training of peer counsellors; supervision; benefits of peer counselling; performance/behaviour change of clients; challenges encountered by counsellors and competence of peer counsellors. Lastly, is a review of studies related to evaluation of competence of peer counsellors.

2.1 Introduction

Often when students interact with each other freely on campus, the assumption is that all is well and that they have no struggles among themselves. Sometimes it is also presumed that these interactions solve most of the challenges they go through. Study by Heravi (2004) show that although campus life may look sociable for most students, there are some who go through it painfully. The subject of interpersonal relationships has been included in the literature review because of the role it plays in student's life. One cannot talk of peer relationships without mentioning interpersonal relationships. Peer relationships and counselling are best understood from the context of what takes place in interpersonal relationships. The literature on interpersonal relationships is to help us understand some of the reasons why students may or may not prefer peer counselling. If they are able to solve their issues then there would be no need of peer counselling. Since students' life involves a lot of interaction among themselves, it is worth understanding what happens in these interpersonal relationships in terms of benefits, challenges and conflict resolution. Peer counselling in campus therefore cannot be discussed in isolation of interpersonal relationships. One needs to understand how the interpersonal relationships operate and how counselling comes in to assist or improve that relationship.

2.2 Role of Interpersonal Relationship (IR) in Peer Counselling

Interpersonal relationship is defined as a connection people have as a result of interpersonal communication between themselves. This communication is transactional in nature, in that it affects the individuals in different ways and also involves mutual influence for the purpose of managing the relationships (Beebe *et al.*, 2006). Among the students in the University, there exist two types of interpersonal relationships: relationship by circumstances (classmates) and relationship by choice- mainly from friends (Halonen & Santock, 1999). In these two types of relationships, students communicate differently. The way a student will communicate to a classmate is not the same as s/he will talk to a friend. This makes interpersonal relationship dynamic in that it does not operate the same way with all people. This relationship is strengthened by friendship- that is a relationship that exists where two people who share common history or social standing often share good and bad times together (Argyle, 1991).

Friendship is based on indirect need of reciprocity with the aim of helping one another. Studies show that people, who are helpful, friendly and interactive, are usually accepted at all ages and somehow turn out to be of great use to their peers (Corrie & Asher, 1990). Friendship is thus valued a lot by students. This is why Allport (1954) points out that intimacy reduces prejudices and creates a common culture that affects the members of the group. The function of friendship is to help individuals cope with stress, care for physical needs, shape attitudes and beliefs, enjoy life, boost self esteem through encouragement, help cope with uncertainty and also influence behaviour. Its absence in some people creates a state of dissonance that may necessitate some counselling. Social psychologists thus believe that interpersonal influence affect the behaviour of an individual especially if the influence is through the significant other (Halonen & Santrock, 1999). That is why Dickens and Perlman (1981), consider peer relationship as the most important social influence of behaviour in adolescence.

One of the most valued aspects of IR by students is the level of intimacy (this is the degree to which a person's sense of self is accepted and confirmed by the other person in a relationship). To many university students, intimacy in a relationship seems to be the heart of that relationship. This can be

noticed in the manner in which they carry themselves on campus, usually in pairs or in groups of very close friends (a behaviour that is not approved by many adults). Beebe *et al.*, (2006) points out that what makes the relationships more intimate is the ability to be open and feel accepted and loved by the other person. Some of the qualities of interpersonal intimacy which are common among students include: feeling of closeness, sharing one's innermost thoughts, mutual appreciation, support, emotional bonding, openness and honesty affection and warmth. Students value an intimate relationship because it is from there that they derive social and psychological support (Knobloch & Solomon, 2002). Intimate relationship drives them to open up and share their personal issues and thereby get the necessary help, hence the value of peer counselling. It is this relationship that makes them feel closer to each other and see no reason of seeking counselling from adults. This could easily explain why students share with their friends personal issues that affect them instead of utilizing employed University Student counsellors (Ayieko, 1997; Sikolia & Lutomia, 2002).

2.3 Managing conflicts in interpersonal relationships

When people are in a relationship, they usually assume that all will be well and end up well without any conflict. Since life is dynamic, any relationship is bound to have some aberration here and there. Our movements, speech and interaction affect others positively and negatively. Whenever we are affected we react, and this may lead to conflict. Adler and Towne (1987) argue that every relationship of any depth has conflict. That, no matter how close and compatible people are there will be times when their ideas or actions will not match. They further maintain that conflict is a fact of life. In campus, students often find themselves in conflict. Some of the causes of conflicts among students in campus are: deception (Daly & Wiemann, 1994), messages that hurt feelings (Vangelisti, 1994) and aggression (Infante & Wigley, 1986; Kazoleas, 1993). And the way they handle these conflicts determines whether the relationship will last or not.

People use different methods of coping with conflicts in relationships. Whichever method is used, the ultimate aim is to help the relationship not to severe. Kilmann and Thomas (1975) point

out that there are five common management coping styles that people use whenever they are in conflict. These are avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration.

Avoidance, sometimes referred to as 'lose-lose' is an approach individuals use to back off and try to step out of the conflict. In this approach the person wishes that the conflict would go away by itself, without him/her confronting it. Beebe *et al.*, (2006) points out that people who use this style are those who do not want to hurt the feelings of others. This style of coping is common in campus where a student may not wish to lose their close friends. The problem with this approach is that the aggrieved student may just be tolerating the relationship for his /her own benefit but not that the problem has been solved. People who use it sometimes are termed as weak and yet that may not be the case. To them it is just a way of coping with the conflict in a relationship.

Accommodation style sometimes referred to as 'lose-win' approach (Beebe *et al.*, 2006) is a type of managing conflict that is noticeable among students who are hero worshippers. This is where a student gives in to demands of others even if s/he does not like it. The student gives in because of fear of being rejected if s/he does not comply. Sometimes accommodative people do so because they want others to like them. Such students prefer to lose their right but be able to please others. The danger with this coping style is that students lose their power of being assertive hence give others advantage to exploit their vulnerability.

Competition style of conflict management (Beebe *et al.*, 2006), is where a student competes to win a conflict at the expense of others. In this style a student always desires to control others. And if s/he does not win, s/he will resort to warn or threaten the other (Swingle, 1970). This approach is often noticed in senior students when relating to the first years. Since most freshmen are usually naive about the rules governing students conduct in the campus, their seniors take advantage of their ignorance and threaten them when the relationship has turned sour. This style is sometimes referred to as a 'win – lose' approach to conflict.

Compromise style, is where students try to find a middle ground where each will be comfortable. In this situation, each one loses and gains something simultaneously. This is the 'lose – win' approach to conflict. But Filley (1975) points out that although compromise may be best in some conflicts, it is often not the best option to settle dispute in the interpersonal relationships.

Collaboration style of managing conflict involves use of discussion, questions, brainstorming and decision making (Fisher & Ury, 1988). In this style the feelings and values of all involved are taken into consideration. This is the 'win-win' approach to conflict. To most people this style seems to be the best in managing interpersonal conflicts. For most of students this style is often achieved when a third party is involved, who usually happens to be either the Dean of students or the Students counsellor. Good as this style may seem to be, Cramer (2000) in his detailed research concluded that even this style is still not familiar to many people because it is time consuming and can be manipulated by another person for his/her own good.

None of the conflict management styles that students use in order to resolve interpersonal conflicts, has been found to satisfy or solve the problems conclusively. Beebe *et al.*, (2006,) summarizes it thus: "There is no single conflict management style that 'works' in all situations", (p.236). This means that for students to live in harmony among themselves they need to go beyond the different coping styles and utilize other means within their reach.

Perhaps one of the ways of managing conflict effectively could be to combine the collaborative style with counselling especially in circumstances where an individual feels that s/he is not satisfied with the outcome. Where all options and skills have been used to resolve relationship problems have failed, individuals may need to focus on the specific concerns, needs and issues that cause the problem. When this approach is adopted, then counselling becomes a valuable tool of helping the relationship. Beebe *et al.*, (2006) proposes that where all options have been utilized and no single solution is forthcoming professional counselling may be the best to resolve the problem.

The literature on interpersonal conflicts has been reviewed in depth because of the part it plays in resolving conflicts among students. If students learned how to resolve their personal conflicts amicably without hurting each other, then there would be no need of using peer counsellors to assist them. But from the foregoing it is observed that despite different conflict management styles that people use, not one of them helps to solve the problems permanently. There is always a need to compliment one with another. It is in this respect that peer counselling comes in to assist students where the other coping styles have not been successful (Kokul, 2010; Nyaga, 2011)

2.4 Peer Counselling (PC)

Counselling is defined as a relationship between a trained counsellor and a client whereby the client is helped to understand and clarify his/her views of lifestyle and learns to reach the determined goals through meaningful informed choices (Burks & Steffire, 1979). Peer counselling is an ongoing helping relationship that exists in all ages and is usually based on equitable exchanges between individuals who share equal power base (Shantz & Hortup, 1992).

Counselling is not restricted to professional providers only; even those who are not trained for the profession can also offer the same service. For example, a student giving an emotional support to a colleague and uses counselling skills can be said to be counselling his/her friend although s/he is not a counsellor (McLeod, 2003). Many people support lay counsellors by arguing that a well chosen lay counsellor with a long period of helping others, can function effectively as a trained one (Welter, 1990). Kelsey (1981), in support of what peer counsellors do, argues that lay volunteers have the time and qualities of character to prove that they care. With the knowledge of the community that they serve, they can tide well with their clients. Peer counselling in this study is that relationship between students whereby one who is a non-professional uses counselling skills to help the other understand, clarify their problems and be able to learn how to cope with them. The goal of peer counsellors is to encourage clients to become self-advocate and demand their rights to become psychologically healthy instead of depending on others all the time when they are in crisis.

A peer counsellor is a paraprofessional who does not have professional training and has been selected from a group, trained and given supervision to perform some key functions that are generally performed by a professional counsellor (Mamarcher, 1981). In the case of Moi University, these are students who have been trained and equipped with counselling skills in order to help their colleagues who could be experiencing some challenges they are unable to cope with. Peer counsellors have been used in direct helping relationships (based on the research on paraprofessional effectiveness) and it has been found that they can be as effective as professionals in bringing positive change(s) to their clients (Hoffman & Warner, 1976). The most effective peer counsellors are those who have undergone some kind of training. These are the ones who have been exposed into both didactic and experiential training under supervision. According to Arudo (2008), peer counsellors are students who are appointed by their colleagues or administration to be a link between individual students and the administration. These students are trained and supervised by professionals in order to function effectively. A peer counsellor therefore should be a student who has volunteered to help others adjust and cope with issues that interfere with their well being while on campus.

The value of the service Peer counsellors render to the University cannot be underestimated. However, their ability to serve others needs to be evaluated in order to help them do their work effectively. To assume that they are great helpers without finding out what actually goes on may not be expedient to both the counsellors and their clients. Competence in any task is what helps to produce desired values. Through evaluation, counsellors are able to be helped to detect their weaknesses and strengths and thereby be in a better position to improve their services and help others well. In the evaluation, the study looked at key areas that are helpful in preparing peer counsellors be competent.

2.5 Training of Peer Counsellors

Most students usually seek personal help from their peers because they belong to the same social setting and their peers understand them better (Murphy & Eddy, 1995). Studies show that paraprofessional peer help, yields better understanding of interpersonal relationships (Brammer & MacDonald, 2003) than any

other way. Study has also shown that college students from a particular ethnic group appreciate help from students of their own community because they understand each other better than those from other communities (Locke & Zimmerman, 1987). Although these peer helpers are useful to their communities, it is recommended that in a university set up students should work with those from diverse backgrounds and expand their interpersonal relationships (Brammer & MacDonald, 2003). This helps them to have a global understanding about other people. When choosing to be peer counsellors, students are encouraged to be prepared to work with their colleagues from different communities and not be confined to their own groups. They should be informed that peer counsellors should aim to help any student irrespective of their ethnic or social background. The training should aim at producing counsellors who are competent of handling issues from diverse angles. The skills to be offered in the training should equip the counsellors to help the clients effectively.

2.5.1 Selection

Selection of peer counsellors (PC) either for training or service is done using some criteria. The advert for recruiting the counsellors should state the basic qualification for the candidates. The qualifications that should be emphasized are: commitment; availability; willingness to help; willingness to accept standards of ethical conduct; and willingness to work within the philosophy and goals of the program (Delworth & Moore, 1974). Not any student should be picked to be a peer counsellor. Gortner *et al.*, (1977) point out that the most important qualification for selecting peer counsellors is commitment to helping others and the abilities to interact with a variety of people. The other important qualification is the availability of the counsellor. These qualities help to strengthen the competence of the skills that a counsellor requires in the profession. A peer counsellor also requires a person who has facilitative skills for empathy, genuineness and respect for others. These are the major qualifications a person is required to have to be selected as a PC. The selection is done after the volunteer students have applied for the post. Selection includes interviewing the candidates to determine their suitability. In the selection, individuals who can demonstrate empathy, self-confidence and ability to accept others are given consideration (Brown, 1994;

Arudo, 2008). Absence of proper selection ends up producing candidates who may not be enthusiastic to help their peers. Any uninterested persons for counselling will struggle to be competent in what they wish to do. Appropriate selection is therefore paramount in producing competent counsellors.

2.5.2. Training

Most peer counselling programmes carried out by non-professional persons are done with an assumption that those who give the services have enough experience to do them. Though they lack formal training, they can be better understood, relate well and deal with their own disability that may hinder their optimum operation (Carter, 2000). But to be suitable helpers, peer counsellors need some basic training on how to go about helping their clients meet their needs. Training is an important component of counselling. Training is aimed at providing specific skills related to helping relationship that would make the counsellor be more effective in his/her service to the client. The training curriculum should include topics on objectives, basic counselling skills, techniques of active listening, professional ethics, problem solving, decision making skills, referral procedures, ways of establishing support, supervision, documentation and resources (Charleston, 2008). Information on policies, procedures and organization of the programme, interpersonal skills, legal considerations, demonstration or modelling skills, practicing the skills with supervision in real counselling situation and feedback, should be included in the curriculum (Frenza, 1985). The training should involve both didactic and experiential techniques through supervision (Danish & Brock, 1974).

Practice is the most important aspect of counselling. 'Practice makes perfect', goes the old adage. For peer counsellors to be said that they are qualified and competent, they must be exposed to the practical aspect of the learned counselling skills. Through practicum, peer counsellors are able to discover their abilities and to counsel their weaknesses that may require correction. The practice is first tested at the role play stage during the training, before it is exercised at the practicum in the field. Practicum gives the student opportunity to taste what actual counselling is all about (Hampton, Rhodes & Stokes, 2004). Experience shows that the longer a person is exposed to practicing skills, the better and sharper the person

becomes in using those skills. The practicum period is usually dictated by the course the students are taking. The acceptable period should not be less than six weeks of continuous intensive work.

The literature on training of peer counsellors, does not point out at what level a trainee is considered competent. Although there are assessments done after the training, the implementation of the skills are in the field where the counsellors operates. None of the literature reviewed indicated any evaluation in the field except during the practicum of the trainees.

2.5.3. Supervision and Consultation

Peer counsellors are often considered as paraprofessionals with some skills and natural helping talents of the professional. However, the skills they have need to be polished through contact with the professional counsellor so that they are adequately equipped. This involves working directly with the counselees under professional supervision during training. Bernard and Goodyear (1992) point out that peer supervision is the arrangement in which the peer counsellor work together for mutual benefits. And that peer consultation as a process in which critical and supportive feedback is emphasized. In the consultation the counsellor can accept or reject the suggestion of the others. Supervision is a way in which the counsellor shares his/ her experiences with another counsellor with the aim of getting support or assistance in the counselling process. Research gives strong evidence of benefits of paraprofessional helping when they are being supervised (Christensen & Jacobson, 1994). Supervision is therefore an important requisite for effective peer counselling.

Effective peer counselling entails frequent supervision. Supervision is increasingly important to a counsellor, in that it is a way for learning, maintaining and improving professional counselling skills (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992). Studies show that many peer counsellors gain new ideas and assistance with problem solving when they make use of supervision (Benshoff, 1993). Peer counsellors cannot operate efficiently when they do not get comments or critique about their service from others. From the

researcher's experience when supervising students on practicum, students who are frequently supervised, gain more skills and end up doing better than those that had fewer supervision. Supervision being an ongoing training process for all practicing counsellors is aimed at polishing counselling skills of peer counsellors and should therefore not be overlooked. The underlying premise of supervision is to help trained counsellors to function more effectively in their profession. Benschoff and Paisley (1996) contend that some of the benefits of peer consultation include: decreased dependency on supervisor and greater interdependence of colleagues; increased responsibility to assess counsellors own skills and those of their peers; increased self confidence; self direction and independence; development of consultation and supervision skills; use of peers as models, and ability to choose peer consultants. Supervision is crucial for a trainee counsellor. McLeod (2007) emphasizes that: "It is a requirement of most professional associations that counsellors who they credit should receive regular supervision from qualified persons" (p.507).

Hawkins and Sholer (1989) point out that the functions of supervision should be: Educational, to enable counsellors to get feedback on their work, develop new understanding of the counselling and get new information; for support, to give counsellor opportunity to share their dilemmas, problems and to deal with distress arising from clients; for management, to assure quality of work and help counsellors to plan and utilize their resources. In the interactions with the trainees, Hawkins and Sholer (1989) further suggest that the supervisor should look for issues that are related to the counselling for example: reflections on the content of counselling session, exploration of the technique and strategies used by the counsellors, exploration of the relationship, the feeling of the counsellor towards the client, what is happening here and now and the counter transference of the supervisor. Supervision has thus been found to be universally helpful and therefore a mandatory part of counselling (Feltham, 2000).

2.6 Value of Peer Counselling to the institution

Any service becomes useful if it meets the purpose it was intended for by the user for the consumer. It becomes even more valuable when the consumer (client) shows some change/s in terms of behaviour. The

performance (outcome) that the counselees display after counselling is what determines whether the counselling was effective or not. Counselling becomes beneficial when there is positive change in behaviour or positive response from those who use it.

The function of PC among others is to provide counselling skills to other students where authority or professional services may be inadequate (Arudo, 2008). According to Arudo, (2008), Peer Counsellors provide assistance to various services on campus where university students' counsellor cannot reach. Orientation of new students, providing information to their peers about college requirements, the procedures, making referrals of cases to the appropriate persons, counselling their peers, coordinating learning skills are some of the services that peer counsellors offer to the university. They also offer first hand help since they are close to their colleagues and are able to notice what they are going through. Where students are afraid of seeing the university counsellor, the peer counsellor becomes handy in counselling. Peer counsellors are very useful to the university counselling unit in that they expand the services of counselling to students in areas that the professional (student counsellor) would not reach and thereby reduce costs that would have been incurred in hiring another professional to do the same work (Frenza,1985). Peer counsellors help to reduce the workload of the professional counsellor when the population of students increase and no extra counsellor is hired for the job.

Through interacting with their colleagues, peer counsellors use unique abilities and skills that traditional counselling does not use and hence are able to capture parts that cannot be easily reached by other counsellors. They are able to gauge the needs of their colleagues in a manner that a professional may not. No wonder McLeod (2003) comments that they sometimes act as better professionals. They act as a bridge or the gap between the professional and the group they serve- in that students who cannot access a professional due to fear are able to be helped by them and thus reducing the load for the students counsellor. They are able to assist the professional to know some areas of need that students hardly communicate to the adults (Frenza, 1985). Peer counselling helps in responding to young people's priorities or issues of concern such as careers development, relationship and the like. In incidences where

students may require some experts help and not be aware of where to get it, the peer counsellor can refer them to the appropriate person for assistance. In their study on influence of Peer counsellors on social adjustment, Disiye *et al.* (2011) found out that those students who interacted freely with the counsellors were able to adjust well socially and academically in the school.

Whereas some adults perceive peer interaction as a negative social influence, Vassos (1971) describes it as one of the development methods of organizing and utilizing the resources of students and their ability to help other students become more successful in the university. Peer group counsellors have been utilized effectively in many colleges in the areas of academic adjustment, drug rehabilitation settings, and personal problems (Dietshe, 2012). Their benefits to the well being of their peers have been noticed in many ways. The contribution of a positive peer model to school environment should thus be seen as a positive strength. Research has shown that utilization of peer counsellors help students to resolve their issues than seek help from traditional sources like parents, school counsellors and others (Ayieko, 1997; Dietsche, 2012; Nightline, 2012).

Since students influence each other a lot in many areas, it is just important to utilize them to help each other in those areas that are harmful to them. Erney (1974), argues that since peer counselling is more useful to students than adult initiated programmes, it should be developed in all schools. He qualifies his argument by maintaining that training the young people to serve as facilitators can help to reduce the pressure of drug abuse in schools. Samuels and Samuels (1975) supports peer counselling by stating that although students may not be learned in the various approaches to counselling, they know how to talk to each other effectively. This is an advantage that could be utilized to help their friends positively. Sussman (1973) says that peer counselling has greater potential to promote individual and human development. He posits that it touches the student as a person, encourages self- expression and gives students an opportunity to provide significant help to others. Those students counselled by others experience positive growth due to peer influence. Some of the challenges students experience are better handled by peer counsellors (Marangu *et al.*, 2012) Peer counselling provides students with experience that enhances their

self-awareness and increase their problem solving and decision making skills. They learn to be more responsible for themselves as they develop meaningful relationships with their counsellors (Samuels & Samuels 1975; Dietsche, 2012).

2.7 Performance /Behaviour Change of the Counselees

The outcome of any activity is what sustains or popularizes the momentum of that activity. The performance of the clients after counselling is the most reliable indicator that genuine counselling has taken place. The clients, who are the service consumers of counselling, are the persons who can report on the success or the failure of the counselling. The evaluation of peer counsellor's competence to a large degree depends on the behaviour change of the client.

Excelling in academics is the main objective for student's existence in the university. counsellors. Studies carried out on the outcome of peer counselling in different parts of the world, show that students with low grades in their subjects and are enrolled in the peer programme end up performing better than their counterparts who were not in the programme (Kauffman *et al.*, 1999; Arudo, 2008; Diestche, 2012). It has also been found that the peer programme increases student's retention in schools. Arudo (2008) maintains that peer counselling programmes in schools have helped to improve the academic performance of the schools that utilize them. Making use of peer counsellors helps to reduce dropouts in educational institutions (Kauffman *et al.*, 1999). Students who are at risk of dropping out of college and fear that they may lose their education easily turn to their friends for advice and assistance and thereafter are able to continue until they graduate (Carr, 1990; Mckavanagh *et al.*, 1996). Students who constantly have academic problems, after counselling by their peers show significant improvement in academics (Reardon, 1990). From the extensive research that has been done on the benefits of peer counselling on academics, it would be prudent that educational institutions and parents made use of peer counsellors whenever their students manifests signs of degenerating in academics.

What an individual does with his/her life after college becomes crucial at the time of completing the study. Choosing a suitable career sometimes can be a nightmare to students. Students, who are not able to

decide on suitable career choices, benefit a lot through interaction with their fellow students on suitable career for themselves. Apart from helping others, Diver-Stammers (1991) states that students who train as peer counsellors, use their skills in other settings outside the college to benefit themselves and thus adapt easily in a foreign setting. They acquire leadership skills that give them an upper hand over their colleagues when it comes to looking for jobs. Students who are involved in Peer counselling are well prepared for the job market irrespective of their area of specialization due to the leadership skills they acquired when educating and counselling others (Arudo, 2008).

Noticing the influence peers have on individuals, many universities in Europe, Canada and USA have trained students to help their colleagues adjust well in the university. Most young people at the time of joining college seem to have just come from the stressful teenage life that is coupled with anxieties and fears (Feldman & Elliot, 1990). These freshmen look confused and desire to have persons they can relate to, help them around, assist and support them to get their personal identity within the campus. Peer counsellors become handy to these first years by orienting them and help them to adjust to the college life.

It has been found that students who participate in the peer counselling programme tend to personally develop and integrate well into college and also end up helping their colleagues as well. Kamanja (1998) posits that Peer counselling helps students to make informed decisions. In his study, Arudo (2008) found out that as the peer counsellors continued with their activities of counselling others, their self confidence improved and they developed high sense of self esteem. Their self-image increase as they help others. Luks and Payne (1991) in their study revealed that helpers experience improved their health through their act of helping. Brammer and Macdonald (2003) noted that when people's feelings are touched there is strong mutual satisfaction for both people. The helper is thus helped in the process of helping. As peer counsellors continue to help, they gain more skills of helping in a better way. This is an added advantage. Pope and Vasquez (2008) point out that a counsellor can help a person to change but if his/her

professional responsibility slips, it can hurt others. S/he therefore needs to improve his/her skills regularly in order to help others better.

In many educational institutions, peer counsellors act as a bridge between students and the administration, in that they are able to inform the administration of what students are going through and what they would wish to be done. Some information that cannot easily reach the administration is relayed well by the peer counsellors because of the skill in communication that they have learnt (Arudo, 2008). The peer counsellors are also involved as resident hall supervisors, class representatives, study or skill trainers, to assist the administration improve the life skills of students (Carns, Carns & Wright, 1993). To be a bridge between administration and students means that the peer counsellors are trusted by the students and therefore expected not to betray them to the administration. Being a link between administration and the student body can also be a threat to the counsellors especially when students have lost confidence in the administration (Arudo 2008; Kokul, 2012).

Discipline is a major concern for every parent for their child. In the university, students' discipline helps in the smooth running of the academic programmes and a peaceful environment for the students. The peer counselling programme plays a significant role in the discipline of students in the institution. Through their daily interactions, students influence each other a lot. The influence can be positive or negative to the student. Students who have been influenced negatively and have developed destructive tendencies, peer counsellors can be of great help to them. Baker and Gerler (2001) found out that those students who engage in the peer programme tend to have less disruptive problems and are better behaved than those who do not. Tobias and Myrick (1999) and Arudo (2008) also found out that peer counsellors are very effective in helping students who have behaviour problems.

There are many things that peer counsellors do for their colleagues. One of the major one is assist to relieve stress. A student from New York University put it this way:

A lot of times students get into situations where they have a lot of anxiety such as stress or they have issues with their roommates personal issues or family issues and maybe need to see

a psychologist. Our job is to help students prevent these problems before they happen. We go out to campus organizations, fraternities, sororities, clubs and basically any place that requires our services. We give workshops on how to handle eating disorders or any other issue that may affect students” (Heravi, 2004).

A Peer counsellor becomes handy to someone who is in low spirit because such a person finds a shoulder to lean on. The opportunity to talk about distressing subject the loss and helplessness to a willing listener helps the person come to terms with the issue and find reason to live. Talking to a trained counsellor helps clients realize that they are not alone and they learn to accept the loss.

Peer counsellors when properly trained on how to listen, empathize and relate personally to the special emotional difficulties, can help a lot of students who go through grief while on campus (Meyers, 1987). Peer counsellors help many people who have become isolated and discouraged to find reasons for living. Students who have lost desire to study or leave campus for unknown reasons, may start going out again and find value of living after they have been talked to by a counsellor. The peer counsellors thus provide the link between the client and the world they live in. Where a student has become defiant due to stress and is not willing to listen to a professional, a peer counsellor becomes helpful. The Peer counsellor should not be expected to solve problems of such a student but mainly to assist the student to handle their emotional stress in a manner that would assist them maintain their self-esteem. The relationship that is involved is aimed at helping the student take out and not to act out the stress. Talking in this case enables the student to discharge the emotions and begin to relax (Boyer, 1984).

Interpersonal and sexual relationships that develop among students in campus can cause stress and depression that may even lead to suicidal tendencies (Kamanja, 1998). This is a common phenomenon in many Kenyan universities where young people pair up for a long period during their time of studies. Whenever misunderstanding arises from such prolonged relationships, a student may decide to commit suicide rather than seek help from their peers. It is in such incidences that peer counsellor become useful to their colleagues. Kamanja (1998), points out that as a peer counsellor in Kenyatta University, she

assisted many of her colleagues who had problems in relationships where some threatened to commit suicide.

The influence of peer counsellors on their colleagues cannot be underestimated. Sensitive areas like HIV and AIDS which sometimes is emotive due to information it elicits, can easily be handled by peer counsellors than adults (Bennet & Lehman, 2002). In most Kenyan universities peer counsellors are used to educate their fellow students on responsible sexual behaviour with the aim of combating the spread of HIV/AIDS. Reproductive health programmes sponsored by 'Pathfinder' and 'I Choose Life', have trained peer educators on HIV and AIDS education for Moi, Maseno, Nairobi, Egerton and Kenyatta universities. These Peer educators have succeeded in creating awareness of HIV and AIDS among their fellow students (Wosyanju, 2003). Although the level of HIV/AIDS knowledge is high, the practice of that knowledge is still low. Report on sexuality in the Kenyan universities (SENCER, 2001; ICL, 2005; Miller *et al.*, 2008 ; Othero *et al.*, 2009) reveal that university students still engage in risky sexual behaviour. A study carried out by 'I Choose Life (ICL)', revealed that 75% of students in Moi University engage in sex and very few of them use condoms while others have a negative attitude towards abstinence (ICL, 2005; Adam, & Mutungi, 2007).

The peer counsellors therefore have been given a heavy task of helping students change their attitudes, sexual behaviour and learn to be responsible persons. Through discussions and video shows the peer counsellors strive to convince their colleagues on responsible sexual relationships (Kamanja, 1998). Although this is a challenging task, the peer counsellors have realized that their work has paid dividends especially on the few that have changed their sexual behaviour and improved their academics. The peers thus act as resource persons for their classmates on the same subject. Organizations that have noticed the power the peers wield on their colleagues, have tapped that potential and empowered them to educate other students. Pathfinder is a good example that has made use of peer counsellors at Kenyatta University for over two decades to educate students on reproductive health. It is reported that through peer education, the incidences of pregnancies and abortion has reduced (Arudo, 2008). This has been achieved

due to the fact that students feel free to discuss such subjects like condoms and other contraceptives with their peers (Kamanja, 1998). Erford, Eaves & Young (2010) therefore suggest that the peer counsellors should learn and teach a technique that will be useful to clients.

Apart from the subject of HIV and AIDS, peer counselling is of great help to students involved in drinking at the university. Students who drink on campus admit that they got trapped into it due to peer influence. This supports the findings of Borsari and Carey (2001) that peer social influence frequently involve in some destructive behaviour like drinking. Where drinking is a problem to students, research shows that support groups such as Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) have a profound effect on their peers than a professional counsellor would (Moore & Emswiler, 1982). The peer counsellors thus have been found to do a better job of helping young people who have alcohol problems. Theoretical literature on models of social influence supports peer influence as a key model of interventions on behaviour change (Carey, 1995). These social influences peers have towards their colleagues can be used to intervene for positive change. Climini Martens, Larimer, Kilmer & Neighbors, (2009) posit that peers could be used to offer support group to their colleagues who may be going through difficult times. In their research on effectiveness of peer facilitated intervention on high risk drinking, De Volder *et al.* (1985) concluded that the power of peer influence is so strong that it can bring a big change on an individual. This supports the theory that students learn more effectively from their peer than from older persons who are of a different generation. The peers are thus effective in influencing the behaviour of their colleagues who drink if they are well equipped with suitable counselling skills. Peer counsellors can affect feeling, security, perception and independence decision making of young persons. They can be used by the university to act as agents for positive change among their peers who have a problem with drinking. They could be properly trained and work along with the Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) group to help students who have been affected by alcohol.

From the foregoing literature, the clients' performances are depicted as positive after peer counselling. But there are situations where peer counselling sometimes does not help to produce positive performance,

this is lacking in some of the literature. The literature does not point out whether the positive performance was due to competence of the peer counsellor.

2.8 Challenges of Peer Counsellors

Peer counsellors like any professional face many challenges when rendering their services to the clients. These challenges sometime can demoralize and render them ineffective. One of the main challenges that most peer counsellors face in campus when counselling colleagues is sexual relationship. An intimate relationship develops when the client becomes dependant on the counsellor (Bates & Brodsky, 1989). There are some cases where the counsellor takes advantage of the client's vulnerability. Research show that sexual contact between therapist and their client are common despite it being prohibited (Pope & Bouhoutsos, 1986). This weakness that has been documented a lot is a challenge that any PC is likely to encounter when counselling a student of the opposite gender. Since most students in Moi University are sexually active (ICL, 2005), chances of a peer counsellor becoming attracted to the person of the opposite sex is very high. The peer counsellor is therefore expected to uphold the professional ethics at all times and should not take advantage of the client under whatever circumstance. S/he must take the responsibility of protecting the client all the time. The way peer counsellors carry themselves is so important because it affects the clients they are serving. They are therefore expected to relate in a manner that will not compromise their integrity. Pope and Vasquez (2007) caution that if counsellor's professional responsibility slips, it causes a great harm to the client. This calls for great discipline and diligence on the peer counsellors who mingle freely with their colleagues all the time in the campus.

Being a model to the peers can be a daunting task especially to a college student. But there is no short cut to this as a counsellor. A peer counsellor is expected to assume an active, directive and supportive role among her/his peers. S/he is therefore expected to be a role model to the rest of the students whom s/he is counselling. This becomes a daunting task especially when the peer is grappling with a behavioural problem like that of drinking. Bandura (1986) posits that one of the fundamental processes by which clients learn new behaviour is by invitation of the social modelling provided by the therapist. The peer

counsellors therefore need to be aware of the impact of their attitudes, behaviour and values they exert on their members. Their behaviour influences clients all the time. Peer counsellors need to model behaviour that will not compromise their roles as leaders of good morals. Good counselling can be marred by a leader's failure to model appropriately.

Confrontation is a valuable and powerful skill in counselling. It is often used to challenge clients who are not serious with themselves. Used properly, confrontation can help a client change tremendously. Yet very few students dare confront their friends who indulge in destructive practices. Some peer counsellors find it a big challenge to do so. Confrontation can easily be mistaken to mean an overt attempt to control clients so as to modify their behaviour (McLeod, 2003). It is often feared, misused and seen as a negative act. Corey (2004) asserts that failure to confront a person, who has a negative view about the issue before him/her in counselling, may jeopardize the effectiveness of that counselling. Individuals who have skewed approach into looking at behaviour change should be challenged to take a deeper look at themselves in a polite, firm and supportive manner. Such challenges may be misinterpreted to mean hostility or the like. Many students are afraid of confronting their colleagues for fear of being called bullies, hence losing friends.

Tucker (1996) gives the following reasons as to why we encounter problems when confronting others: because of verbal and non verbal messages we use; self-righteous attitude we possess; we do not dialogue; we do not have a powerful case on the person's problem; we do not have accurate information and so we do not keep accurate communication; we do not keep the problem where it belongs instead we shift; we do not reinforce the good behaviours instead we challenge the bad one and we do not let the person save face, instead we destroy. This makes our confrontation look hostile than friendly and concerned. A fearful peer counsellor may avoid confrontation by all means during counselling, especially if this will affect the counselling. But Corey (2004) suggests that a counsellor can be trained on how to use constructive and caring confrontation skill. Confrontation should be used in a way that the client is respected and not judged. Effective positive confrontation should open up the channels of communication and not gag it.

One of the challenges in peer helping relationship is when the client needs practical help like money or food (Hughes, 1981). Having served as a counsellor in the university the researcher encountered several incidences where students sought for counselling with the aim of being helped practically. The economic life of some students in the public universities is low. Some of the students who come from a poor background especially orphans often do not have enough money for their basic needs such as to buy food. These needy students are often faced with problems that need practical intervention. Some present themselves to their peers for counselling with an expectation that they would be helped out of their financial burdens practically. After counselling session they expect the peer counsellor to give or support them with something tangible. But since counselling does not prescribe giving of tangible items, such a student may see no need of going back for counselling. In such a case, it is prudent for the peer counsellor to learn a technique of how to encourage a student to work instead of being dependant (Erford *et al.*, 2010).

Another challenge in peer counselling is that of dual relationships. Dual relationship in counselling occurs when the therapist is engaged in another relationship with a client other than counselling, for example a counsellor whose client is a friend or a business partner (McLeod, 2003). In campus students have friends whom they would open up to when they are in need. Some of their friends happen to be peer counsellors. A sincere peer counsellor would face the challenge of how to help a friend when approached for counselling. The challenge with dual relationship is that it compromises the professional nature of the relationship in that the counsellor is not free to counsel without taking side. Dual relationship presents a conflict of interest which if not handled would lead the counsellor to be biased in handling the issue at hand. The counsellor is not so free to counsel the way s/he would because of fear of jeopardizing the friendship. For example, it would be difficult to confront a friend in counselling. Dual relationship makes the client vulnerable to the counsellor because of the close relationship that exposes him/her to the counsellor. This hinders any effective counselling (Lamb & Catanzaro, 1998). Although many professional counsellors discourage counselling a person who is close to them – like a friend, Welter

(1990) suggests that we can still help a friend if we integrate skills into a way of living so they become part of us than just a way we adopt to help someone.

In many counselling situations counsellors are often accountable to the client alone. Carter (2005) argues that since peer counselling is non-professional and is offered on a non-fee basis, it is difficult to establish accountability in the case of negative outcomes. But accountability is necessary for any effective service that is rendered. A person who is not accountable to anyone can be dangerous. There are incidences where a counsellor is faced with a challenge regarding whether or not to report the case to a third party. A good example is where a client who is HIV positive and is engaging in unsafe sex that puts the partner at risk. In such a situation the peer counsellor will be at pains as to whether to inform the partner or not. Another scenario is where a peer counsellor may be requested by the university administration to counsel a student who has a problem and then give a feedback to the administration (Carol & Walton, 1997). Since most students fear reporting their mates to the administrators, this may prove to be a tough challenge for the peer counsellor. But Lirine and Doueck (1995) point out that in cases where mandated reporting is required; the counsellor may adopt strategies to preserve the therapeutic relationship while reporting. This may include anonymous reporting. McLeod (2003) maintains further that there are some occasions under whatever circumstance that the counsellor has no choice but to breach the boundary of accountability. And if s/he does this, it is in the social good of the client.

Time factor is a challenge to all people; to the student counsellor it is even more demanding. Counselling is an exercise that demands time with the client. Any counsellor who helps in a hurry is not worth being one. Counsellors who have no time for their clients may not last long in the profession. Being a counsellor calls for dedication and availing time for the clients. Smith and Smith (2008) emphasize that being available for the client at the time they need most, means a lot to the person. Peer counsellors in campuses have their classes to attend to other than counselling their colleagues. This becomes a challenge when clients need their help seriously. Since most of the counselling is done outside the class, the peer counsellors have to set extra time in which to counsel their clients. One may wonder whether they have

enough time for this. Although the challenge of time is there, what most counsellors require is to be available for their clients. This could be done through discipline and proper organization. The peer counsellors need to set aside some time for counselling. Because of this extra duty they do for their colleagues, some universities give them honorarium, tokens of appreciation or bursary for their tuition.

The foregoing review on challenges was to point out how they affect the services of the peer counsellors' competence. For example a peer counsellor who is weak in handling sexual relationships, may end up compromising counselling. The peer counsellors may also be overwhelmed with any or all of the above challenges to the extent that they are not able to render their services competently.

The review on peer counsellor challenges was to help the researcher find out whether the participants in the study experienced the same; and also whether the challenges had any impact on their competence. The reviewed literature did not depict whether the challenges affect the performance of the peer counsellor.

2.9 Methods of Peer counselling

Due to the dynamic way of life in which students operate, it is not possible to have a single method of counselling them. Different methods have been developed to reach the youth effectively. Methods like Group Therapy (Sugarman, 1998; Corey, 2004) Cognitive behavioural therapy (Whitfield & Davidson, 2007), Telephone counselling (Reese et al., 1995), Internet counselling (Cherry, 2011), Motivational Therapy (Miller, 1995) among others are some of the counselling methods that are used to help the youth who have psychological problems. In all these different methods of counselling, the main objective is to help clients learn to live healthy lives free from stress.

One of the important values in counselling is confidentiality. It does not matter who is being counselled be it an adult or a youth, each person values their sense of worth with a lot of respect. Confidentiality in counselling is a skill that every counsellor is expected to learn. No person would wish to hear their stories circulating among their friends after sharing it in confidence. To protect confidentiality and the identity of their clients, some peer counsellors prefer to use the telephone as a method of counselling their peers. The

Yale Walden peer counselling for example, have used this method to train their counsellors thoroughly on how to help clients (Goldberg, 2009). Studies on advantages of telephone counselling reveal that clients are satisfied with telephone counselling (Duan et al., 2000). They report that the counsellors understand, are caring, offer feedback, exhibit positive attitude, and focus on the problem (Young, 1989). The anonymity of the counsellor on the phone enables clients to be very honest and speak out immediately what they are going through and this helps speed up the counselling process (Zhu *et al.*, 1996).

Although telephone counselling is considered to be more effective than face to face counselling (Reese *et al.*, 1995), it has its own drawbacks. One of the limitations is that it is not easy to evaluate whether clients have benefited from the counselling (McLeod, 2003). It is also not easy to judge which problem should require telephone counselling and which one should get face to face counselling. The other disadvantage it has especially for campus students is the cost. Most of our Kenyan universities do not have free toll phones where students can call freely when they are in distress. Should a peer counsellor get a distress call from a student, it will force him/her to use his/her own money to assist that student. This may prove difficult where peer counsellors have no money to use on their phones. The issue of capturing the non verbal cues that would be helpful to the counsellor to understand the intensity of the issue, is another problem that use of phone cannot handle.

Group counselling is another method peer counsellors use to help their colleagues. Most growth oriented or educational topics are best handled in group counselling. Topics like the dangers of drinking, safe sex, how to manage finances on campus, can best be understood by college students through group counselling. Studies reveal that the purpose of group counselling in universities is to provide opportunity for growth in areas such as career decisions, interpersonal relationship educational plays, identity of problems and other concerns (Corey, 2004).

Internet Counselling is rather a new approach to counselling. This method of counselling involves asynchronous and synchronous distant interaction between the counsellor and the client using e-mail,

chat, and video conferencing features of the internet. The advantage of this method of counselling is that it provides the client with some kind of privacy (Cherry, 2011). Students who may not wish to be seen discussing their issues with resident peers can make use of this method. However, it may be disadvantageous to the student in the following ways: it is difficult for the client to identify the person who is counselling; there could be technological failure due to power or network interruption; lack of face to face interaction that has a human touch ; the counsellor in some cases would refer the client to another counsellor because of proximity and confidentiality; confidentiality is not guaranteed on the internet and lack of availability of the facility for the students on campus. The cost of communication on the internet may also be prohibitive for the student.

Where the peers may be facing situational crises, temporary conflicts or trying to change self-defeating behaviours, group therapy provides empathy and support that helps to create trust among them. Individuals who fear to ask questions on some sensitive topics often find it comfortable to do so in group counselling. Group counselling helps individuals to make changes in their beliefs, feelings attitudes and behaviours. It enables people to explore social relationships skills and learn how to discuss their perception of others without being judgmental (Corey 2004). Group counselling also helps the members appreciate each other and learn to accommodate others from different backgrounds. The group understanding and support helps members to willingly explore problems brought in the group. It helps individuals see themselves through others' behaviour and thus presents the challenge to change for the good (Yalom & Lesczc, 2005).

Where peer counsellors are not able to reach their peers in their rooms, peer counsellors organize workshops that would address issues that affect students directly. Topics like how to manage stress, conflicts, study habits, eating disorders and any other area that may require teaching and demonstrations is best handled in a workshop. In the workshops they used variety of teaching methods (Heravi, 2004).

Individual counselling method seems to be the most preferred by students, since it accords them the privacy they need. It is most effective where a student do not share a room with another student. Where the room is shared, the client or the roommate may be inconvenienced when they need to use the same room for studying or something else. Since confidentiality is valuable to all people, students prefer to share their concerns with the peer counsellors when they are alone (Cuizon, 2009). It is upon the counsellor to choose the most suitable place where they can share the problem in confidence (Sturkie & Tan, 1992). This gives the student the opportunity to pour out his/her heart to the counsellor without any fear. Issues of relationships and drugs are usually sensitive and students would prefer discussing them on a one to one basis rather than in a group. Individual counselling is therefore suitable to discuss such a topic (English, 2012).

2.10 Competence of Peer Counsellors

Performance of an individual largely depends on the competence s/he has. Likewise the performance of the counsellee, will to some extent depend on the competence of the skills used by the counsellor to assist the client. According to McLeod (1992), competence is not restricted to skills only but involves “any quality or abilities of a person which contributes to effective performance of a role or task” (p.360). If the counsellor is not competent in the counselling skills s/he is using, the performance of the client may be dismal. Study on the impact of ICL on sex behaviour change at Kenyatta University revealed that lack of refinement on recruitment, training and supervision contributed to the dismal behaviour change among the students (Miller *et al.*, 2008). “The lack of shift in abstinence and faithfulness indicators raises question about the ability of peer education in this intervention at least, to promote behaviour change.” (p.354).

This statement communicates a lot on the competence of the peer counsellors. They were not competent (so to say) to carry out the task that was expected of them. This could have been due to lack of intensive training, commitment, lack of adherence to professional ethics or may be lack of supervision. No wonder the researchers suggest that some study be done on the impact of peer educators on their clients whether

their behaviour is consistent with what they are advocating. Competence should be more than possessing skills. It also involves the way the peer counsellors carry themselves among their peers. The perception of a client on the counsellors behaviour adds much to the skills they possess. Ethics requires that a therapist must be competent so as to be able to handle a client appropriately. Pope & Vasquez (2011) hold that competence for a therapist is mandatory. "When a patient comes to us for help, they trust us to be competent. Ethical practice hinges on competence. Society holds us accountable for competence through courts and licensing boards (p.58).

Competence is the ability of an individual to perform a given task properly. Performance of an individual largely depends on the competence the person possesses. That performance will influence the people the individual is interacting with, positively or negatively. In the counselling situation, if the counsellor is not competent to use the skills required towards the client appropriately, the performance of the client may not be noticeable. A competent peer counsellor should be one who is capable of handling counselling without much supervision. Suryanarayana (2009) defines competence as the knowledge, ability and belief a person possesses that s/he brings into practical situation. The knowledge of the subject matter, counselling skills, beliefs and feelings of the counsellor on what is going on in the counselling scenario, can be considered as competency that an effective counsellor possesses (Medley, 1982). Suryanarayana (2009) posits that competence involves three things: presage, process, and the product. According to him, presage refers to personality factor, recruitment, and the training that the person undergoes; process refers to the action, the practice and the service that the person is involved in and product refers to the quality of the work produced. This may be taken to mean that if any of the three is missing in any task that a person does, then the person is considered incompetent.

Shepherd, Britton and Kress (2008) state that counsellors who demonstrate substandard performance, are referred to as incompetent or impaired counsellors. They clarify that incompetent counsellors are those who have never reached the minimal performance standard like those who have grave deficit in clinical knowledge, case conceptualization, diagnosis and treatment, as well as problems with personal

functioning. An impaired counsellor is: “a formally competent counsellor who demonstrates diminished functioning, such as substance abuse problem or boundary violations” (p. 220).

It therefore behoves counsellors to be aware of their impairment or other limitations. Impairments in psychological, emotional or physical well-being of the counsellor may affect the value of that counselling (Shillito-Clarke, 2003). It is therefore important for a counsellor to be fit at all times to be able to counsel effectively. Poor communication between a client and the counsellor may be considered as lack of competent on the part of the counsellor. Shepherd et al. (2008) therefore gives a word of caution when evaluating counsellors. He says that the assessors have to be careful not to classify a person as incompetent by observing only one aspect of their skill. Some competent and skilled counsellors may be assessed as incompetent when they have showed deficiency in only one area and yet they are competent in other areas.

According to the National Association for College Admission Counselling (NACAC) a body that coordinates persons dealing with counselling of students in universities, a competent counsellor should be able to demonstrate the following competencies: 1) possession and demonstration of exemplary counselling and communication skills; 2) ability to understand and promote students development and achievement; 3) ability to facilitate transitions and counsel students towards realization of their full educational potential; 4) ability to recognize, appreciate and serve cultural differences and special needs and families; 6) demonstration of appropriate ethical behaviour and professional conduct in the fulfilment of roles and responsibilities; 7) ability to develop, collect, analyze and interpret data; 8) demonstration of advocacy and leadership in advancing the concern of students; the ability to organize and support a college admission counselling programme (NACAC, 2000).

Since peer counsellors form part of the team that counsel students in the university, they like other counsellors, are expected to demonstrate some if not all the competencies outlined above. They may not display all the competencies required but they should demonstrate the competencies that are pertinent to the clients they are serving. Some of the competencies that peer counsellors should possess are: ability

to use counselling skills effectively; the ability to assist students to develop sense of worth and acquire decision making skill; ability to understand and be sensitive to students needs in the campus; being aware of self and personal weakness; ability to recognize individual differences, personal, social, emotional and educational concern of the students; possession of counselling and communication skills ; ability to recognize the nonverbal communication; be able to understand the educational requirements of the university and be able to inform the students appropriately; ability to be sensitive and handle students social, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender, age and learning and differences; demonstrate the knowledge and practice of professional ethics; ability to document important data and information related to counselling; seek peer supervision from time to time; provide support and assistance to students who need to advance in training; ability to do referral to students who need help elsewhere; seek to sharpen their competencies by keeping up to date with new developments in the area of peer counselling (NALAG, 2006).

2.11. Areas of Competence

Although peer counsellors are not professionals in their helping or caring services, they are still expected to have some qualifications that would place them in the bracket of being considered competent and also expected to exhibit all requirements enshrined in the code of ethics of counselling. For the purpose of this study, the areas that the researcher considered peer counsellors should be thoroughly competent in are: Basic counselling skills, referrals, supervision, confidentiality, follow-ups, assessing clients in readiness for counselling, documentation, keeping of records and personal development and observation of codes of ethics

2.11.1. Emotional Competence

Emotional competence involves our own awareness and respect for others. This includes self-awareness, self knowledge, self acceptance and self monitoring. This entails knowing our strengths and weakness especially in counselling situations and being also aware about the effect it has on others (Pope & Vasquez, 2011). Ethical responsibility requires a counsellor to be constantly aware of personal weakness

that may impede counselling. Sexual relations with clients, is a violation of professionalism in counselling.

2.11.2. Competence to observe Ethics in counselling

Ethics is important in counselling because of its value in the profession, in that it requires all therapists to be familiar with the code of ethics where they are practicing. Collins (2007) says: “Most professional organizations have developed ethical codes to protect the public from unethical practices, to guide counsellors in ethical decisions and to set standards. Counsellors are usually evaluated against these guidelines” (p. 89).

Kenya Psychological Association (2012), and others have developed a code of ethics that every counsellor should use in their practice. Peer counsellors are not exempted from being conversant with these codes of ethic. The critical areas in the code of ethics that the researcher thought peer counsellors should be most conversant with are: Confidentiality, supervision, referrals, follow-ups, assessment of client before treatment and documentation.

2.11.3 Competence in Basic Counselling Skills

Mastery of basic counselling skills or what Ivey (1971) calls micro-counselling skills is cardinal in counselling practice. These skills include listening, paraphrasing, reflection of feelings and content, empathy, attending to client, and plan action with client. Nelson-Jones (2008) point out that a good helper is one who possesses basic counselling skills. A counsellor who is not able to use the Basic counselling skills effectively should consider himself/herself not ready to counsel

2.11.4 Competence to make referral

Pope & Vasquez (2011) point out that people are not endowed with knowledge to deal with all issues that human beings go through. We may be knowledgeable in one area but not the other. And that’s why it is important to make use of other persons who are skilled in the area we are not. Many times experienced

counsellors refer their counsees to someone else for further special assistance. Collins (2007) clearly puts the value of referral this way:

Referral does not mean that the original counsellor is incompetent or trying to get rid of a difficult counsellee. Instead referral is an acknowledgement that no one person has the same time, stamina, emotional stability, knowledge, skill or experience to help everyone. We should refer whenever a counsellee does not appear to be improving or when we are stuck and not sure what to do next (p. 91).

Knowledge of referral is important to many. Studies have found that even general practitioners refer their patients who suffer from depression, stress, anxiety to the counsellors (Corney & Simpson, 2005). This indicates value to which professionals attach to referrals. Peer counsellors who may not have adequate knowledge to handle issues beyond their ability are therefore required to have competent skills to make referrals. Peer counsellors should be competent to know what problems to refer and who to refer to. It is suggested that before making any referral, the counsellor should know the best helpers in the community to refer their clients to (Collins, 2007). This competence is important to peer counsellors because often they come across issues in their campuses that they are unable to handle and require a consultant.

2.11.5. Competence to Deal with Sexual Relationships

Since counselling often involves discussion of sensitive issues, the tendency for the counsellor or the client feeling attracted to the other often arises. Collins (2007) points out that almost all counsellors experience sexual attractions once in a while. The topic of sexuality is often given a wider discussion perhaps because it touches both the counsellor and the counsellee. Both are vulnerable to this subject. But the person who in most cases is being focused on is the counsellor. The power the counsellor wields in the counselling relationship makes him/her be seen as the person in control of the situation. It is left upon the counsellor to be in a position to know how to handle the sexual relationship. Sexual relationship is such a delicate subject because it can destroy any good counselling. Pope and Vasquez (2011) and Collins (2007) state several reasons why sexual relationships should be discouraged in counselling. Some of these are: it ruins a counsellor's reputation, marriage and counselling effectiveness; it never helps the client

who has the problem and thereby damages the counsellor's career and professional image. Competence in handling sexual signals is thus crucial for a peer counsellor.

2.12. Related Studies on Evaluation of Competence of Peer Counsellors

Various authorities have come up with different areas of counselling that should be considered when evaluating counsellor competence. Crouch (1992) suggested four main areas that should be observed; counsellor awareness, personal work, theoretical understanding and case work skills. Larson *et al.* (1992) have five areas; micro-skills, process, dealing with difficult client behaviours, culture competence and awareness of values. Beutler *et al.* (1986) had ten areas that they consider makes a counsellor competent; personality, emotional well-being, attitudes and values, relationship attitudes (empathy, warmth), social attributes (expertness, trustworthiness, attraction, credibility and persuasiveness), expectations, professional background, intervention style and the mastery of technical procedures and theoretical rationale. McLeod (2003) suggested seven areas that he considered as a composite model of a counsellors competency; interpersonal skills (listening, empathy, awareness of non verbal messages), personal beliefs and attitudes (awareness of ethical and moral choices), conceptual ability ,for example ability to assess client's problem, personal soundness, mastery of technique, ability to understand and work within social systems (e.g.) being able to use support system and supervision and openness to learning and inquiry). He further cautions on the way assessment should be carried out. He points out that assessment can be biased depending on the person who is assessing. The assessor can be misled by trainees who may present their best at the time of training but not being real in the normal situations. It seems that each assessor often has special interest that motivates him or her to assess. In this study, the researcher considered nine areas to be crucial in assessing competence of peer counsellors.

1. Basic counselling skills- These include; listening, attending behaviour, paraphrasing, reflecting feelings and meanings.
2. Referrals- This is the ability to ask the complexity of the issue and make a quick decision to use.

3. Supervision- Ability to make use of supervisors during training or after for the purpose of improvement.
4. Confidentiality
5. Personal development- Capacity to be aware of need for new knowledge.
6. Follow ups- Being able to be in touch with the client and know his /her progress after counselling
7. Professional Ethics
8. Documentation – being able to keep records of important information on the counselling for use.
9. Assessment of client in readiness for counselling

A lot of literature has been documented on peer counselling programme with the aim of determining the effectiveness of the programme to the client and the institutions and to determine its posterity (Frisz & Lane, 1987). But evaluation of the competence of peer counsellors has not received much attention compared to that of the entire peer counselling programme. Yet competence of the counsellor is what determines the effectiveness of that programme. Loesch, (1988) gives the following reasons as to why peer counsellors performance should be evaluated: 1) in order to facilitate good counsellor- client relations and thereby remedy incompetence that may harm the client; 2) to assess the counsellor's effectiveness in performance for the purpose of licensing; 3) to improve the counselling profession.

The performance of clients as consumers also depends very much on the preparedness of the counsellor. To arrive at a fair judgment on the competence of the peer counsellors, the following aspect of assessment has to be considered: time of assessment: method of assessment: areas of counsellors competency to be assessed and the people to conduct the assessment (Loesch, 1988).

Foster-Harrison (1995) recommends that evaluation of the peer counsellors should be done at the formative stage of the programme and at the summative period. Frenza (1985) however suggests that the evaluation of the peer counsellor should be built in the programme to measure all the stages of the programme. Loesch (1988), points out that evaluation of counsellors competence should be done at all stages before training, during training and after training to screen out the incompetent trainees. Assessment done during the training is basically meant to help trainees to achieve required competent skills before graduation (Frenza, 1985). The assessment done during their practice is meant for sharpen their skills. At whatever period the assessment of peer counsellors is done, the purpose is meant to improve their competencies. The evaluation should not be left until the counsellor request for it, but it ought to be done periodically. That way it will help produce competent counsellors all the time. However, difficulties in obtaining data from clients immediately after counselling, makes this exercise to delay.

Loesch (1988), points out that instruments that are used for evaluating peer counsellor competencies range from those that are highly subjective, to those that are measurable and have empirical properties. He states that subjective and objective instruments include: video tape excerpts; rating forms; judgment of counsellors' activities and indicators of clients behaviour change. He further elaborates that objective instruments like Counsellor Evaluation Inventory and Counsellor Rating Form are effective in measuring counsellors' performance. Smaby, Maddux, Packman, Lepokowski, Richmond & LeBeauf (2005) on the other hand emphasize that the assessment instrument should meet sound psychometric criteria, whereby reliability and validity data ensures that measurements are consistent and measure what they are intended for. They suggest that video tapes are suitable during counselling sessions but can be cumbersome during the review depending on the length and the number of sessions recorded. McLeod (2003) further adds that the anxiety of the client or the counsellor during the video recording may cause them not to represent the true picture of the counselling situation. However, the researcher felt that it was more effective an instrument in assessing the skills of the counsellors, because it presents a rather similar situation that would be considered real in a counselling set up. Smaby *et al.* (2005), states that video recording is

beneficial for training purposes and that it facilitates the establishment of interpreter reliability. Subjective assessment which includes positive comments from assessors, observation on the number of referrals made and the number of clients counselled are said not be accurate indicators of the counsellors' performance. Objective assessments based on indicators of behaviour change are best recommended as strongest indicators of counsellors' performance (Loesch, 1988). Eldridge (1981) therefore concludes that effective assessment is achieved through emphasis on client's behaviour indicator, use of subjective and objective procedures and long-term follow-ups.

According to Loesch (1988), areas of competence in the counsellor that need to be evaluated should include: counsellor characteristics; communication skills; counselling outcomes and counselling skills. Adherence to the professional ethics is a major competence that also needs to be assessed. As to who should do the assessment, a number of authors seem to agree that all the stake holders of the counselling should participate in the assessment. Eldridge (1981), points out that the people who should assess the counsellors competencies are those with whom they interact. These are peer counsellors, their clients, supervisors and administrators. Self assessment done by counsellors themselves, gives them an opportunity to be honest with themselves concerning their performance. This helps them evaluate themselves against comments they receive from others. Although self- assessment may be subjective, it is still considered as useful part of assessment. Peers/clients evaluation of the counsellors' competence is usually significant because, peers point out the outcome of the counselling. Frenza (1985) emphasizes that since clients are the service consumers they are better placed to assess the competence of the peer counsellors. But Loesch (1995) points out that although self assessment and client rating scales provide useful information on the performance of the counsellor, many of them are not of value because they are not psychometrically sound. This calls for using of assessment tool that is psychometrically designed. Supervisors are said to be generally interested in competency of skills and adherence to the ethics (Butcher & Scofield, 1984) whereas the administrators are keen on compliance or accountability to the institution. Their assessments on the counsellor are therefore biased to their line of preference. The

researcher will put into consideration the suggestions from the above reviews when designing evaluation instruments so that the study will bring out the desired outcome.

On assessment McLeod (2003) concludes that there is no single method/technique of assessment on counsellors that seems reliable due to their weakness here and there. He therefore proposes that a combination of many sources and techniques which possibly arrive at a multi-perspective assessment, drawing upon a large sample of relevant behaviour should be used.

A study by Salovey and D' Andrea (1984) to investigate general peer counselling activities in 200 campuses of Hawaii found out that those who trained peer counsellors were both professional and counselling students. The number of professional trainers was more than the student trainers. They also found out that only small percentage of peer counsellors received adequate training before becoming counsellors and that training was done by professionals. The study found out that there was no specific mode of training that was used. Most of the trainers used Ivey's (1971) micro counselling techniques. The peer counselling activities was poorly funded. Most of the issues handled by the peer counsellors were relationship and academic problems. The study found out that a quarter of student population made use of peer counselling services in their campus. Many students did not receive adequate training before becoming peer counsellors and most peer counsellors were poor in keeping records of clients they served and including their data. The researchers recommended a systematic research to evaluate the effectiveness of the services provided by the peer counsellors and the trainings being provided by various campuses. The study revealed that although counsellors were involved in active counselling, there were some inadequacies in them. Their effect on the clients was not largely felt. Although the study unearthed details of elaborated peer counselling activities it did not come out clear on effectiveness or the competencies of the peer counsellors. It did not delve into

the problems encountered by the peer counsellors. It did not touch on issues such as practicum, supervision, or some of the components that make a counsellor competent. The present study intends to find out competencies of peer counsellors in discharging the duties expected of them.

Bunyan (2002) carried a study on how peer helpers can use their portfolios to monitor their personal growth and developments. In the study he demonstrates in detail how recruitment, training, supervision and evaluation is carried out to help counsellors gain skills that would be of great use to their peers. In the selection he outlines the specific requirements in terms of the characteristics of the persons to be recruited. For the training of the counsellors, he provides the models to be used, the curriculum that he thinks are suitable, the duration, the training content and the structure of the training. One important component of training that he included is the use of experiential technique. Two main areas that the researcher found to be of interest in the study was the emphasis on supervision and evaluation. He states that the main functions of supervision were to provide a forum of discussion between the counsellor and the supervisor in order to help the counsellor discover his/her weakness. Supervision also helps the counsellor to learn about types of problems dealt with, referrals, ethics, boundaries of relationships and support system. Supervision in essence improves the skill of counsellors and hence sharpens the competencies. On evaluation, he laments that not much has been done in this area. He singled out the value of evaluating the programme in its entirety in order to improve the training and supervision. Although evaluating the entire programme is good for its effectiveness to the community, the actual service providers need an exclusive assessment, since they determine whether or not the programme is of value to the consumers. They need assessment to ascertain that their training background and character in a way that does not negatively affect how they deliver the services. This is the concern of this study.

Foster – Harrison (1995) in his study on the type of evaluation to use for peer counsellors suggests that formative and summative evaluation would provide better results while assessing the programme. Although the two types look suitable, the summative would be costly in terms of time and funding. Summative evaluation would involve assessing the programme at the end of every module for a long period of time. The current study is constrained with the two factors, time and funds and the researcher has opted to use the formative one for the study.

Study carried out by Shreve (1991) on service delivery variations on centres of people with disabilities, revealed that sometimes consumers (counselees) don't go for counselling because they are not motivated or they don't know what counselling is all about. The study found out that good counselling is sometimes affected by the attitude of the counsellors or poor supervision by non competent person or lack of sufficient funds to operate the programme. In her study, she points out that evaluation of the effectiveness of the services provided by the peer counsellors is done through consumer's feedback forms. The clients are provided with feedback form to complete after every service. If the goal of the service was not obtained, then the counsellor is questioned. Any dropping out or dissatisfaction expressed by the client, is a sign that the counsellor had a problem. Evaluation of counsellor is carried out in all stages of training, supervision and in the actual service delivery. This evaluation is systematic and strict but may not be applicable to learning situation where students may not be serious with filing feedback forms. The problem of using feedback after every visit is that sometimes client's response may be ideal expectation that the counsellor could not provide. Using the feedback alone to measure the counsellor competence can lead to a biased conclusion. The client's feedback should be measured by other factors that affect the nature of counselling. The study recommended that

proper direction of how to set up and operate effective counselling centre should be taken up. The current study was set to evaluate both the client and the counsellor to establish the effectiveness of the counsellors' competence in delivering.

Arudo's (2008) study on peer counselling experience in secondary schools basically outlines how Kenyatta University Peer Counselling Outreach has been of benefit to students in secondary schools. He points out that counselling should be a group activity rather than an individual task. The study describes how peer counselling activities are conducted in schools where they are invited. The study points out that the role of peer counsellors is to train students on acquiring suitable skills that would help them live well with their peers. The counselling basically touches on issues such as academics, family, relationships stress and the like. The students are also taught life skills that would help them in their future. The study points out the many benefits of counselling which includes motivation to learning, improvement of grades, improvement of discipline and interpersonal relationships. The study however did not touch on evaluation of the programme or the peer counsellors. Nor did it point out some of the problems counsellors realize that could affect their competence. The study does not point out competency of the counsellors, or the training they go through. Supervision of the peer counsellor was not touched either. The study left out important components of counselling that make the programme effective.

Study by Aladg (2005) on developing peer helping and testing its effectiveness, indicated that peer helpers usually concentrate on training aspect and neglect other related areas. The study evaluated the skills of the peer counsellors, their personal growth, perception of trainers, and training. The study evaluated reasons why clients sought for counselling and found out that they needed to be helped in careers, academics and interpersonal relation topics. Clients reported that their needs were met and they rated the effectiveness of peer counsellors as positive. In the

study, clients reported that factors that affected peer counselling were venues, little number of interaction with counsellors, issue of confidentiality, few counsellors and nature of help (just being listened to and not getting advice). Clients also evaluated attitude and behaviour of PC as positive. The study recommended need for assessment to study and explore beliefs, motives values of students in relation to peer helping programme. That peer counsellors need future training to provide support through empathic listening and decision making skills and need for counselling venues. The study touched most of the areas related to the present study. However, it did not touch on supervision, practicum, documentation of client records and observing code of ethics which does assist to improve on the quality of the counsellor. The study generally evaluated the programme but not the counsellor and his/her competency, which is the main concern of this study.

Loesch (1988) did a study on assessment of counsellor's performance. In the study he points out the value of assessing counsellor which should mainly be, to reduce incompetence in counsellor's performance. He further suggests that assessments aim to improve counselling profession so that clients can have confidence in the profession. The areas that he observed needed assessment were counsellor's characteristics, communication skills, (since it is the heart of counselling) and the outcomes of the counselling. His suggestion of those particular areas is in line with the present of study. In his study he recommends that the methods of evaluation should utilize multiple instruments which should have a high degree of validity. He recommends that the assessors of counsellors performance should include the clients (since they are the consumers of the service) counsellors and supervisors. Although supervisor's evaluation is usually considered accurate, he argues that sometimes they are biased towards the level of skills than

other areas. The current study took into consideration the stakeholders in the peer counsellor's performance that is the clients, trainers (supervisors) and the counsellors themselves.

In her study on peer counselling programs, Frenza (1985), states that the important components that establish solid counselling programs are selection, training and supervision, and evaluation. The quality of a counsellor is crucial when selecting students who will be peer helpers. She further states that the basic qualifications for counsellor should be commitment and ability to help others, willingness to accept standards of ethical conduct and willingness to work within the rules of the programme. The researcher concurs with her that these qualities form strong pillar of competence in training. She mentions key areas that sharpen counsellor's competence, which are: information on ethical and legal consideration, identifying source and support network, being aware of individual's limitation and seek professional help and making use of referral.

On training, she recommends use of didactic and experiential techniques where demonstration and modelling of skills are included. Like other experts, she suggests that supervision and feedback be carried out during the training of skills and in real counselling situations. It is this lack of close supervision which seems to affect peer counselling at Moi University. Periodic professional workshops are also important for personal development of the counsellors. In the study, Frenza emphasizes the role of evaluation as being to: provide feedback to professional and the peer, to determine whether training goals are being met, to provide data for important and to increase credibility and continuing of the programme. One thing that she mentions concerning evaluation is that, it must be built into the initial design of the programme to measure the quality of its work. This was found to be missing in peer counselling at Moi University, because no evaluation has been done since the programme was initiated; hence the purpose of this study. According to her, evaluation should use simple methods like use of questionnaires, check lists,

use of records or reports and rating scales for clients. The researcher found that what was raised in Frenza's (1985) study are some of the factors that this study is concerned with in determining the level of competence of the peer counsellors.

In their study on evaluation of counselling process and clients' outcomes, Smaby *et al.* (2007) point out that the best practice in assessing performance of counsellors is to use multiple measurements, that is by obtaining data from counsellors, clients and external raters. They also recommend the use of video recording to evaluate the counsellor's performance during training. In their study, they recommend different types of instruments that should be used to evaluate counselling process and outcomes. Evaluation of performance can be tricky if the researcher does not know what to evaluate. When it comes to evaluating competence one may not know what competence to measure. The current study attempted to incorporate some of the suggestions put forward by Smaby *et al.* (2007) when designing instruments that will measure the competence of counsellors. Some of the instruments proposed in the study were not suitable for this study due to technicalities involved but they were definitely relevant in other counselling related areas. This study mainly dwelt on the use of instruments to assess the performance or behaviour change of the clients.

Shepherd, Britton and Kress (2008) did a study on reliability and validity of professional counselling performance evaluation. In their study, they pointed out that many potentially incompetent counsellors are churned out of college having not received any correction. This is because supervisor's assessments are often not reliable or valid. They stated that some supervisors evaluate students as being skilled, when they were not. The factors of validity and reliability thus become important when evaluating counsellors. From the study they found out that the rating of site supervisors was different from the rating of the course supervisors. Thus in

order to arrive at valid result of the scores, an outside supervisor should be incorporated. The total scores from the three supervisors would help reach a valid decision on the performance of the counsellor than just using one person score. This kind of rating would help the counsellors to feel that comments given to them are not prejudiced. They recommend that professional organizations should assist to develop measurable competency criteria. They concluded that assessing trainee competence is complex and need to be researched on further. The current study attempted to use more than one person to evaluate the competence of counsellors.

In all the foregoing studies, the aspect of competence was merely alluded to but did not stand out as a salient factor of concern. None of the researchers took it up as a major study. This study is concerned about competence of peer counsellors in learning institution, because it affects severely the kind of services they offer to their fellow students.

2.13. Summary

The literature review touched on interpersonal relationships and the value students attach to it. It also looked at what happens in the relationships, causes of conflicts and how people manage these conflicts. In the review it was observed that although students have different ways of managing conflicts which seem to work for them. Peer counselling was reviewed and the role it plays among students in the universities. The benefits of peer counselling to the university administration and the counselees, was examined in detail. Training and supervision were seen as key methods of inculcating competence into peer counsellors. However there was no mention of periodic evaluation of peer counsellors' competence in the field. The outcomes or the performance that counselees exhibit after undergoing peer counselling, indicated that peer counsellors can help bring remarkable change in academics, drinking habits and social relationships of the counselees. However, there was no mention as to whether these changes were as a result peer counsellors competence. Challenges that peer counsellors encounter and different methods used in peer counselling that were reviewed did not point out their effects on the counsellors'

competence. Evaluating the peer counsellors, the performance of the counselees and the entire programme was observed as the appropriate measure of determining the competencies of the peer counsellors. It was observed generally that most of the institutions make use of peer counselling to improve learning and discipline. However, the literature reviewed did not show whether these improvements were pegged to peer counsellors' competence in the universities. The researcher found out that peer counsellors competence to influence counselees' performance was missing. This was the gap. It was on the basis of this background that this study was carried out to investigate the influence of peer counsellors' competence on the counselees.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter contains the procedures and research methods which were used for the study. It covers geographical locale of the study, research design, research population and sampling techniques, sample size, development of research instruments for data collection, validity and reliability of the instruments and data collection procedures.

3.1. Geographical Locale of the Study

This study was carried out at Main campus and Eldoret West campus of Moi University in Uasin Gishu County, Rift Valley Province, Kenya. Moi University Main Campus is located 310 Km, Northwest of Nairobi. It is situated in Wareng District, Uasin Gishu County. It lies between Latitude 1° 30' N and 0° 05' S, and Longitude 34°E and 35°45' E (see Appendix I). West campus is 40 Km away from Main campus. It is situated in Eldoret, 5 Km from the town centre (see Appendix J). Reasons for the choice of the campuses were three fold. First, Main campus has the largest population of students. Second, the two campuses have most students who take the counselling course (Administration Records, 2012). Third, the two campuses have had peer counsellors for a longer period compared to others.

Moi University was established in 1984. Since its inception the university has expanded and has 10 campuses located in different parts of the country. These campuses are: Main campus (35km from Eldoret town), School of Law (Annex), Eldoret West campus, Town campus (School of Medicine), Kitale campus, Odera Akango (Yala), Nairobi, Kericho and Mombasa. It has a population of about 30,000 (undergraduate and postgraduate) students.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is an outline that is designed to give direction towards the research problem (Orodho, 2003; Kothari, 2003; Kombo & Tomp, 2006). It acts as a blueprint that helps a researcher to reach a solution to the research problem. Since the study aimed at finding out what was taking place, describe and interpret the existing conditions, the researcher adopted a pragmatic paradigm that uses both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2009). This paradigm which is also referred to as Mixed Methods Research was found to be suitable for this study. Creswell (2009) states that the philosophy behind pragmatic paradigm is that it gives the researcher the freedom to choose the methods, techniques and procedures of the research that are suitable to his needs; it allows the researcher to look at many ways for collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to one method; the data from both methods provide the best understanding of the research problem. It is on the basis of this background that the researcher chose mixed methods approach. The researcher was concerned with the investigation of peer

counsellors' competence on counselees' performance. Since the researcher was interested in getting the data through numerical descriptions, interviews and discussions, the mixed method approach design was found to be suitable. The researcher used the sample statistics based on numerical data and the information from qualitative data to interpret the findings and draw conclusions about the study.

3.3 Research Methods

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Quantitative method which involves collection and analysis of numerical data was used to achieve the research objectives 1, 2, 3 and 5. Qualitative method which involves collection and analysis of narrative data without statistics was used for interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGD). The use of mixed research methods was adopted to provide triangulation and hence reduce errors caused by one instrument.

Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data. Questionnaires helped to obtain valid and reliable data that could be generalized (Kothari, 2003). The objective of using the questionnaires was to get facts and opinion of the students on the subject of the research. The research questions were designed to elicit quantifiable data to enable inferences to be made to the population from which the sample was drawn. The questionnaires were used to achieve the following objectives of the study: objective number one - to investigate the training background of the peer counsellors; objective number two - to investigate the methods used and topics covered in training peer counsellors at Moi University; objective number four - to identify the counselling skills that the peer counsellors are competent in; objective number six - to identify challenges that peer counsellors encounter when counselling their peers. The numerical data gathered for the objectives mentioned above were to help explain how they affect peer counsellors competence at the University. Qualitative methods which were used to achieve the research objectives included: interviews, observation and focus group discussions (FGD). Data on perception or opinion of students can best be gathered using these methods. These methods were also used to collect data that could not be gathered by the questionnaire. For example students' feelings and body language that could not be expressed in statistics could only be captured using qualitative method. The methods were further

used to add to the depth of the quantitative data. Qualitative data were to address the following objectives: objective number one - objective number four - which counselling skills are peer counsellors competent in; objective number five- what was the performance of the counselees after counselling and objective number seven- which problems do students commonly present to their peers for counselling at Moi University?

3.4 The study Population

At the time of the study, Moi University had a population of 25,456 (undergraduate) students.

The target population were students (peer counsellors and counselees), Housekeepers, Assistant Dean of Students, Student Counsellors and student leaders. The students who participated in the study were undergraduate students of the university based at Main campus and Eldoret West campus. Due to the nature of the study, the researcher selected the school of Arts and Social Sciences and the school of Education from which the students' population was drawn. These schools were the ones that house most peer counsellors due to the counselling courses they offer. By the time of the study, these schools had a total population of 7,307 students.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample

To assess the counsellors' competence and the outcome of the counselling effectively, Loesch (1988) points out that the following people are necessary: counsellors, their supervisors, their peers, administrators, and the clients (counselees). The researcher used purposive sampling technique to get appropriate population for the study: the peer counsellors, the administrators (assistant Dean of students, Hostels staff), counsellors and the counselees. The criteria for selecting the appropriate sample size for a study, has been an argument by several scholars. There are those who argue that the bigger the sample the fair the representation (Dooley, 2001). There are also those who maintain that the sample size must be 5% of the population (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). Dooley (2001) argues that due to the constraints involved in the surveys such as time, length of the questionnaires, interviews

and budget limits, most researchers use the smallest sample size. Considering time and the size of the population, the researcher used 5% of the target population as the sample for the study based on a suitable sample size for a study (Nachours, 1992).

Sampling for the study was done from the size of the population per group. Sample for peer counsellors was drawn from students who were taking counselling course in the schools of Education and Arts and Social Sciences and peer counselling clubs. Sample for counselees was drawn from students who had been counselled by the peer counsellors. The selected samples were the representative of the population from which they were drawn. The population of students taking counselling course in the school of Education and the School of Arts and Social Sciences was 343. The population of peer counselling clubs was 110. Only those who were involved in peer counselling were selected for the study. The participants who were not taking counselling course, but were engaged in peer counselling were taken from National Youth Guidance and Counselling club and Peer Counselling club. In total, the sample size of the peer counsellors that participated in the study was 135; this was 29.8% of the peer counsellors who participated in the study. The peer counsellor's population was stratified according to years of study (except 1st years). The 1st years were not considered for the study because it was assumed that majority of them were still new in the university and had not matured into becoming peer counsellors.

Table 3.1: Students taking Counselling course in 2010/2011

Year of Study	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	4 th Year	Total
School of Education	43	25	□□33	48	149
School of Arts and Social Sciences	59	92	□□□□20	□□23	194
Total	102	117	□□53	71	343

Source: Students Statistics 2010/2011, School of Education and School of Arts and Social Sciences, Moi University

Purposive sampling was also used to select clients (counselees) who were to provide data on behavioural changes/ performance. For the purpose of confidentiality in getting counselees, snowball sampling was applied whereby each peer counsellor was requested to identify at least one client who would be involved in the study. This was not an easy exercise, because some of the clients objected to be involved in the study. However the researcher was able to get 87 of them that were useful for the study. This was a big number since the researcher required 20 for the study. Purposive sampling which is basically a qualitative method technique was further used to select informants for interviews. These were: housekeepers, Student counsellors, Assistant Dean of Students and students' leaders. The researcher identified suitable individuals in each of the group who would provide data for the study. They were requested through telephone if they were willing to participate in the study. After affirming their participation, a date was set for the interviews. There were 11 informants. The responses from the informants were to help augment and validate the information given by peer counsellors through questionnaires. The participants for the FGD were drawn from volunteer peer counsellor students. Announcement for volunteers was posted and interested students submitted their names to the research assistants. There after stratified sampling was done based on gender, year of study and school. A total of 16 students were selected for FGD. The purpose was to get their opinion regarding peer counsellors competence and the behaviour changes of the counselees. There were two sets of the FGD and each had 8 members. Sampling for observation was done through the lecturer and the students who were participating in practicals of counselling skills. A request for permission to video record the practicals and administer questionnaires was sought from the students and the lecturer. 54 students participated in the practicals.

3.6 Research Instruments

The study employed multidimensional approach to data collection. Qualitative and quantitative research methods that were used included questionnaires, interviews, non-participation observation using video recording and focus group discussions. Questionnaires were administered to respondents using research assistants and lecturers in different schools. Interviews were conducted to selected respondents while

focused group discussion was conducted to two groups of between eight and ten members each. The research instruments were designed to measure the following competencies of the peer counsellors: ability to use the counselling skills effectively; ability to observe confidentiality; ability to assess students for treatment; ability to do follow up on clients who have been counselled; ability to keep record of the counselling (Loesch, 1988).

3.6.1. Questionnaire

The purpose of using questionnaire instrument in this study was to collect quantitative data. Questionnaire was advantageous in that the researcher had no influence on the responses of the participants because they answered in their own words (Kothari, 2005). The other advantage was that the researcher was able to reach many students within a short time (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The participants also had adequate time to respond freely and give well thought out answers. Questionnaires which contain structured and unstructured questions were used in the study to elicit the opinion of the students on peer counselling. Matrix questions which use Likert Scale rating were used. The questions were structured to solicit for data which were focused and relevant to the objectives of the study. Three sets of questionnaires were used: for the peer counsellors; for clients/counselees who had benefited from counselling: for peer counsellors during the practical. Questionnaires for peer counsellors addressed objectives on methods used and topics covered in training, the counselling skills they were competent in, the problems students presented for counselling, challenges they encountered when counselling and how peer counselling could be improved at Moi University. The other set of questionnaires was designed for peer counsellors' self-assessment immediately after their practical. This was to assess how they used their skills during the practical sessions. The questionnaires were administered by the lecturer concerned in six practical sessions. The purpose for repetitive self assessment was to evaluate the level of improvement of the skills that were learned. Questionnaires for the clients (counselees) were basically for assessing the performance or behaviour change of the counsellee.

3.6.2. Interview Schedule

The objective of the interview was to get opinions, ideas and attitudes of students on the subjects that would not be captured in the questionnaire. The interview method was used to enrich and verify the information given in the questionnaires. Interviews often help to obtain details of the data got from questionnaire (Kasomo, 2006). Interview schedule had semi-structured and open ended questions that addressed competence of peer counsellors at Moi University. The researcher made appointments with the respective persons for specific date for the interview. Interviews were conducted to sampled informants who were: Assistant Dean of Students, Housekeepers, Students counsellors and Student leaders. It was assumed that these informants had knowledge on the topic of study because they freely interacted with students all the time on campus. Being leaders in their own capacities, their information added another perception of peer counsellors that gave more input of data for the study. Their responses were to assist to corroborate the information given by other participants in the study. According to Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) this kind of interview enables the respondent to communicate freely what they observe, experience and know. The advantage with the interview was that the researcher ensured that all the questions were answered. During the interview, the researcher reframed some of the questions to help the participants understand clearly what was being asked. Each interview took one hour.

3.6.3. Non-Participative Observation

Observation method was included to assist the researcher obtain data on the actual behaviour that was being displayed by the participants. Kombo and Tromp (2006) point out that direct observation allows the researcher to understand behaviour in the right context and thereby understand it better. The researcher utilized this method to corroborate data that was provided by the peer counsellors through the questionnaires and also during their practical sessions. The researcher adopted structured observations whereby specific pattern of behaviour would be evaluated. The researcher used the same instrument that was used by the peer counsellors for their self-assessment. This was for the purpose of comparing the data that was given by the peer counsellors with the one the researcher had gathered through the observation. For the purpose of confidentiality and to avoid the presence of the researcher during the practical, the

researcher requested the peer counsellors to have the sessions videoed and the video clips availed to him for assessment. This method was agreed upon and 54 students were videoed during the individual practical sessions. The duration of each individual session was thirty minutes and each peer counsellor was videotaped two times.

3.6.4. Focused Group Discussion (FGD)

A Focused Group Discussion is usually a group of individuals of homogeneous and shares certain relevant characteristics for a study purpose (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The objectives of using Focused Group Discussion (FGD) were: to get more opinion of students on peer counselling in a free and relaxed environment; to explore meanings and expressions that could not be explained in words or statistics but through observations; to help the researcher to freely ask questions and to explore the answers given by the students; to get the feeling of the students on the subject by observing the non-verbal communication during the discussion. The FGD addressed the objectives on: competencies of peer counsellors; the problems commonly discussed during peer counselling; the level of competencies of peer counsellors; the performance of the counselees; the challenges the peer counsellors encountered and how to improve peer counselling at Moi University. Each group took one hour of discussion. The sessions were conducted in a manner that each student was given an opportunity to respond. The researcher took cognizance of those who were quiet and directed some questions to them. The focused group discussion was used as a forum to get more information that could have been omitted in the questionnaires.

3.7. Validity and Reliability of Data Instruments

For a research instrument to be considered useful, its validity and reliability aspect must be taken into consideration. The validity of the instrument is the extent to which the test instruments are time indicators of what they are purposed to measure (Dooley, 2001). Reliability refers to the consistency of stability of the measurement instrument (Kasomo, 2006). It is the extent to which the instrument yields consistent or systematic results after repeated trials (Dooley 2001).

3.7.1. Validity of the Research Instruments

To confirm the validity of the instruments, questionnaires and interview schedules were designed in consultation with the research supervisors. These were later given to them for their correction and comments. The supervisors read through the instruments and made their suggestions. Their feedback on formatting, wording, length, clarification content and number of items were put into consideration in revising the instruments. To ensure their validity, the items were checked against the objectives of the study. The instruments were then pilot tested. The respondents involved in the pilot study did not participate in the main study. The results from the pilot indicated need for further refinement of the instruments. Modifications were made on the instruments before they were finally used.

3.7.2. Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability is the consistency with which an instrument yields the same result when it is tested on an entity (Dooley, 2001). To test the reliability of the questionnaires, the researcher used test-retest method. The instrument was first tested in a small group of students and again retested after 2 weeks. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1970) which most researchers prefer to measure reliability was adopted to determine the reliability of the items. Researchers consider a measure to be reliable if Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeds .70 (Leary, 2001). In this study the alpha co-efficient obtained for the items in peer counsellors questionnaire was .80, for the counsellees questionnaire was .77 and for practical session questionnaire was .78. The results of the tools were considered reliable for the study. The researcher thereafter determined the usability of the instrument.

3.8 Pilot Study

The purpose for pilot study is to assist to identify omissions or ambiguity of some questions in the questionnaires (McLeod, 1999). Before the researcher started collecting data, a pilot study was carried out in order to test the validity and reliability of the instruments that had been developed. The instruments

were piloted at University of Eldoret (formerly Chepkoilel campus). The responses were coded and summarized. After analyzing the instruments as to whether they measured to the objectives of the study and their validity and reliability, modifications on the instruments were considered before actual study.

3.9. Data Collection Procedures

Before embarking on administering the research instruments, permit was sought from the National Council of Research, Ministry of higher Education, (see Appendix K) To do this, the researcher contacted Dean School of Education Moi University for a letter. Permission was also sought from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Extension, Moi University, to conduct study in the two schools. After obtaining permission the researcher administered questionnaires to the participants through their lecturers and two research assistants. Heads of departments were requested for permission to conduct study among students in their departments. Appointments were made with informants like Assistant Dean of students, Housekeepers, hostels officer, and Student counsellors for interview. The researcher sought consent of the participants before conducting the study. The participants were requested to sign the letter of consent before responding to the questionnaires and participating in the interviews. The participants were informed that that participation in the study was voluntary (see Appendix A). The participants were informed that the data collected would be for the purpose of assessing peer counsellors competence and for improving peer counselling in the University.

After obtaining permission, the process of collecting data began. For the students who were participating in practical, the research assistants administered questionnaires to the peer counsellors. The students were allowed to practice their skills on each other in triads. After the practical the participants who played the role of counsellors were instructed to fill the questionnaires immediately, so as to capture their experience during practical before they forgot. The exercises were conducted for different skills that were practiced for 6(six) weeks. The questionnaires were later collected by the research assistants and forwarded to the researcher. Video recording during practical for observation was carried out for three weeks due to lack of adequate facility and personnel. This exercise was done after obtaining permission from the lecturer

and the participants. The purpose of the exercise was clearly communicated to the participants. Confidentiality of the information was assured to all participants. Each counselling session was given 30 minutes. In total 54 students were video recorded. After recording, the video clips were condensed into compact disc (CD) and given to the researcher.

For the peer counsellors who did not participate in the practicals, two sets of questionnaires were handed to them. One was for them to respond to and the other was for their clients. In order to protect the identity of the clients, the peer counsellors were instructed to request one of their clients who would volunteer to fill the questionnaire. The questionnaires for both counsellors and clients were later collected. This exercise took two weeks.

Interview schedules for informants were done for Assistant Dean of students, housekeepers, hostel officer, student counsellors and students leaders. The interviews took three weeks. The researcher used interview schedules containing semi structured questions. The researcher took adequate time with each participant to exhaustively get all information related to the study. The last data was got from focused group discussions. For Focussed Group discussions, the researcher used the interview schedule that contained open-ended questions, to guide the discussions. In order not to lose the information, the researcher used tape recorder. During the discussions the researcher, used notebook to record salient points, and non-verbal cues that were observed during the discussions (Jwan & Ongondo, 2011).

3.10. Scoring of the Research Instruments

Two types of Likert scale were used for different questionnaires. Responses for questionnaire for counsellors' self assessment during practical, were scored on 6 point Likert scale; where, 6 = Excellent, 5 = Above average, 4= Average, 3=Fair, 2 = Poor, 1 = Not used/Not applicable. Responses on questionnaires for peer counsellors and clients were on 5 Likert scale; where 5 = very competent, 4 = Competent, 3 = Average, 2= Little, 1= None. Scores of 4 or 5 was considered competent while scores of 2 or 1 incompetent.

Other responses to the structured items were tabulated on frequency Figures, counted, converted into percentages and means.

3.11. Data Analysis Procedures

Responses to the questionnaires and interviews were examined. Data generated by the instruments were examined and coded. The levels of classification, Nominal level and Ordinal were used to code data that was generated by the questionnaires. Data on gender classified as nominal was given the following codes: Male - 1 and Female - 2. Other groupings for example year of study, Course of study were also treated as nominal and coded thus: 1st year – 1, 2nd year – 2, 3rd year – 3, 4th year- 4, 5th year – 5. The other responses were classified under ordinal level e.g. ranking of competence was coded as follows: Very competent – 5, Competent – 4, Average – 3, Little – 2, None – 1

All the 16 items in the peer counsellors' questionnaire and the 10 items in the client's questionnaire were coded for all the respondents. The coded data was entered into Microsoft Excel software. The data was then loaded into Statistical Packages for the Social sciences (SPSS) programme for analysis and later interpretation. Since the study was mainly a survey, it relied on descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that the study was done with the consent of university authority and Ministry of Education. Since this study involved a high degree of confidentiality on the part of the clients, ethical issues of research were taken into consideration. First the consent to involve the participant in the study was sought. No participant was manipulated or coerced into the study. The researcher communicated to the participants to be honest in their response to the questions. Confidentiality of the participants was ensured especially the clients. All participants had right to remain anonymous no identification in form of registration number or name was to be written on the questionnaire. The researcher also communicated to the participants the relevance of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Overview

This chapter highlights on data that was collected, its presentation, analyses and discussions. The presentation and the analysis were done in line with objectives and questions of the study. The data was presented in descriptive statistics using Figures which contain variables, frequencies and percentages. The data was analyzed in the order of the questions that were contained in the questionnaires. The data was organized in orderly manner starting with background information of the respondents followed by questions in the questionnaires. Description, interpretation and brief discussion of the data was done on broad themes. Finally, the results were discussed on the basis of every objective question to find out whether the goals were achieved.

4.1 Demographic Information of the Peer counsellors

The frequency Figures that were generated using SPSS programme showed the demographic information of what was required from the respondents, such as gender, year of study and the status of the counsellor whether a peer counsellor or a guidance and counselling student. This demographic information of the peer counsellors is shown in Figure 4.1, Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3

4.1.1 Gender

The representation of gender is shown in Figure 4.1. It was noted that female peer counsellors were more than the male. This could be interpreted to mean that women seem to be more emotionally understanding than men (Turner, 1981).

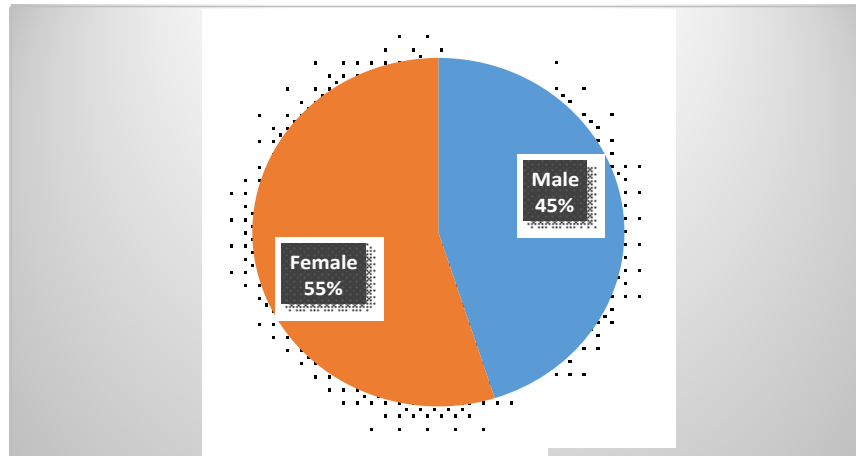


Figure 4.1: Gender

4.1.2. Year of study

Figure 4.2 shows the year of study of the participants. First years were excluded from this study because it was assumed that many of them were still undergoing training in basic skills of counselling and therefore were less experienced to counsel. There were three participants who did not indicate their year of study properly.

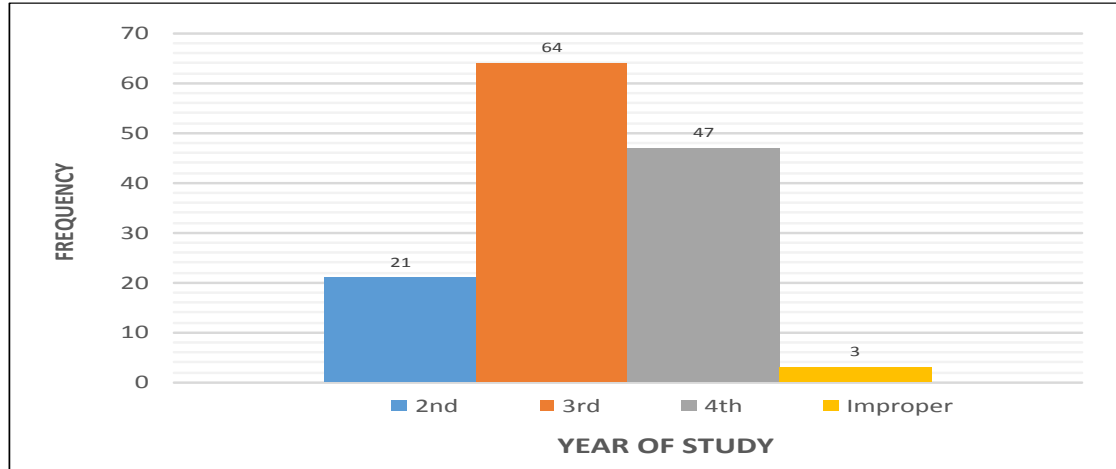


Figure 4.2: Peer Counsellors' Year of study

Courses of study are shown in Figure 4.3. The study showed that students who specialize in counselling courses (Counselling Psychology and Guidance and Counselling) were 47 (34.8%). They were fewer than those who take other courses 88 (64.2%). This information was to establish whether other students other than those who take counselling courses were also actively involved in counselling their peers despite their degrees of specialization. The findings confirmed that other students were keen in becoming peer counsellors. It was not clear on the motive of their interest in counselling, whether it was genuine for helping their colleagues or it was for getting certificates like it happens with other clubs. It is noteworthy that more than 75% of students taking Guidance and Counselling course in the school of Education were

not involved in the study. One would have expected that such students would be on the forefront in counselling their peers because this was the best forum for them to practice their skills.

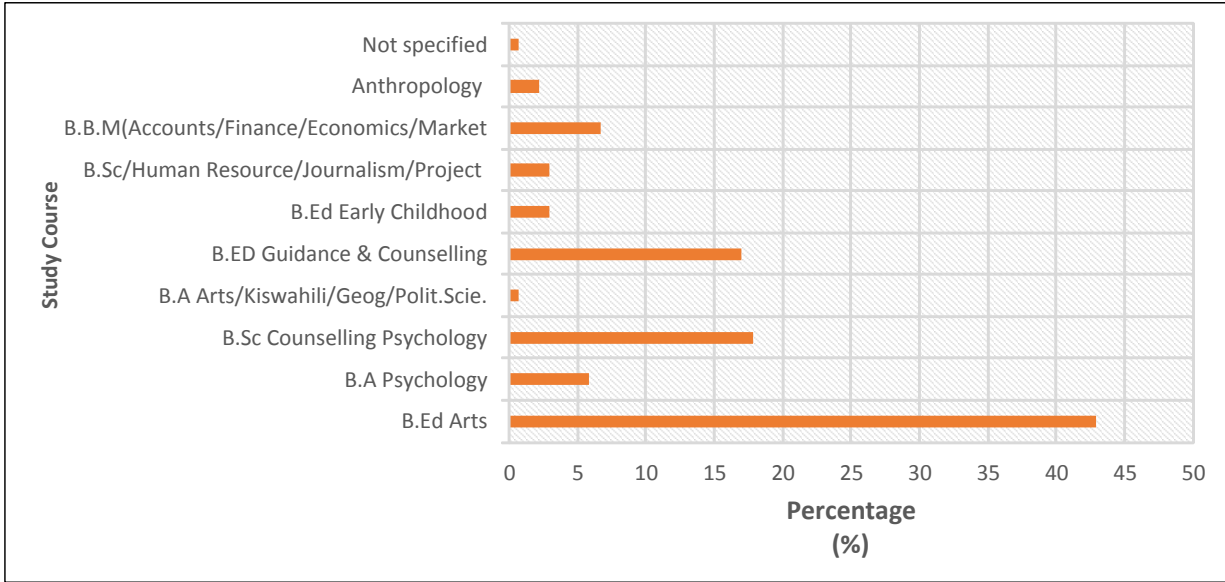


Figure 4.3: Course of study

As to whether one was a peer counsellor or a counselling student the results indicated equal category as shown in Figure 4.4

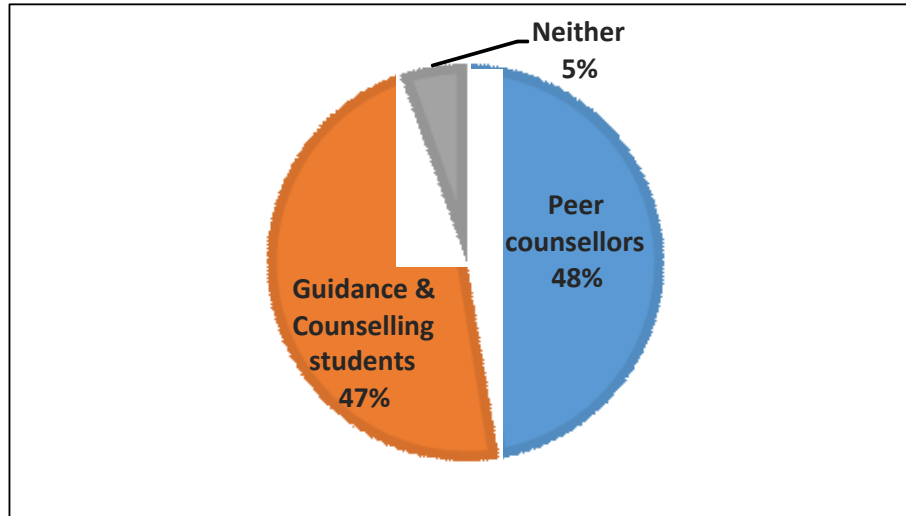


Figure 4.4: Peer counsellors and Guidance and Counselling Students

Those who indicated that they were Guidance and Counselling students were 64 (47.4%). This number was noticed to be slightly more than the actual students who indicated that they specialized in counselling course 47 (34.8%). This could be an indication that such students desired to be recognized as serious counselling students and not mere peer counsellors. This item was included in the questionnaire to find out if the students had any form of training in counselling before they become peer counsellors. Since training is an important component of competence, the type of training one had would help to point out the level of competence of the individual.

4.2 Peer Counsellors' View about Level of their Competence

Self- assessment can be tricky to persons who are not sure of their competence. The study sought to find out how peer counsellors rated their level of competence from the questionnaire. The purpose of the question was to get an honest response from the peer counsellors as to how they viewed their competence towards the service they offered. People who have undergone thorough training and are confident of their performance would rate themselves above average. But most of the counsellors rated themselves average. Figure 4.5 shows how peer counsellors rated their level of competence. Sixty three (46.6%) of the respondents rated themselves as competent peer counsellors while half of the respondents 67(49.6%) considered themselves as average. Four respondents did not comment on their level of competence, an indication that perhaps they were not sure of themselves. Perhaps the reason why most counsellors could not rate themselves as competent was because of the awareness of the kind of training they had. Since they knew that they were not competent in many of the skills, they could therefore not confidently say that they were competent. Majority of them confined their answers to be average. From the findings, it could be deduced that majority of the respondents considered themselves competent enough to counsel their clients/counselees. However, an interesting fact about this result was the contradictory responses from the focused group discussion where all the members felt that they were not competent. It would be fair to conclude that the counsellors felt that their level of competence was below average.

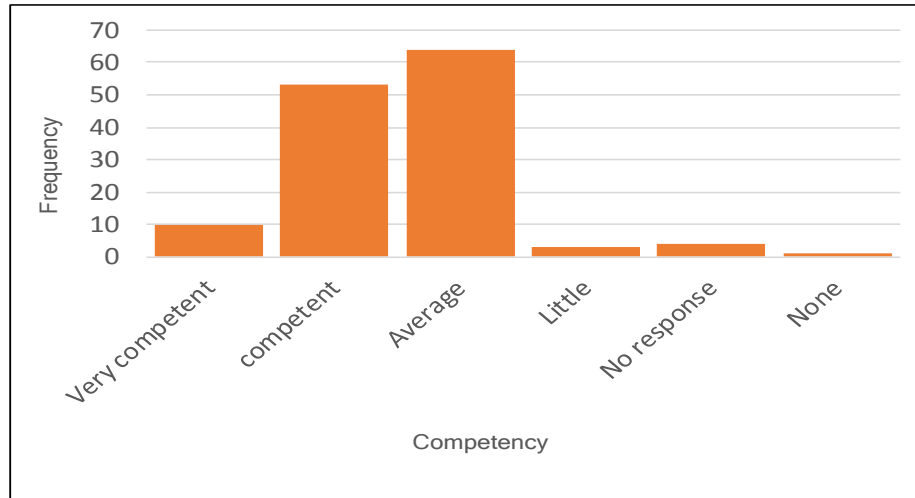


Figure 4.5: Peer counsellors' view about Level of their competence

4.3 Previous Training of Peer Counsellors

Training was considered an important component for evaluating competence of peer counsellors. There were four items to this question. Figure 4.6 shows the type of training the students undertook before becoming peer counsellors. Results showed that majority of the respondents learnt counselling skills through counselling course. Some of the participants indicated that they had more than one training background. Majority in that category were those who were doing counselling course. Self-training was included in the questionnaire to find out if there were students who considered themselves competent to counsel through long experience despite their lack of training (Welter, 1990). It is worth noting that such students existed and were using their experience to help their colleagues. The data also showed some

participants who did not indicate their training background. One such respondent was guidance and counselling student.

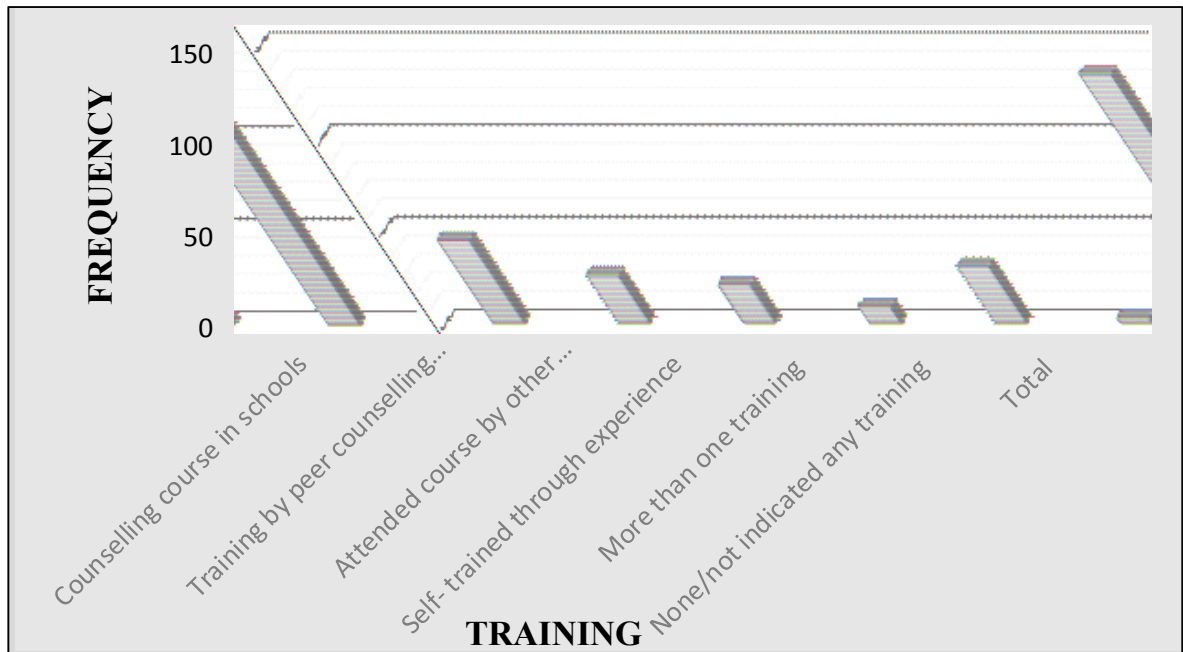


Figure 4.6: Type of training acquired before becoming peer counsellors

The study also found out that there were some students who had acquired skills in more than one training as depicted in Figure 4.7.

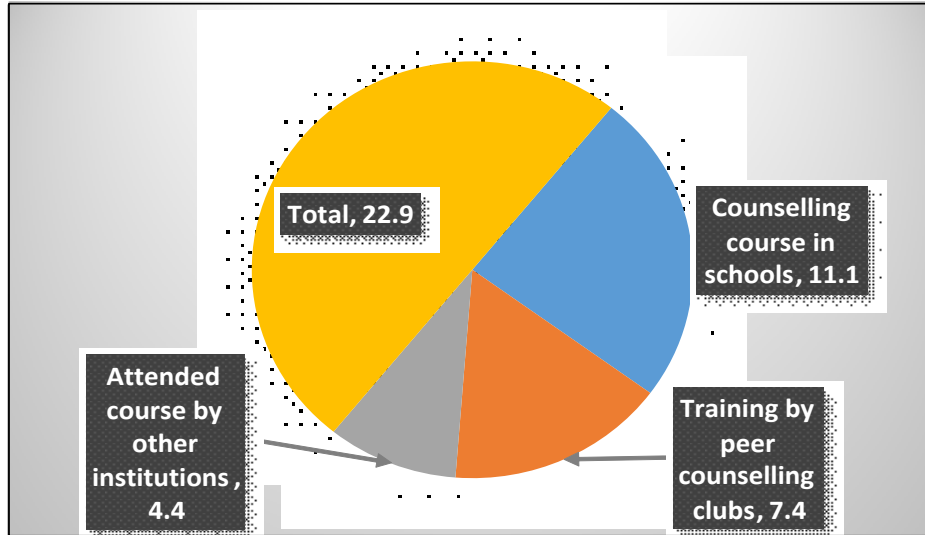


Figure 4.7: Students who attended more than one Training

4.4 Methods used in Training Peer Counsellors

The study sought to establish the methods that were used in training peer counsellors. The objective of this question was to find out if the methods of training had any relationship with the level of competence of the counsellors. Figure 4.8 depicts the types of methods that were used to train peer counsellors. A competent peer counsellor is one who has been exposed to both theories and practical method of counselling. Most participants indicated that they had undergone both theory and practical methods. Training using lectures or practical alone produces counsellors who are lopsided and may not be

competent or well balanced when counselling others. The training that majority of the counsellors had, indicate that they had a good foundation for helping their colleagues.

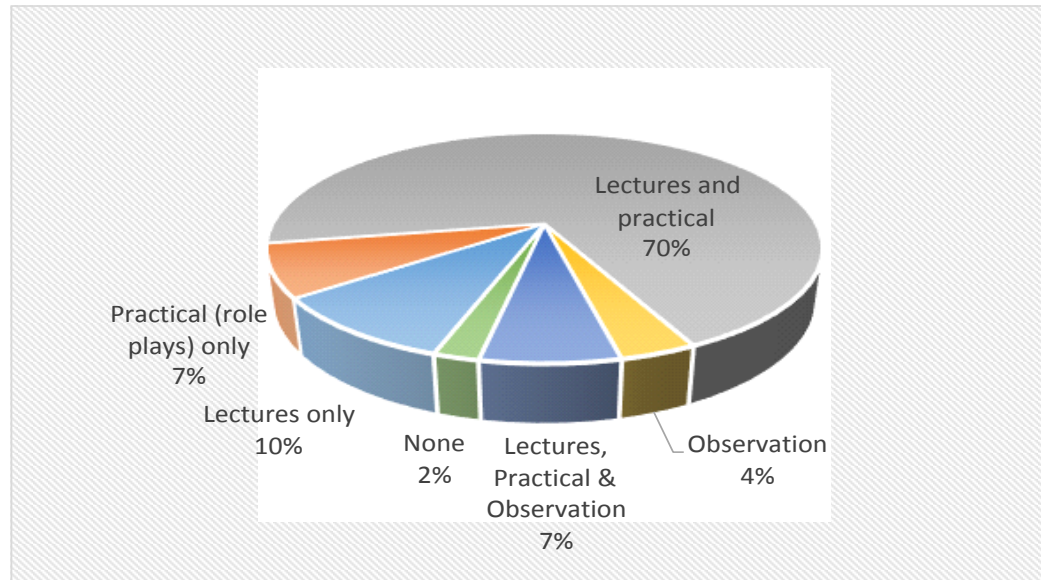


Figure 4.8: Methods used in training peer counsellors

4.4.1 Topics Covered During Training

Topics that trainees covered during their training were vital in preparing them to be effective and professional in their helping relationships. A competent counsellor is one who is versed in most areas in counselling. Many lectures or practical in only a few areas of counselling does not adequately prepare an individual to counsel. A counsellor needs to cover all essential topics related to counselling. The

respondents were required to indicate the topics they covered during their training. Figure 4.9 shows topics that were covered during the training. Results showed that majority of the respondents covered basic counselling skills and confidentiality. The topics which were equally important in counselling like referrals, keeping records, follow ups and supervisions were indicated as topics that were least covered during the training. This meant that 86(63.7%) did not know how to do referral, 98(73.6%) didn't know how to keep records, 71(52.6%) cannot do follow ups and almost half of the respondents 68(51.1%) could not assess counselees in readiness for counselling. The data showed that most peer counsellors were mainly acquainted with the basic skills of counselling and not so much of other related areas in counselling. This skewed knowledge somehow pointed out the type of competence the counsellors were using on their clients. That is, they only knew how to interrogate, listen to clients and probably just send clients off. No wonder in their suggestions for improvement of counselling, majority indicated that they needed further training in areas of deficiency. A balanced counsellor is one who is knowledgeable in all topics related to counselling.

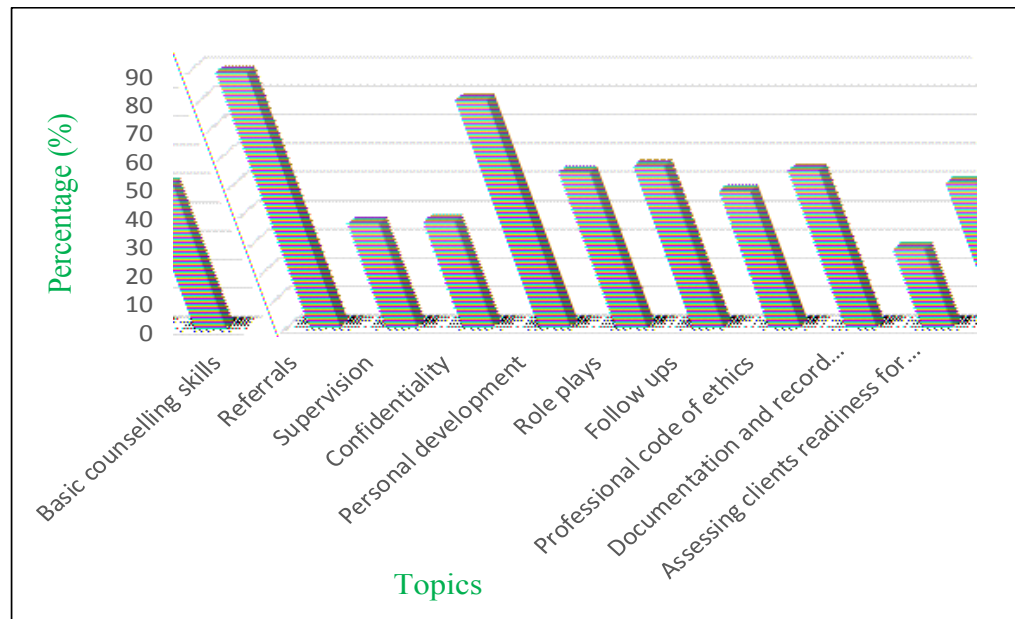


Figure 4.9: Topics covered during Training

4.5 Duration of Practicum

Practicum is a period of training whereby trainees put into practice what they have learned into a real situation. Practicum may range between four to 12 weeks depending on the time the practicum begins and the conditions of the venue. Figure 4.10 illustrates the duration that peer counsellors took in their practicum. Ninety three (70%) peer counsellors indicated that they took between six (6) and more than ten (10) weeks in their practicum. This was a good indicator of practical training and experience for the peer counsellors. Twenty four (17.7%) of the respondents had not attended any practicum. A competent counsellor should have a long duration of exposure in the practicum. Counsellors, who had less than six weeks of practicum, had therefore less exposure of interacting with clients, which in a way would affect competence. But having a long exposure of practicum without appropriate, supervision does not help to develop relevant competence. The study revealed that some of the students did not have relevant supervision during the practicum. This meant that such counsellors were not adequately prepared, and therefore needed more help in the technical aspect.

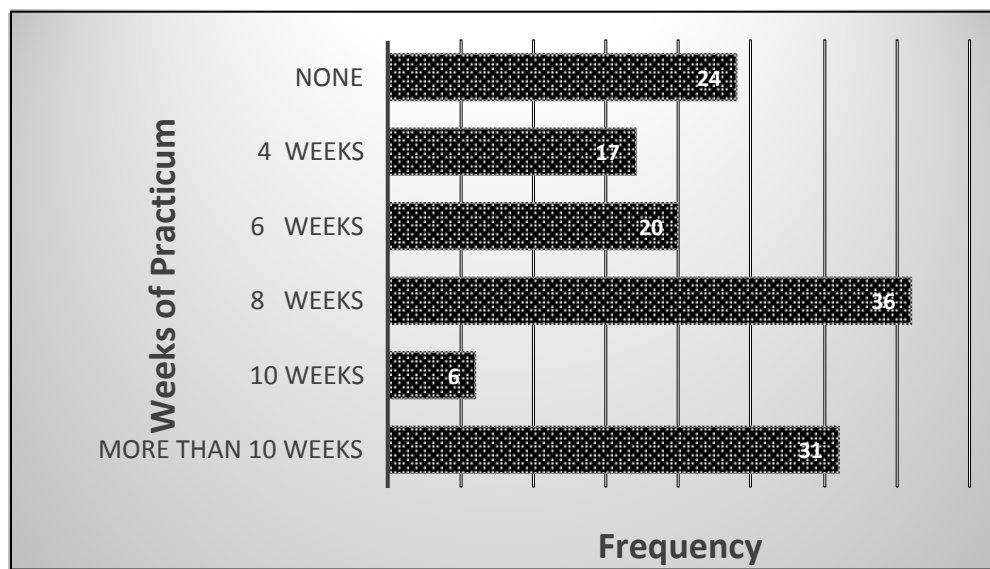


Figure 4.10: Duration of practicum**4.5.1 Supervision**

Practicum should also be the time when a lot of supervision is carried out by the relevant tutors. The number of visits and assessments a supervisor makes to a trainee determines the quality of the competence the student acquires. The more supervision visits, the better the training. Supervision of the peer counsellor is vital to professional development of a counsellor (Cowie & Sharp, 1996). Supervision should be done by lecturer (tutor), any counsellor or by qualified peer counsellors. Supervision involves checking, advising, critiquing and helping peer counsellors. Figure 4.11 illustrates the number of periods the peer counsellors had been supervised. It was disappointing to note from the result, that 46 (34.1%) of the respondents had not been supervised at all and only 36 (26.6%) had been supervised more than four times. In other words majority 97(72.9%) of the students had not received adequate supervision. This said a lot on the nature of competence of the peer counsellors. A competent counsellor is one who has received adequate supervision. Peer counsellors feedback that they were poor in empathizing, referral, follow-ups and the like, is a clear indication that they had poor supervision. Supervision helps to improve the different skills related to counselling. It should be carried out all the time by the experts, during the training and even after.

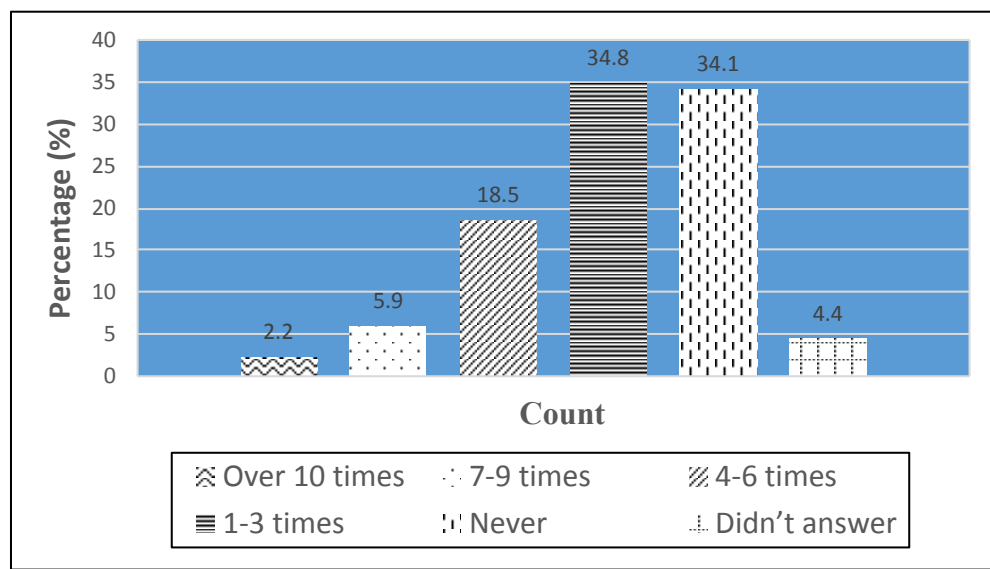


Figure 4.11: Number of times Peer counsellors were supervised

4.6. Counselling Skills that Peer Counsellors were Competent in

Mastery of counselling skills is what determines the competence an individual has in counselling. The more skills a counsellor is conversant with, the better a counsellor or professional that individual is. The researcher presented five important skills that peer counsellors should be conversant with to be considered competent counsellors. Figure 4.12 presents the skills that respondents indicated they were competent in. The data shows that majority of the respondents were competent in Basic Counselling skills, but were less competent empathy, non-judgemental and referral. The data further showed that majority (85%) of the counsellors were not conversant with assessing clients for treatment while 110(82.7%) were not versed with documentation and record keeping and only a few (24.1%) were also conversant with follow ups. Not being conversant with the skills like follow ups, referrals, assessment of clients before counselling and keeping of records, clearly showed that there was something wanting in peer counsellors' competence. A competent peer counsellor should be conversant with nearly all the skills of counselling (Nelson-Jones, 2008) rather than just a few as indicated in Figure 4.12. The results mirrored on the topics that the counsellors covered during their training. Since most of them were not conversant with the above skills, their competence in the same would be weak while counselling. This showed that for counsellors to be competent in particular skills, they ought to have been thoroughly grounded in those skills. In other words, the topics related to the skills, should be taught in depth.

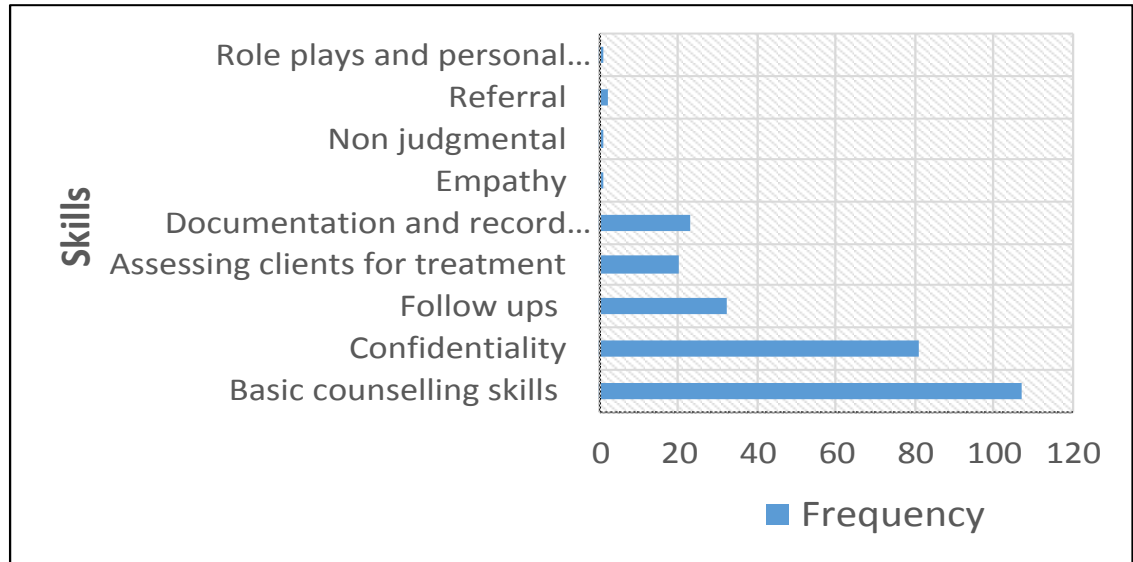


Figure 4.12: Skills that Counsellors were most competent in

4.7 Performance /Behaviour change of Clients after counselling

Competence can best be measured by assessing the outcome of behaviour change or performance of the counsellee (Suryanarayana, 2009). Any positive change of behaviour shown by the client normally is attributed to good or competent counselling. Peer counsellors were requested to indicate the level of performance in terms of behavioural change(s) they noticed had taken place on their clients after counselling. Figure 4.13 illustrates that 111 (82.2%) of the clients who had been counselled demonstrated positive behaviour changes, 18.5% of the clients demonstrated remarkable change while 63.7% showed

average change. Since change of behaviour is a process, it could be inferred that the help peer counsellors offered their clients was bearing fruit. Positive performance could also be attributed to some skills that the counsellors were good at. Nelson – Jones (2008) points out that a counsellor can be strong in some skills and weak at others. This was in agreement with the study by Arudo (2008) that peer counsellors have impact on students' change of behaviour. These responses corroborated with the findings from the interviews with informants and the clients that indicated that most students who were counselled by the peer counsellors improved in their performance. One of the interviewee (the hostel officer) said this about the behaviour change “I noticed that those who drink, after being talked to by the peer counsellors, have reduced their drinking habits and some stopped drinking completely”. This confirmed peer counsellors' effectiveness in helping students who have behavioural problems.

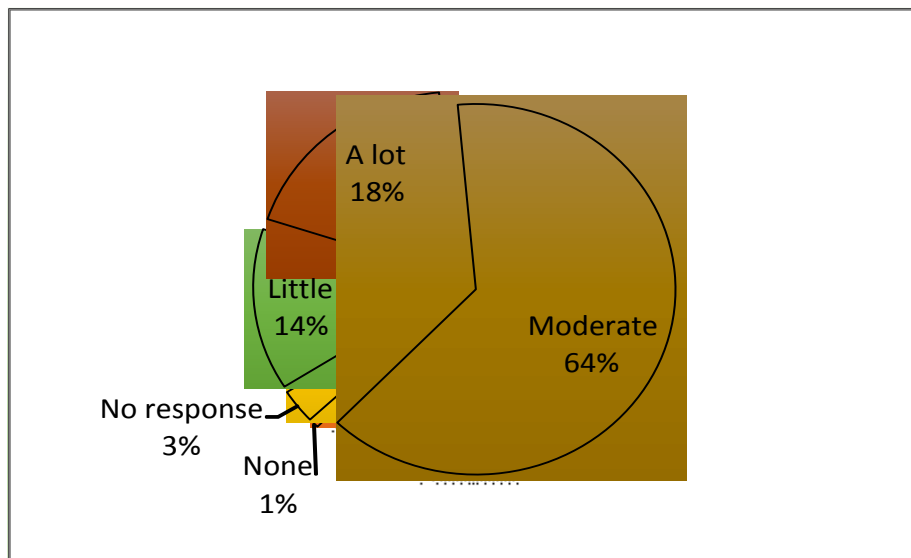


Figure 4.13: Behaviours change/s of Clients after Counselling

4.8 Challenges Encountered by Peer Counsellors while Counselling

Challenges often act against or check the performance of any given task. This variable was included to find out whether there were challenges that were encountered by the peer counsellors that could have affected their competence. However good or competent a counsellor may be, any disturbing problem/challenge may impede the effectiveness of the work done, hence render that person incompetent. The study sought to find out the nature of challenges that existed in the two campuses of Moi University that could affect competencies of the peer counsellors. Figure 4.14 shows the types of challenges that peer counsellors encountered while counselling their peers. From the study the biggest challenge was that of time for counselling, 80 (59.3%). This could be attributed to the fact that University has no specific time in their programme for counselling students. The counsellors have to look for appropriate time when to counsel their colleagues. The other challenge was venues for counselling the clients 49(36.3%). This was brought about by limited space for both learning and accommodation. The study established that most counselling took place in the field or in vacant classrooms. Sexual relationship was another challenge that peer counsellors encountered while counselling members of the opposite sex 46 (34.1%). This could explain the findings by ICL (2005) that most college students are sexually active. Peer counsellors who succumbed to this challenge, found themselves compromising the professional code of ethics (Pope & Vasquez, 2007). The other challenge was about students who needed to be assisted with money. These were students who would go for counselling with the hope of getting some monetary assistance for their use. Majority of such students were the needy cases who have financial problems. Giving practical assistance like money would easily make a counsellor vulnerable to a clients' dependency. Yet the respondents indicated that there were students who sought for practical help, money, on top of being counselled. This was a challenge to the counsellors, because just like their colleagues, they also relied on support from their parents.

The challenges cited by the peer counsellors corroborate with findings from the literature review, and the responses from the key informants who were interviewed. The challenges in some way, could easily affect the competence of the counsellor if s/he does not know how to deal with it

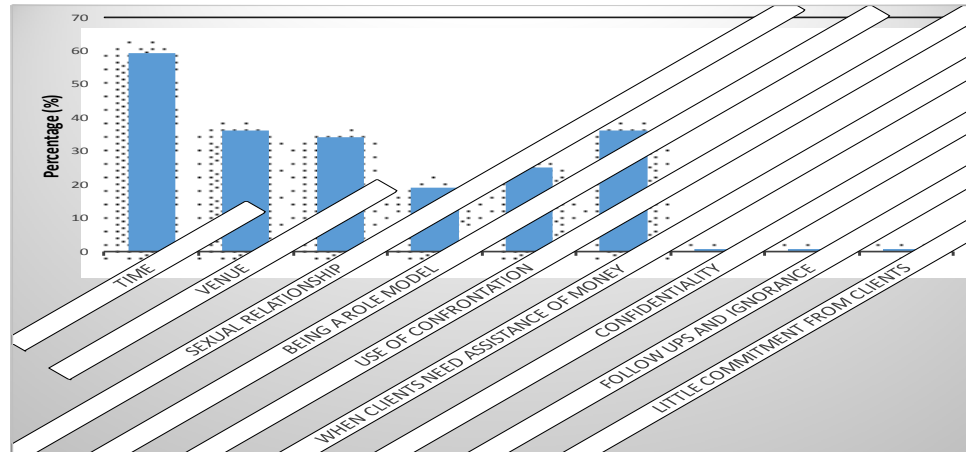


Figure4.14: Challenges encountered by Peer Counsellors while counselling

4.9 Types of Problems Students Presented to Peer Counsellors

The nature of the problems students presented to peer counsellor was a variable that was used to determine the type of personal issues students preferred to be handled by their peers. Figure 4.15 shows the type of issues students presented to counsellors to handle. Relationships ranked the highest (85.2%), followed by academics and then family. Drinking (37.0%) and finance (35.6%) were rated lowest. The other problems (4.4%) that were cited included abortion, stress, suicidal attempts, mental, drug abuse, smoking and truancy. From the study it could be deduced that most students considered their peers to be

competent in handling relationship problems. Perhaps the reason why most students preferred peer counsellors to handle relationship topic was because majority of them (including peer counsellors) also experience the same problem. Being of the same age, many of the peer counsellors would understand what their colleagues go through (Ayieko, 1997). In the relationships, students experience misunderstanding, stress, break-ups, competition, pregnancies abortion and even fighting. That is why it occupies a major part of issues shared with the counsellors. Relationships also to some extent affect the academics lives of the same students (Kamanja, 1998).

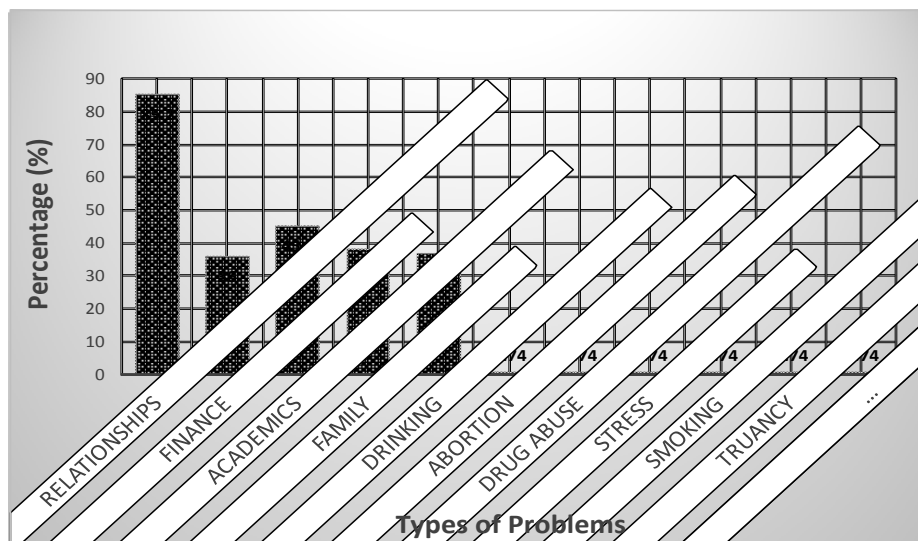


Figure 4.15 Problems Students Discuss with Peer Counsellors

It was interesting to note that relationships and academic problems followed each other. There could be a relationship between the two, in that one problem easily affects the other. That is, if one has a good relationship, then the academic performance would be good and vice versa.

4.10 Improving Quality of Peer Counselling at Moi University

The study sought responses from the peer counsellors on ways of improving the quality of peer counselling at Moi University. This question was included with the aim of improving the level of competence in the future. The peer counsellors were to choose on any of the five suggested ways that they found relevant. They were also expected to suggest other ways they thought would improve peer counselling. Figure 4.16 shows the number of responses in each category.

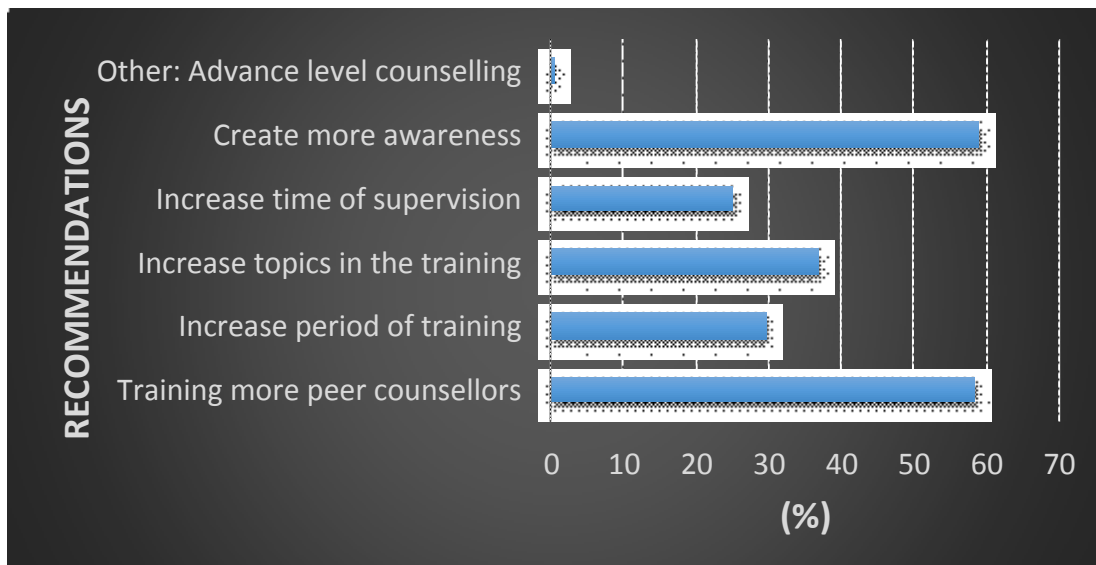


Figure 4.16: Improving Quality of Peer Counselling at Moi University

Creating more awareness of the peer counsellors 80 (59.3%) scored the highest followed by Training of more peer counsellors 79(58.5%). The number of responses on these two recommendations depicted the awareness of the counsellors on the areas that needed more attention. They need more counsellors and more publicity. Suggestion on increase of more topics for training and period of training indicated some form of inadequacy of what the peer counsellors had. This could be interpreted to mean that peer counsellors felt that they were not prepared enough for the services they were giving. To increase time for supervision 34 (25.2 %.), was another area that was recommended for improvement. This could have been pointed out perhaps due to little supervision they got from their tutors, since some of them had not received enough supervision. From the study it could be deduced that peer counsellors felt that their inadequacy to counsel competently was due to some factors that had not been attended to, and were therefore affecting their counselling. The study also revealed that peer counsellors desired more supervision than what they were getting.

4.10.1 Additional Suggestions on Improvement of Peer Counselling

In this item, the researcher sought more suggestions from peer counsellors themselves on how peer counselling could be improved at Moi University. The suggestions were to help the researcher make a recommendation of what students would wish to see being done to improve the quality of peer counselling. Table 4.1 shows peer counsellors' suggestions on ways of improving peer counselling. Most students 54% suggested that they needed to attend more workshops and have more forums for practical. This was an indication that the peer counsellors were not getting enough from what they were being taught. This also suggested on how they viewed their competence.

Publicity and awareness represented by 37(25.9%) was a suggestion that may have come from the realization that the university administration did not recognize the presence of the peer counsellors. This also meant a desire that their presence be felt. It could also be interpreted to mean that the peer counsellors had also realized that they had not made an impact for their presence be noticed. Allocation of

funds and being motivated (24.5%) was a suggestion that could have come from the observation that peer counsellors were not appreciated for the services they rendered. Since they were not given any funds to help carry out their activities, the suggestions could be an expression for consideration for assistance. Motivation is usually considered as a factor that improves performance. The kind of motivation being suggested could be in form of allowance, material and/or privileges.

Table 4.1: Additional Suggestions on improvement of peer counselling

Improve training for peer counsellors	63
Create awareness of peer counsellor	27
Create special venues for counselling	25
Have outreaches to schools	25
Visit institutes like rehabilitation centres	15
Motivate/encourage peer counsellors	23
Have competent/professionals to train peer counsellors for peer clubs	10
Provide materials(books) for training peer counsellors	10
Allocate funds for the peer counselling programme	10
Mainstream or make counselling a common course for students	10
Form more counselling clubs	10

Increase time for supervision	3
Involve the university administration to support peer counselling	3
Emphasize role of peer counselling during orientation	5
There should be more interaction with tutors	2
Introduce fee for counselling	2
Follow-ups to be intensified	1
More emphasis should be put on personal development	1
Role modelling by peer counsellors	1

4.11 Responses from Clients/Counselees

The best people who can rate the efficacy of a product are the consumers of that product. For the purpose of this study, the researcher sought clients' responses on competence of the peer counsellors. Since the researcher did not know who the clients were, he made use of the counsellors to get the volunteer clients to participate in the study. These were clients who had been counselled by the peer counsellors. The clients were informed that their identity and information would be treated in confidence. Eighty seven (87) students volunteered to provide the information. Males were 34 and females were 52, one (1) respondent did not state his/her status. The students were drawn from 2nd years (19), 3rd years (39) and 4th years (29) as shown in Figure 4.17. The volunteers were issued with questionnaires.

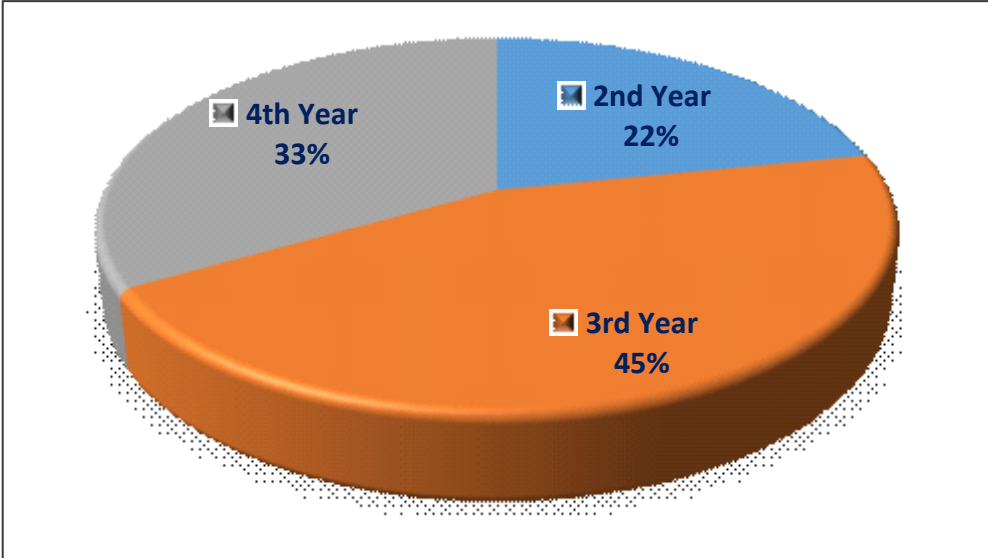


Figure 4.17: Clients' Year of Study

4.12 Counselling Competence Noticed by Clients

The clients were requested to point out the counselling competencies they noticed being demonstrated by peer counsellors. Figure 4.18 indicates the kind of competencies the clients noticed in the counsellors.

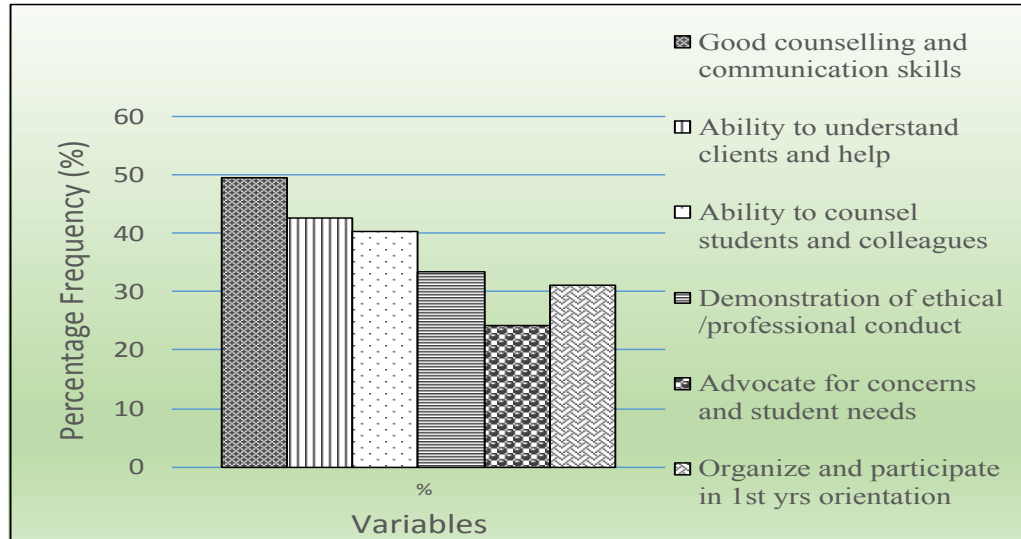


Figure 4.18: Counselling competencies Noticed by Clients

About half of the clients indicated that the peer counsellors had good counselling and communication skills, 42.5% indicated that the peer counsellors understood and helped them well, 40.2% indicated that the counsellors had ability to counsel their colleagues whereas 24.1% indicated that they had concern for students needs. The results in a way were pointing out that counsellees (clients) noticed different types of competencies in counsellors. What was interesting was that there was none of the competencies that stood out for all the clients. All the competencies pointed out were below 50%. The clients also regarded peer counsellors as people who had some degree of competence to help students. They did not doubt their competence. On participation during the orientation of first years, 27(31%) noticed peer counsellors

presence. The responses from the counselees showed that the peer counsellors competence was below average. This could be interpreted to mean that in the eyes of the clients, the peer counsellors were not seen to be actively concerned about the needs of students.

4.13 Peer Counsellors Skills Noticed by Clients

The clients were further requested to point out the type of counselling skills they noticed peer counsellors were competent in. Six types of skills were given in the questionnaire. In this question, the study was to find out whether the clients could specify the competencies they noticed peer counsellors possessed. The researcher sought to compare their responses with those of the peer counsellors and see whether both could tally. Figure 4.19 provides the responses of the clients.

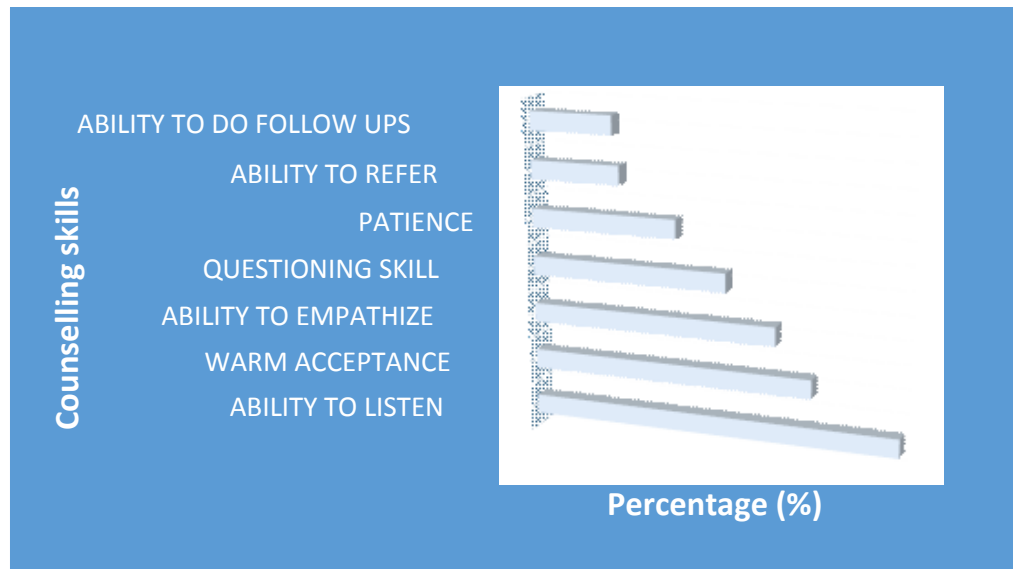


Figure 4.19: Counselling skills noticed by clients

The following counselling skills were rated slightly higher than the rest by the clients: ability to listen (59.8%), warm acceptance (46%) and ability to empathize (40.2%). The rest of the skills were rated below 40%; being patient, ability to refer (14.9%) and doing follow-ups (13.8%). The skills that were rated low indicated that probably the peer counsellors were not adequately trained in them. This rating corroborates the findings from the peer counsellors that showed that they were poor in doing follow-ups, referrals and being patient (See Figures 4.9 and 4.12). This finding therefore pointed out that peer counsellors need more training.

4.14 Problems Clients Shared with the Peer Counsellors

Figure 4.20 presents the nature of problems that clients presented to peer counsellors for help. From seven items given in the questionnaires on problems students shared with peer counsellors, 52.9% were relationship problems, 32.2% academics and 25.3% stress. These three appeared to be the most disturbing problems that students took to peer counsellors for help. Financial (12.6%), family (12.65%), drinking (12.6%) and careers (12.6%) were mild compared to the other three. These findings tallied with that of the peer counsellors where most students preferred to share their relationship problems with their peers.

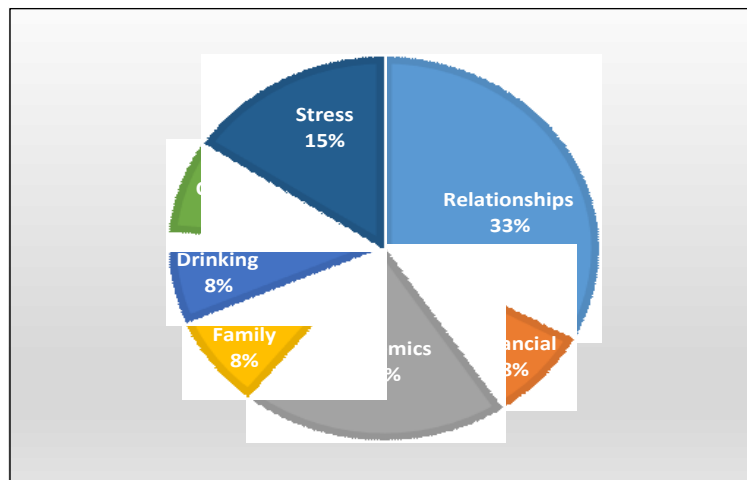


Figure 4.20: Problems Clients Shared with the Counsellors

4.15 Clients Performance in Behaviour Change after Counselling

The most vital information that the researcher required from the clients was their responses on their performance (in terms of behaviour change) after counselling. The performance of clients after counselling to some extent is indicative of the competency of the counsellor. Positive change of behaviour could be attributed to the time, value, intensity and quality of counselling the counsellor had with the client. In this question, the clients were required to score by indicating the level of behaviour change they experienced since they appeared for counselling. Figure 4.21 shows the performance of the client after counselling

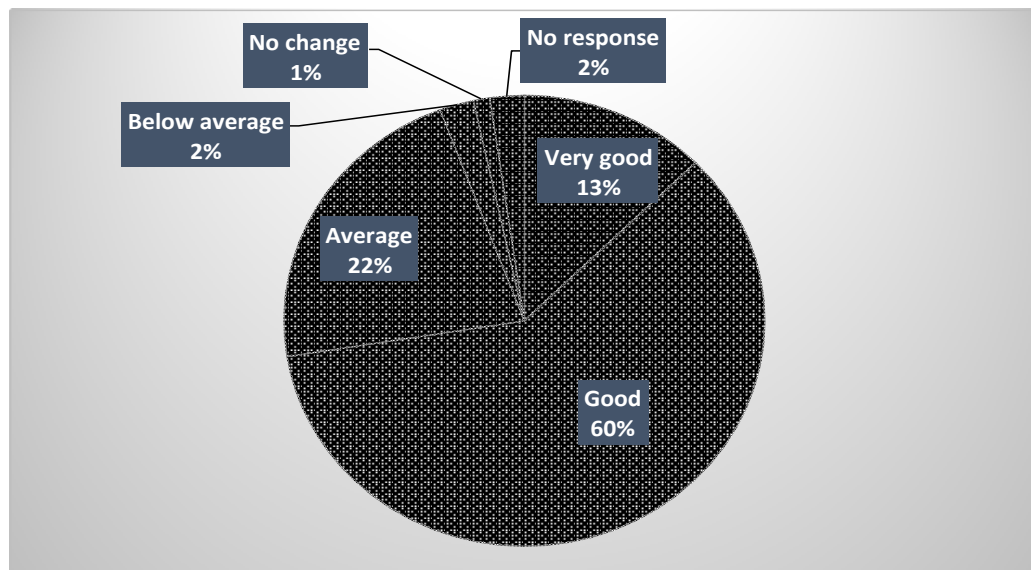


Figure 4.21: Clients Performance in Behaviour Change since Last Counselling

Eleven participants (12.6%) indicated that their performance was very good after counselling, 52 (59.8%) had good performance and 19 (21.8%) experienced average change. Those who experienced little or no change in their behaviour were 3.4%. In total those who experienced average and above average changes were 82(94.2%). This was an indication that there were significant behaviour change and improvement of performance after counselling. This could be interpreted to mean that the peer counsellors were effective in the services they offered to students. This result corroborates with the responses peer counsellors gave on the same item – that there was a positive change of behaviour after counselling.

4.16 Opinion of Clients on Challenges of Peer Counsellors

Sometimes people assume that clients are passive and do not notice the challenges counsellors encounter while counselling. This question was put to the clients to find out if they were also aware of any challenges the peer counsellors were facing in their helping relationships. The clients were expected to indicate the type of challenges they noticed the counsellors experienced from the six types that were presented to them. Figure 4.22 indicates what the clients thought to be the challenges peer counsellors faced on campus.

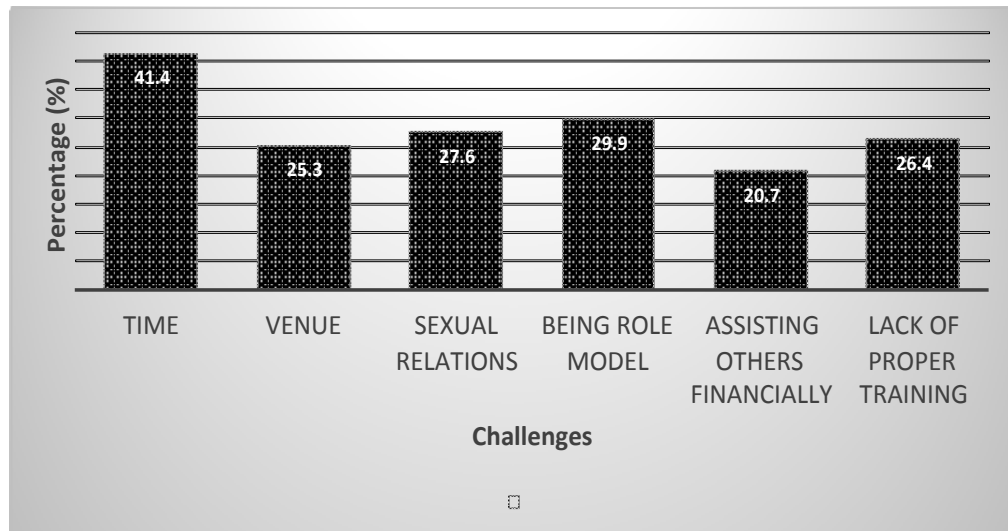


Figure 4.22 Clients Opinion on Challenges Peer Counsellors

Thirty six (41.4%) of clients indicated that time was the biggest challenge they noticed peer counsellors had. Being role model (29.9%) was second and challenge of sexual relationships (27.6%) was third. It was interesting to note that clients viewed peer counsellors as service providers who lacked proper training (26.4%), something that the counsellors did not point as a challenge on their part. The other challenge they noticed was that of lack of venue (25%) from where they would be counselled. Two of those challenges (sexual relations and being role models) were related to the character of the peer counsellors, whereas lack of training was related to their skills. These responses on challenges in a way were an indication that clients were aware of some of the weaknesses the counsellors had that affected their competencies.

4.17 Clients' Opinion on the Level of Counsellors' Competence

The clients were presented with five items to choose from on their opinion on the level of peer counsellors' competencies. Figure 4.23 indicates the opinion of clients on the level of counsellor's competence. More than half of the clients (63.2%) felt that the peer counsellors were competent, whereas 26(29.9%) saw their competence as average. Overall, majority (93.1%) of the clients observed that peer counsellors were competent to counsel.



Figure 4.23: Clients' views on Level of competence of Peer Counsellors

4.18 Clients' Recommendations on Improvement

In this item, the clients were required to choose the type of recommendations they felt were suitable to improve the quality of peer counselling at Moi University from the five choices they were given in the questionnaire. On improvement of the quality of peer counsellors at Moi University, 51.7% of clients saw the need of creating awareness as being paramount. This could be an indication that not many students were aware of the presence of the peer counsellors. This could be tied to lack of adequate publicity during orientation of first years, or lack of continuous publicity of the service to the students. Training of more counsellors was 42.5% and increasing period for training was 28.7%. The need to train more peer counsellors could be an indication that not many students who had needs were being reached with the services university. Figure 4.24 shows the recommendations the clients provided.

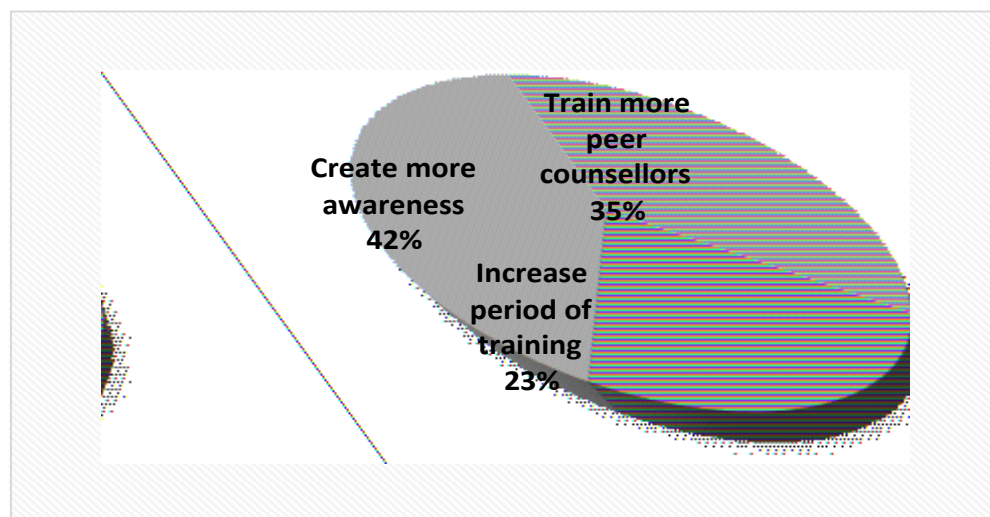


Figure 4.24: Recommendations on Improvement of Quality of Peer Counsellors

4.19 Self-Assessment of Counselling Skills during Practical Sessions

Six practical sessions were held in which questionnaires were distributed to the peer counsellors after the end of the session. At the end of each session, the peer counsellors were expected to carry out self assessment on how they used the counselling skills while attending to their clients. Scores for each session were worked out and the results were condensed into tables and mean produced for all the six sessions as shown in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Results of Peer Counsellors' Self-Assessment t on Counselling Skills during Practical Sessions

Counselling Skills	Not used (%)	Poor (%)	Fair (%)	Average (%)	Above average (%)	Excellent (%)
Appropriate sitting position	-	-	1.7	11.7	35	47
Maintain good eye contact	-	-	1.7	11.7	28.3	53.3
Attend to the client	-	-	-	13.3	42	43.3
Make the client at ease with you	-	-	5	13.3	48.3	21.7
Accept the client	-	-	-	6.7	33.3	55
Actively listen to the client	-	-	-	8.3	40	48.3
Use open ended questions	-	-	8.33	20	20	23.3

Understand the body language	3.3	1.7	11.7	25	38.3	15
Empathize with client	-	-	16.7	21.7	46.7	10
Be silent during the session	8.3	6.7	8.3	23.3	33.3	16.7
Resist giving advice	5	8.3	13.3	16.7	36.7	13.3
Paraphrase content accurately	1.7	1.7	6.7	13.3	48.3	23.3
Reflect clients feeling accurately	1.7	1.7	16.7	21.7	36.7	15
Disclose self appropriately	16.7	3.3	21.7	23.3	15	11.7
Confront appropriately	10	3.3	8.3	30	33.3	10
Control your emotions	3.3	1.7	6.7	16.7	35	31.7
Plan action with the client	5	1.7	1.7	23.3	40	25
Resist giving practical help	15	1.7		8.3	16.7	55
Set deadline for plan of action	11.7	3.3	6.7	30	30	13.3
Referral of client for further help	46.7	5	8.3	18.3	8.3	8.3

From the results, it was observed that most peer counsellors rated themselves competent in the following counselling skills: maintaining eye contact (81.9%), attending to the client (85.3%), make client feel at ease (70%), active listening (88.3%), use of open-ended questions, consulting with another and plan of action with client. The skills that the counsellors did not use confidently were self disclosure (20%), confrontation (13.3%), referral (51 %) and setting deadline for plan of action (15%). The minimal use of these skills could be interpreted to mean that the clients had less knowledge on how to use them or did not see reason for utilizing them. But the overall study revealed that peer counsellors could use counselling skills appropriately. It was observed that the reason why the peer counsellors were not attending all the practical sessions was because of attending other classes. Figure 4.25 shows the results of how the peer counsellors rated themselves in all the six sessions. It was observed that in all the sessions, peer counsellors rated their ability to use counselling skills as being above average. Out of the 1119 responses on the given items in the questionnaire, 703 were above average and 191 below average. This indicated that most peer counsellors considered their counselling skills to be above average.

4.20 Non-Participant Observation and Assessment Result

Fifty four peer counsellors were videotaped during their practical training for assessment purpose. The videotaping was for two assessors - for the lecturer and for the researcher. Permission was sought from all the participating students after explaining the reason for videotaping the sessions. The video clips were later availed to the researcher for assessment. The purpose for the assessment was for the researcher to find out the level of competence the peer counsellors possessed when counselling the clients during the practical sessions. This was basically meant to help the researcher compare his findings with the peer counsellors self assessment results on the same practicals. The practicals were simulated counselling sessions done by all the participating students. The researcher used the same instruments the peer counsellors used to assess themselves (see Appendix F). The result of the researcher's assessment on the counselling skills of the peer counsellors is shown in Table 4.3. The result showed that peer counsellors were good in the following counselling skills: Appropriate sitting position (63.6%), maintaining eye contact with the client (77.3%), attending to clients (61.3%), making the client be at ease (59.1%), accepting the client (72.8%), active listening (79.5%), questioning skill (56.8%), resisting to give advice/solutions (88.6%) and paraphrase of content accurately (66%). The peer counsellors were found to be average in the use of the following skills; empathy (63.6%) and plan of action with client (50%). It was noticed that few students empathized with the clients appropriately. Some cases that were presented and needed deep empathy were left unnoticed. Skills that were hardly used at all were, use of self-disclosure (93.1%), being silent during the session (95.5%) use of confrontation (97.7%) and referral (100%). The skill on referral was not used may be due to lack of suitable client for it.

From the researcher's assessment, it was noted that in some of the skills, the peer counsellors rated themselves higher compared to the researchers' assessment. This implies that counsellors often evaluate their performance higher in any given assessment (Butcher & Scofield, 1984). It was also noticed that four peer counsellors used empty chair and relaxation techniques very well. This is an indication that apart from the skills, the peer counsellors also knew how to use other technique of counselling.

Table 4.3 Non-Participant Observation Result

	Not used (%)	Poor (%)	Fair (%)	Average (%)	Above Average(%) []	Excellent (%)
Appropriate sitting position	2.3	-	6.8	27.3	40.9	22.7
Maintain good eye contact	-	-	2.3	20.5	50	27.3
Attend to the client	-	-	4.5	34.1	47.7	13.6
Make the client at ease with you	4.5	-	4.5	31.8	43.2	15.9
Accept the client	2.3	-	4.5	20.5	61.4	11.4
Actively listen to the client	2.3	-	2.3	15.9	56.8	22.7
Use open ended questions	4.5	-	6.8	31.8	31.8	25
Understand the body language	29.6	68.2	-	-	-	2.3
Empathize with the appropriately	12.3	31.8	50	13.6	2.3	-
Be silent during the session	95.5	4.5	-	-	-	-
Resist giving advice	-	2.3	6.8	2.3	54.5	34.1
Paraphrase content accurately	-	6.8	6.8	20.5	45.5	20.5
Reflect clients feeling accurately	-	6.8	13.6	36.4	27.3	15.9
Disclose self appropriately	93.2	2.3	-	2.3	2.3	-
Confront appropriately	97.7	2.3	-	-	-	-
Control your emotions	97.7	-	-	2.3	-	-
Plan action with the client	4.5	11.4	20.5	29.5	25	9.1
Resist giving practical help	88.7	9.1	2.3	2.3	-	-
Set deadline for plan of action	45.5	27.3	11.4	6.8	4.5	4.5

4.21 Comparison between Peer Counsellors Self-assessment and Non-Participant

Observation Results

Table 4.4 shows comparison between peer counsellors self-assessment and the researcher's assessment results. The peer counsellors' self assessment result compared to the researcher's assessment showed that the peer counsellors rated themselves higher in all the skills as shown in the table. Counselling skills where both the peer counsellor and the researcher had almost the same scores were in the appropriate

sitting position, maintaining good eye contact, attending to client, making the client be at ease, accepting the client, actively listening to the client and using open ended question effectively. In these skills the differences in standard deviation (SD) of the two results were between 0.1 and 0.4. The counselling skills where the SD was higher (0.11-1.81) were in, ability to empathize effectively, being silent during the session, using self-disclosure appropriately, confront appropriately, being able to control their emotions, setting deadline for plan of action with the client, and referrals. In these counselling skills, the peer counsellors rated themselves higher compared to the researcher's assessment. This could be interpreted to mean that probably the peer counsellors were better grounded in basic counselling skills than other related skills.

**Table 4.4: Comparison between Peer counsellors' Self Assessment and Non-Participant
□Observation Results**

Skills	Peer counsellors assessment		Researcher's Assessment		
	Respondent	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Maintain appropriate sitting position		5.32	0.76	4.81	0.88
Maintain a good eye contact with the client		5.39	0.77	5.02	0.76
Attend to the client		5.23	0.75	4.70	0.76
Make the client at ease with you		5.05	0.81	4.74	0.79
Accept the client		5.51	0.63	4.81	0.69
Actively listen to the client		5.35	0.66	5.02	0.70
Use open ended questions accurately		4.82	0.94	4.79	0.92
Understand the body language		4.48	1.06	1.81	0.79
Empathize with the client appropriately		4.51	0.89	2.82	0.78
Be silent during the session		4.28	1.32	1.05	0.21
Resist giving advice/offering solutions		4.33	1.50	5.11	0.92
Paraphrase content accurately		4.46	1.29	4.66	1.09

Reflect the clients feeling accurately	4.65	0.99	4.32	1.11
Disclose self appropriately	4.07	1.34	1.18	0.75
Confront appropriately	3.94	1.40	1.02	0.15
Control your emotions	4.45	1.19	1.07	0.45
Plan action with the client	4.86	1.23	3.86	1.30
Resist offering practical help e.g money	4.84	1.56	1.14	0.41
Set deadline for plan of action with client	4.44	1.61	2.11	1.41
Refer the client for further help	3.20	1.81	1.00	0.00

4.22 Findings from Qualitative Data

4.22.1 Results from Interviews with Staff

Interviews were conducted for three Students' Counsellors, two Assistant Dean of students (ADO), three Hostels staff (HS) and three students leaders (SL). The objective of interviewing these members of staff and the students' leaders was to get their opinion on the competencies of peer counsellors, since they happen to interact with students much more on daily basis compared to other people on campus. The results indicated that most of them were aware of the existence of the peer counsellors. Interviewee number 1 responded: "Since we train the peer counsellors we know their existence. There are also some who take counselling courses in Education and Psychology". Only two interviewees responded that they were not aware of the peer counsellors' existence since they had not been noticed being actively involved in counselling fellow students. On competency, majority of the interviewees who were aware of peer counsellors' existence felt that they were competent to counsel other students. They also affirmed that peer counsellors went for training before they began counselling. It was further learnt from the Students' counsellors that, peer counsellors undergo elementary and advanced training. Interviewee number 4 said: "We give them certificates after training as a measure that they are capable to counsel".

The study found out that the problems students preferred to share with peer counsellors include, academics, financial, relationships, money, cohabiting, alcohol drugs, pregnancies and HIV. The issues they would take to the Students' counsellors, Assistant Dean of students or the hostels staff, would include, academics, finance, pregnancies, alcohol, family, mental problems, interpersonal conflicts and

fear. It was noticed that some of the issues students took to members of staff would be the same they shared with their peers. The only social issue that students did not share freely with members of staff was on relationships. This could be interpreted to mean that students would not wish the adults to know about their relationships with members of the opposite sex. Interviewee number 1 put it this way: “the students would not want us to know who their boyfriends or girlfriends are”. The study found out that peer counsellors referred cases which they could not handle to Student counsellors, Assistant Dean of Students or to the hostels staff. Interviewee number 3 put it that the peer counsellor will not come to you when they are successful but only when the counselee has a problem.

The study also found out that students, who were counselled by the peer counsellors, changed their behaviour after counselling. Interviewee number 1 commented; “There are some of the students who change remarkably after talking to the peer counsellors”. Interviewee number 3 also confirmed this by saying: “We have noticed changes in relationship problems when a student is counselled by the peer”. Interviewee number 6 also reported: “a Muslim student helped a mentally disturbed student until he got better”. Interviewee number 5 said: “through them, we have noticed the level of taking drugs go down on campus”. For that matter, members of staff made use of them quite often to assist their colleagues.

The interviewees reported that some of the challenges they noticed the peer counsellors experienced included, lack of respect from their peers. Interviewee number 7 commented: “if the peer counsellor does something that others disapprove she loses respect from the other students”. Interviewee number 2 said: “Since most peer counsellors come from humble backgrounds, students from well to do families have no regard for them, and do not respect their counselling”. Time for counselling, lack of venue to counsel, lack of motivation, helplessness, lack of financial support, lack of supervision, sexuality (problem with the person of the opposite sex) are part of the challenges that counsellors encounter. Interviewee number 3 pointed out that one of the challenges the peer counsellors grappled with was that “students don’t know when and how to stop the counselling”.

The respondents suggested a number of recommendations that could be put in place to improve the quality of peer counsellors at Moi University. Interviewee number 3 said: “Pay them allowance to motivate them, institutionalize the programme, recruit more peer counsellors, let the peer counsellors be recognized by university administration and all departments, intensify the trainings, and get more external trainers”. Interviewee number 1 suggested: “Have more professional counsellors for the trainings, have thorough vetting during recruitments and encourage the peer counsellors to have formal sessions with Dean of students to get feedback on what they are doing”. Interviewee number 6 gave suggestions which were related to hostels, “The peer counsellors should liaise with the hostels staff to be advised on students who may require counselling. The peer counsellors be attached to the young mothers group and the wardens and be distributed to different hostels”. Interviewee number 7 who pointed out that he was not aware of the existence of the peer counsellors suggested that there should be more publicity on them so that more students could make use of them.

4.22.2 Results from Focus Group Discussions

The researcher gathered sixteen peer counselors (eight females and eight males) into two groups of eight each for Focused Group Discussion (F.G.D). The objective was to get their opinion and more information to help consolidate the findings gathered through the questionnaires. The reason for using F.G.D was for triangulation purpose. The responses from the F.G.D are presented following the questions that were asked.

On the nature of problems students present to peer counsellors, the participants responded that they were mainly relationships, family, roommate conflict, spiritual, drugs and drinking. Interviewee number 2 of Group 1 said:

On drugs, in most cases they are reluctant to talk about it, but later they open up. On relationships most of them are free to share what they go through. But some are not so free. They prefer to use a friend to come to see us. Those who have drinking problem are more free compared to those who take drugs.

On whether students made use of them when in difficulties, it was reported that it is only those who knew the peer counsellors are the ones who approach them. Interviewee number 4 of Group 1 said, “Others get information about us from other students. Others also come to us after being referred by those who know us”.

About the training background they had before becoming counsellors, they stated that, they didn't counsel until they got the skills of how to counsel. “We don't allow others to counsel until they are trained” (Interviewee 5 of group 1).

As to whether first years also counsel other students, interviewee 1 of Group 1 said, “They don't counsel in the first semester. They mostly refer clients to us. But after learning the basics of counseling and the ethics, they can counsel in the second semester. In most cases they refer the students to us.”

On the topics they cover during their training, the following were reported : stress, trauma, HIV and relationships. They stated the training mainly covered areas that affected students on campus. On being questioned about the topic on basic counseling skills (since it did not feature spontaneously until the researcher asked), interviewee 6 of Group 2 put it this way, “ We handle the topics together. For example we can spend at least 45 minutes on a counseling topic then continue with another topic”.

Peer counsellors did not seem to have systematic method of training on topical issues. For example, students who take counselling as a course in regular classes, sometimes use case studies to train.

The challenges peer counsellors encountered when counselling were presented as follows by interviewee number 8 of Group 2:

What frustrates me most is when a person keeps coming to me on the same problem over and over again. And even after talking to her she doesn't change. This is a challenge to me because it makes me feel that am not effective.

Interviewee number 3 of Group 2 said that confidentiality was a challenge. Clients would go to the peer counsellors but were not so free with them for fear of being exposed, “A student would come and begin to talk indirectly by using another person name instead of himself. It is like he doesn’t trust you.”

Clients having fixed mind when seeking help was another problem. Interviewee number 6 of Group 1 said, “Some clients come with already a set mind that their problem is so difficult that I can’t solve.” This supports study done by Shallcross(2010) that some clients are so stubborn during counselling.

Lack of suitable venue was a major challenge that was brought up. A number of the participants concurred that this was a problem that affected their services to the clients. Interviewee number 5 of Group 1 put it this way, “We don’t have special rooms for counselling. If a client comes and your room mate is in the room, he (client) feels shy to talk”.

It was interesting to note that there were some clients who went to see the counsellors not necessarily for counselling, but to test their ability to counsel. Interviewee number 2 of Group 2 stated it this way, “Some people come to test whether you are capable to counsel them. For example you may counsel someone then at the end he tells you that he was just joking and wanted to know if I could counsel”. One of the participants was so infuriated with this and remarked, “Counselling takes time. And for one to tell you that he was just joking, it is like rubbishing your effort. This is very annoying” (Interviewee 1 of Group 1).

Other challenges that the peer counselors experienced include feeling inadequate to handle some problem due to lack of information (Interviewee 8 of Group 2) and how to deal with psychiatric cases (Interviewee 1 of Group 2).

The participants were asked to state the number of weeks they spent for practicum. Majority of them being education students who were not majoring in counselling, said that they didn’t have any practicum for counselling. But one of them a counselling psychology student, said that he had 11 weeks. But even

that period was not sufficient for him. He put it this way: “Much of the practicum I had, I was observed by supervisors who were not my tutors”.

On supervision during practicum Interviewee number 3 said:

The counselling lecturer came only once for the entire period. The others who came to supervise me were not experts. When you have someone who has taught you, you feel more confident because you need him to show you where you are weak. But when he is not there you feel cheated.

This confirmed the responses they gave in the questionnaires that few of them had been exposed to practicum and supervision. Overall majority of the participants felt that they did not have enough supervision on the services they gave to students.

Concerning counselling skills they felt they were competent in, the following skills were reported as the ones they were able to use confidently, these were, Listening, Questioning and Attending.

On use of confrontation as a skill, most of them said that they were afraid of using it. Only one participant reported that he had no problem using it on his clients “Am very good at confrontation” (Interviewee number 3 of Group 2).

It was noted that none of them mentioned the skill of empathy. When asked whether they knew how to empathize, all of them said they were not competent in that skill. No wonder this skill had the least score in the questionnaires. The skills they stated they were not competent in included: Documentation, Assessment of clients for counselling, follow ups and referral.

It was encouraging however to learn that peer counselling has positive effects on students behaviour. The counsellors reported that they noticed positive behavior changes in the clients they had counselled. Most of the participants responded to the affirmative on this. Interviewee number 8 of Group 1 said, “On relationships, some girls get a period of evaluating what I have told them on what they have been doing. After that they stop and become self-aware. Actually, many girls change after that”. Interviewee number 1

of Group 1 said this about a client he was counselling, “One told me that he was cheating in exams. But when he did the exam last semester, he reported to me that he performed better than the previous one because I had talked to him against cheating”.

Counselling had helped some students build their self esteem . “ A student who was looking down upon himself was now able to express himself more assertively” (Interviewee 5 of Group 1). These responses tally with what Heravi (2004) comments on the use of peer counsellors towards helping their colleagues on campus.

The researcher further enquired on the ratio of positive and negative changes they noticed in their clients. Three participants commented thus: “ More than 50% of those I have counselled have changed positively” (interviewee 3 of Group 2). “ About 70% are moving towards positive change. Only 30% have a relapse on change” (Interviewee 1 of group 2). “On relationships, 80% of those I have counselled have changed” (Interviewee 8 of Group 1). When asked to rate overall the level of behavioral changes they had noticed in their clients, they all said that it was average.

The researcher inquired about any behavioural changes they noticed on students who were alcoholic, since this was the most abused drug in college. Majority of the participants responded that they had noticed little or no change in those who were taking alcohol.

When asked to comment on their competence as counsellors, majority of them said they were not competent, especially those who were not taking counselling psychology course. Their responses were as follows, “ We need more training, since we do not get suiFigure people to train us” (Interviewee7 of Group 1). “ I am not fully baked. Some cases that came to me are so complicated and am unable to handle” (Interviewee 2 of Group1). From those who were do counselling psychology the response was: “Am heading towards 75% - 80% I still need to be fully equiped” (Interviewee 3 of Group 2). Interviewee number 7 of Group 2 said that, “To me, competence cannot be measured on facial observation because of lack of thorough parctice. I cannot say am fully competent”.

All the participants felt that they had some inadequacies that needed more training. As to which specific areas they needed training, the following areas were suggested :

Confidentiality, “ How I can convince a client that the information he has shared will not be leaked” (Interviewee 5 of Group 1).

On counselling family issues , Interviewee number 2 of Group 1 , expressed his concern this way: “ There is this client who came and shared about the family problem. The area was so complicated and I could not do much”. When asked as to whether he did any referral, he replied, “ I talked to him to look for someone to help him. But I didn’t refer him.” This was an indication that some of the the peer counsellors werenot adequately prepared with skills to counsel.

On follow ups and referrals the following response was given by Interviewee number 1 of Group 1, “We need monitoring and evaluation. There is this guy who came to me and exclaimed that his life had been ruined. When I refered him to the students’ counsellor he refused to go.”

It was expressed by most participants that often clients were reluctant to go for referral when requested to do so, due to confidentiality reason. Interviewee number 6 of Group 2 said that, “When am requesting a student to see another person for further attention, she thinks that I want to leak the information”. This challenge is echoed by Shellcross (2010) that some students donot like to be referred to another counsellorThis somehow explained why most peer counsellors did not score well on use of referral as a skill in the questionnaires.

When asked to rate the level of their competence, majority of them said that it was average.

On improvement of the quality of peer counselling at the university the following were suggested as areas that needed attention:

Support

We need monetary support to buy materials for training (Interviewee 2 of Group 1).

Venues for counselling

Most of the counselling we do, are carried in classrooms or other places. We need specific venue where students can come for counselling (Interviewee 5 of Group2).

Publicity

Peer counselling is not well known as it should be, students don't know we are peer counsellors. We need some identity so that students know who we are (Interviewee 1 of Group2). Another participant (Interviewee number 10) felt that during the orientation of the freshers, the peer counsellors should be introduced to them by the administration.

Assessment Training

We need assessment from qualified person especially during our trainings (Interviewee number 4 of Group 2). On Exposure, one had this to say “ We need exposure in areas where counselling takes place so that we can witness how clients are handled in those set ups” (interviewee 5 of Group 2). On time, all of them unanimously agreed that they needed extra time for counselling, due to the stringent time for studies they have while on campus. And on Practicals, interviewee 5 said, “We need more practicum to apply on the theories we have learnt” (Interviewee 5 of Group 2).

Throughout the discussion, the researcher noted that none of the participant commented on professional ethics. He then posed the question as to whether sexual relationship was an issue in peer counselling. To his amazement, all participants responded in the affirmative. One female participant (interviewee number 6 of Group 1) put it this way: “ I was talking to this guy, then in the process he switched on to relationship topic. He was interested in me.”

Interviewee number 5 of Group 1 cautioned on romancing with client when counselling. He said, “My friend was counselling this girl and later started romancing with her. This counsellor is now having psychological problem because he is in a relationship and he is so affected”. Interviewee number 2 of Group 1 reported that a client requested for relationship with him after being assisted, “I gave her money and then she came back and now wanted us to develop a relationship”.

The participants expressed that being role models was a challenge to them. Students expected too much from them. Interviewee number 1 summed it this way: “At times we deceive people and we are not ourselves. Other students don’t want us to have fun”.

4.23 Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings of this study was done in relation to the objectives of the study. The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the competence of peer counsellors at Moi University. The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To find out the opinion of students on the level of peer counsellors competence at Moi University
2. To investigate the training background of the peer counsellors at Moi University
3. To examine the duration of practicum and supervision of counselling at Moi University
4. To identify the counselling skills that the peer counsellors are competent in.
5. To investigate the performance of counselees after counselling at Moi University
6. To identify challenges that peer counsellors encounter when counselling their peers at Moi University.

The above mentioned objectives were generated to find out if the peer counsellors were competent to counsel students at Moi University.

4.23.1 Opinion of Students on the Level of Peer Counsellors’ Competence

Pelling (2009), states that a competent counsellor is one who has mastered a set of counselling skills. Yet according to McLeod (1992), competence should not be restricted to skills only, but should also involve “any quality or abilities of a person which contributes to effective performance of a role or task” (p.360). The study revealed that the peer counsellors felt that their level of competence was average, while the clients felt that their level was above average (63.2%). This rating could be based on their ability to use basic counselling skills (Ivey & Authier, 1978) and the performance of the clients who they helped successfully. The university staff also considered their level to be above average. This level of competence would be considered adequate to handle issues that are not that complicated. But where a

student is faced with a problem such as threat to commit suicide, then average level of competence may not be adequate. Gross and Robinson (1987), state that competent counselling should involve: professional qualifications, professional growth, ability to provide services for the clients, having accurate knowledge and expertise in special field and the capacity to solve personal issues. This kind of competence was found to be lacking in the peer counsellors. Solid competence is based not only on the ability to master and use counselling skills as Pelling (2009) suggests, but also being able to demonstrate other skills related to counselling. From the study, it was observed that the peer counsellors were less effective in using the following skills: ability to refer, empathize appropriately, self- disclosure. The counsellors also indicated that they needed more training in keeping records, assessment of clients in readiness to counselling and how to do follow-ups. The study also revealed that some of the counsellors were weak in observing the professional ethics. These weaknesses revealed that peer counsellors lacked some fundamental skills of counselling. For example, if a counsellor failed to refer a case which s/he could not handle effectively and which later resulted to harm the client, then that counsellor's competence is highly doubted. To be very competent in other areas of counselling and fail to observe other basic skills renders the client weak in counselling (NACAC, 2000).

Lambert (1992) rates four determinants of a competent counsellor as follows: skills -15%, clients' belief on counsellors for change -30%; personal qualities of counsellor for example empathy -30% and clients' level to change – 40%. Others Sperry *et al.* (2003) indicate that important parameters to measure level of competence is the clients' satisfaction with counsellors' attributes and their performance. If the peer counsellors rated their level of competence on these determinants then they would score high.

Recommendations given by peer counsellors on how to improve the quality of peer counsellors, in a way seemed to have been pointing on their level of average competence that needed more attention. From the interviews during the focused group discussions, the peer counsellors affirmed unanimously that they were less competent to counsel. This contradicted the results given by the questionnaire and the members of staff. But it could be surmised that the competence that was being referred to was that of basic

counselling but not being able to use all the skills effectively. NACAC (2000) and Loesch (1988) recommend that competent Peer counsellors should be able to demonstrate other abilities related to counselling other than basic counselling skills. The study established that the peer counsellors were deficient in some of those skills like documentation of the clients' data. The peer counsellors thus need to improve on the other skills that are equally useful in counselling. The researcher assessment concludes that the peer counsellors' level of competence was average.

Peer counsellors self assessment on mastery of counselling skills, revealed that they rated themselves higher in use of basic counselling skills. The specific skills which indicated higher confidence were in; active listening, attending to client, use of open ended questions, paraphrasing statement, resistance to giving advice. Throughout their six sessions of practical, none of the counsellors indicated to have referred a client for further review. For all the peer counsellors in the study to indicate that they were unaware of any client who needed referral, points out that they did not understand the use of referral in counselling (Collins, 2007). A comparative assessment by the researcher using video clips revealed that peer counsellors were average in empathizing with their clients and were weak in making use of self disclosure, confrontation and referral skills. Empathy and referral skills are key in any counselling situation (Pope & Vasquez, 2011). And a counsellor who does not know how and when to empathize, may cause the client to doubt his/her competence to counsel. In the video the researcher noted three cases that needed empathy, but the counsellors either ignored or did not notice the body language that was communicated. This could easily be interpreted by the client to mean that the counsellor did not care. Although Shepherd, Britton & Kress (2008) posit that deficiency in certain skills does not make a counsellor be considered incompetent, it still affects the competence of the counsellor. For the counsellors to rate themselves competent but not being able to take note of basic things in counselling, could be interpreted to mean that their understanding of being competent is confined to listening, questioning, reflecting and termination, but not what goes on with it.

4.23.2 Training Background of Peer Counsellors at Moi University

From the study it appeared that those students who were taking counselling as a degree course were better placed in counselling compared to those who were doing other courses. Although majority of them indicated that they were exposed to both lectures and practical methods of training, there were still quite a number that expressed a desire for more exposure in practical. In the training, there were expressions (from the recommendations) that some of the tutors were not professionally equipped to train the students. These were mainly the counsellors who were trained in their clubs by their colleagues. Some of these trainers had not been thoroughly trained to handle some topics that were technical. The trainings or topics handled by incompetent trainers would end up producing less competent peer counsellors. Sanders (1996) point out that training is important in the development of counselling skills. On the other hand, Fairburn and Cooper (2011) hold that a competent therapist is one who has knowledge and skill to deliver expected treatment. If the knowledge is not sufficient then the counsellor is less competent. Since the study revealed that some counsellors lacked professional counsellors for their training their competence was not as strong as would be expected. Peer counsellors recommendations on the need for more training and increased period of training, confirms their average competence in counselling.

The study revealed that most of the topics covered in the training were basically micro- counselling skills (Ivey & Authier, 1978) like listening, attention, responding, empathy, question and the like. The other topics like use of referrals, supervision, personal development, follow-ups, observation of professional code of ethics, record keeping and assessment of clients in readiness for counselling, were given less attention. Adequate training entails covering all areas related to produce a competent counsellor and not just a few. This meant that the peer counsellors were knowledgeable in some topics but poor in others. This skewed approach in acquisition of knowledge ended up in producing counsellors who were not competent in all areas of counselling. No wonder most counsellors expressed desire to have more topics included in the trainings. The topics they covered and understood well, only equipped them to develop certain type counselling skills but not all skills as is required of a competent counsellor. Fairburn and Cooper (2011) insist that training of a therapist is important in enabling them to be competent therapist.

Although the study revealed that majority of them covered basic counselling skills, they were not able to apply some of those skills in practical situations. For example their knowledge on use of empathy was not seen during their practical sessions. This was further revealed through their responses, that 99% of them were not competent to use empathy skill. This casts doubt on the relevance of the topics that could not be put into practice. The methods that were used in training them revealed that majority of them were thoroughly exposed in both theories and practical. This gave them a feeling that probably they were better placed to counsel their peers competently. But responses from their recommendations revealed the reverse, that they needed more practical and exposure in counselling situation. This that the counsellors were not exposed to adequate training sessions that could have enabled them get sufficient skills on the topics they covered and hence give them the competence to counsel with confidence.

4.23.3 Duration of Practicum and Supervision of Peer Counselling at University

Although many peer counsellors indicated that they had adequate practicum (between 6 and 10 weeks), there were still others who felt that the period was not adequate. Some felt that they needed more exposure in institutions like rehabilitation centres and not to be confined to educational institutions only. This points out that the longer a person practices a skill, the more confidence s/he gains and the more competent s/he becomes (Suryanarayana, 2009). Practicum exposes trainees to real life situation and thereby equips them with better skills that sharpen their competence. The study revealed that peer counsellors did not have sufficient period of practicum. They needed more time of practicum than the time indicated. On supervision, the study revealed that only few students were satisfied with this exercise. Majority of them had not been supervised. And even those that had been supervised (33.1%), they were not satisfied with the supervision because it was mostly done by none experts. According to Cowie & Sharp (1996) supervision is what strengthens competence of a counsellor. Peer counsellors cannot be competent if they lack a person who should critique, correct, advice, debrief and help them. McLeod (1992) points out that through supervision counsellors notice their weakness, strengths and gaps that need improvement. This was seen to have lacked among the peer counsellors and thus possibility affected their competence.

4.23.4 Counselling Skills that Peer Counsellors were Competent at

Majority (80%) of peer counsellors indicated that they were competent in basic counselling skills, but were poor in follow-ups, empathy, referrals, assessment of clients and record keeping. The main area that most of them seemed to be competent in, were basic counselling skills (Ivey, 1971) and how to observe confidentiality. The study revealed that they were poor in doing referrals, documentation and follow-ups. The study also showed that they were also averagely conversant with, assessing clients in readiness for counselling, observing professional code of ethics and seeking for personal development. To be knowledgeable in only two areas, average in four and weak in four, placed the peer counsellors' competence in rather a weak pedestal. A competent counsellor should be skilled in all areas of counselling. Their weakness was further echoed by their own suggestions, that there was need to increase the period and topics of training and time for supervision. That meant that for peer counsellors to be considered competent in counselling, they must possess adequate knowledge, skill (Kruger & Dunning, 1999), and practice (Suryanarayana, 2009). Competence demands that the counsellor should be conversant with all skills in areas that are related to his/her expertise (Shepherd, Britton & Kress, 2008). For the counsellors to indicate that they majored mainly in basic counselling skills, this showed that they were not fully baked as counsellors. The peer counsellors as such could not be regarded to be competent because they were weak in other equally important areas that needed their intervention. Not to be able to refer or do follow-ups is a major flaw for any counsellor and easily shows that one is not competent. On rating their level of competence, less than half (46.6%) of the peer counsellors considered themselves adequate to counsel. Although to the clients (63.2%), the counsellors appeared competent, but their lack of skills in other areas of counselling put their performance in a wanting scale. The response from the focused group discussion summarized how they viewed their competence, that they were not competent.

4.23.5 Behavioural Change/Performance of clients after counselling

The study revealed that majority of the clients performed better after counselling. The responses on performance of the counselees from the clients, counsellors and the interviews revealed that there was

positive change of behaviour after counselling. This was in resonance with what other studies have found on the effect of peer counselling in improving change of behaviour on students, (Pearson, 1990; Heravi, 2004; Arudo, 2008). The aim of any counselling is to help clients improve their performance. The indicator of any effective counselling is the level of change in the performance of the clients. If the change in behaviour is noticed to be positive, then counselling is considered effective and the counsellor competent. The study has shown that peer counsellors were effective in helping the clients develop a change of behaviour and thus improve their performance.

4.23.6 Challenges Encountered by Peer Counsellors when Counselling

The study set to find out the challenges encountered by counsellors. This part of study was basically to find out if there were major challenges that could impede on their performance and thereby affect their competence. There were a number of challenges that were cited by both peer counsellors and their clients. Some of these were like: time, clients desire to be given money, sexual relationships, being role model and venue for counselling. The challenges that could easily impinge on the competence of peer counsellors were sexual relationships and being role model, because they touch directly on the personality or the character of peer counsellors and therefore need to be addressed seriously. The character of peer counsellors speaks volumes regarding the services they offer. It was sad to note from the study, that counsellors and their clients reported that some peer counsellors were weak in the area of sex with their clients. Pope and Vasquez (2011) point out the importance of observing ethics when a counsellor is dealing with client of opposite sex. This weakness naturally affects any outstanding skill the peer counsellors had and make them incompetent. The peer counsellors are thus called upon to observe seriously the ethics required of a professional counsellor. Both peer counsellors and clients indicated that some peer counsellors had weakness on sexual relationships when counselling students of opposite sex. This challenge was further echoed by one of the key informant who said: "Some of the peer counsellors have been reported for soliciting for sex from clients" □ Such statement can nullify the effectiveness of peer counselling in the university. Although other people may argue that since college students are sexually active (ICL, 2005) and that this is bound to occur in any interpersonal relationship, professional

ethics should never be compromised in any social set up. Pope and Vasquez (2011) strongly caution counsellors on this behaviour that can harm the client and eventually affect the profession. They emphasize on the importance of upholding professional ethics based not only on the skills, but also how the counsellor carries him/herself. To be a role model communicates a lot to the clients the counsellors are serving. If the community dislikes the behaviour of the counsellors, then their competences are in question. Since a counsellor has power over a client (Collins, 2007), s/he should not manipulate the client to succumb to his /her sexual whims. Thus the subject of ethics on modelling and sexual vulnerability should be reemphasized to peer counsellors during their training.

The challenge on time was reported to be a major handicap for the peer counsellors. This arose due to the way the curriculum in the university is organized. This is in line with the study by Hayes and Morgan (2011) that points out that counsellors had to look for time to counsel students. There was no scheduled time upon which counsellors could render help to their colleagues. This was a challenge because the clients could seek for counselling at odd hours. In such circumstances the peer counsellors would sacrifice their time to attend to the clients. Feltham (1995) echoed that the problem of time was not just restricted to counsellors but also to clients who did not want a long time for counselling. Since the counsellors were not paid, time to counsel was indeed a sacrifice of their studies or other important duties. This supports what Hayes & Morgan (2011) state that teachers in their study had to sacrifice their time for a duty they were not paid. Time factor as a challenge in a way can be said to have some effect on the competence of the counsellors.

Venue for counselling was a challenge because most clients went to counsellors in their rooms. If the counsellor shared a room with another student, then s/he had to look for another suitable place to do the counselling, which in most cases would be a classroom. The problem would be further compounded if the classroom was also being used by other students because of scarcity of learning rooms in the university. Students who required practical help like being assisted with finance posed challenge to the counsellors, because in most cases the counsellors would not have the money to give out. When counsellors failed, to

help practically, the clients viewed them differently. The counsellors were also at pains whether to give money because according to counselling ethics, a counsellor should desist from making client dependant.

4.23.7 Problems Students Presented for Counselling

Problems that students took to peer counsellors for help included: relationships, family, academic, finance, drinking, and stress in the order of importance. From the problems students shared with their counsellors, the study revealed that male- female relationships stood out as major problem compared to the rest. This confirms research by Arnold (2002) which reported that relationship issues between male and female students are common problems in many learning institutions. This could be due to the developmental factor where relationships become the most important social influence of behaviour (Beebe *et al.*, 2006). A lot of relationships issues revolved around romance which most peer counsellors also go through. The students therefore found it easier to share such problems with the peer because they understand them better than the adults. For this reason peer counsellors need thorough training on how to handle these issues that disturb most college students. If the counsellors are not confident in use of empathy, referral skills or in observing the professional ethics as the study revealed, then they are not competent to counsel. Poor treatment of a case presented by a client may cause the person more injury and subject him/her not to trust any counsellor for further help. From the interviews with the staff, the study found out that other problems apart from that of relationships could be shared with members of staff that worked closely with them, like housekeepers, Assistant Dean of students and Student counsellors.

4.23.8 Ways of Improving Quality of Peer Counselling at Moi University

Suggestions on improving quality of peer counselling that were given by both clients and the counsellors, in a way pointed on the weak areas that were neglected during the training. The areas that clearly stood out were, creating awareness about the counsellors, increase the period of practical, and establish venues for counselling, increase training period with more workshops, increase time of supervision, provision of resources and motivation of the counsellors. In their suggestions on improvement, the counsellors

indicated that they needed qualified trainers to handle the trainings and not students. This was a concern that came from counsellors who were in counselling clubs. In other words they felt that they were not effectively being prepared for the service as compared to their colleagues who were taking counselling as courses. This explained the findings why half of the counsellors felt that they were not competent to counsel. This particular group also suggested that counselling be made a common course for all the students, perhaps as a way of reducing bias towards counselling students.

Another suggestion was the desire to be recognized by the university administration. Indeed if peer counselling has to have a remarkable effect within the students' community, the administration should support it. The Standa *et al.* (2000) and Kembo - Sure (2004) reports recommended that peer counselling should be established and strengthened to assist improve discipline in the universities. The peer counsellors offer their services to their clients free of charge yet the University does not pay them an allowance or any form of material motivation that could bolster their enthusiasm to serve. Perhaps the University could borrow what other Universities do for their peer counsellors (Charleston, 2008). Recognition by the administration in a way would motivate and encourage the counsellors to put up their best and improve their competence. Other suggestions pointed to the need for personal development as a way of improving their skills, through attending seminars or taking up counselling courses would assist counsellors sharpen their competence than relying on trainings only.

4.24 Relationship between Findings and Theoretical Framework

The findings of this study could not be conclusive without examining their relationship to the theories upon which this study was based. Hull's (1943) Theory of Learning talks about factors that contribute to effective learning that plays a role in producing competence. The theory talks about drive, reward and habit as important factors that play a role in learning. The theory stipulates that drive when combined with reward strengthens behaviour which when repeated (practiced) several times ends up in producing competence. But if the individual lacks the skill, or does not practice the skill then the outcome (competence) will not be noticed. The findings of this study revealed that the peer counsellors were not

well adequately prepared in their training to carry out counsel their peers. The topics they covered in the training were not adequate to equip them with the skills they needed for counselling. Supervision and practicum of the counselling was not adequate either, thus further de-motivating the students from carrying out their services with vigour. Challenges like venues for counselling, time for counselling, and inadequate training, in a way made the peer counsellors not to delve into much counselling as would have been expected by their clients and the institution.

Competence in most occasions develops from training, drive and practice. Hull's theory touched on the value of practice to produce a habit. That is, if what is learned is not put into practice, chances of that skill diminishing is high, hence minimal or no competence can be realized from what was learned. The Study revealed that the peer counsellors learned some topics like referral, follow-ups, professional ethics, and documentation of records and assessment of clients before counselling. But when asked to state the skills they were most competent in, more than 75% stated that they could not use the same skills they said they had learned. This probably meant that they were not practicing the skills. Many of them were mainly competent in basic counselling skills. Further, the counsellors who participated in assessing their skills during practical sessions, scored below average on the use of skills like empathy and referral. The study revealed that the counsellors were not practicing the skills these learned although they had learned. Lack of practice definitely leads to lack of competence. The study therefore confirmed the premise of Hull's theory that absence of practice contributes to less or no performance. There is thus a relationship between the theory and the study.

Kruger and Dunning's (1999) theory states that competence depends on knowledge, wisdom and ability to understand realities of life. The theory also states that great understanding of the rules of a particular domain leads one to be considered skilled. This study appears to confirm the relationship between knowledge and competence. The counsellors trained and gained knowledge of some skills like documentation, assessment of clients before counselling, follow-ups and referrals which were relevant to the practice they were expected to do. The study showed that most of the peer counsellors had knowledge

of counselling but did not delve to understand the rules of the other skills and use them. They therefore become less skilled in those other domains. Assessment of clients in readiness for counselling for example is a vital skill for any counsellor. The study revealed that the peer counsellors were not competent in this skill. They were equally not seen using this skill in their practical sessions. Failure to use such a skill in counselling showed that the peer counsellors had either no knowledge of it or did not practice it enough to gain competence of the skill. This resulted to their lack of competence in that skill.

The observation by the researcher while participants were engaged in practical captured in a video revealed that some peer counsellors had no knowledge when to use some of the skills expected of them. This finding was further confirmed through qualitative findings that they need more training in certain areas of counselling. It can thus be summed that there is some relationship between the theory and the findings from the study; that if an individual lacks knowledge and some skill, that person may not be fully competent to perform the given task. The relevance of this theory was further supported by the peer counsellors' affirmation that they were not very competent in counselling. Lack of knowledge was also noticed in their not being able to observe professional ethics. Lack of knowledge was further pointed out in some of the training that did not have sufficient topics. Their training background was somehow average. The study also revealed that they did not get experts to train them in counselling. This meant a compromise to their competence. They were not exposed to some of the topics that were of significant value to counselling.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study based on the research objectives. The conclusions of the study are made from the research findings. Recommendation for improvement of competency of peer counsellors and suggestion for introducing policy on peer counsellors' training are made. Suggestions for further research on areas related to peer counselling are also pointed out.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

The major objective of this study was to evaluate the competencies of peer counsellors at Moi University. The concern for this study was motivated by the fact that although there was counselling going on at the University through the student counsellors and with support of the peer counsellors, there seemed to have been no remarkable impacts on helping students reduce on behavioural tendencies that interfere with their education. This gave the researcher a concern to finding out the competence of the peer counsellors on the ability to counsel their colleagues effectively. The researcher developed and pursued six objectives in order to examine the competence of peer counsellors at the University.

The first objective was to establish the students' opinion on level of peer counsellors' competence at Moi University. The study revealed that their level of competence was average. Although some peer counsellors, clients and the staff felt that the level of the peer counsellors' competence were above

average, results from the trainings, practicum, supervision, challenges, and focus group discussions revealed that they were not competent in some skills. Non-participation and assessment of the practical sessions further revealed that the peer counsellors still needed some training to qualify to be considered competent.

The second objective was to establish the training background of the peer counsellors before they started counselling. The study revealed that majority of them were trained either through the formal classes they attended (for those taking counselling courses) or through the training in their clubs. It was however noted that those who were taking counselling as a course had better base compared to those who were not. Also those who were trained in their clubs did not get experts to train them but relied on their colleagues who sometimes were not properly baked. This in essence affected the nature of competence exuded.

The study also revealed that during the training, most of the peer counsellors were exposed to theory and practical aspects of training. Majority of them covered basic counselling skills. However, only a few of them covered topics on referral, supervision, follow ups and record keeping. This showed that the training was skewed to one domain of counselling and neglected other skills. This was seen to be inadequate preparation for counsellors who deal with many student issues. This could have contributed to their average level of competence.

The third objective was to establish the duration of practicum and supervision. It was observed from the findings that majority of the peer counsellors suggested that they had adequate practicum. But results from their recommendations and focus group discussion pointed out that they had insufficient practicum. This in turn affected their performance. On supervision, less than half of the respondents had adequate supervision. Majority of them had still to be supervised. For those who had the supervision, it was found that it was not satisfactory because much of it was done by non- experts. Majority of peer counsellors still needed thorough supervision to help them improve their competence.

The fourth objective was to identify the counselling skills that peer counsellors were competent in. The findings revealed that the majority of them were competent in basic counselling but not in other skills like assessing clients, follow ups or record keeping. This was in line with what was found in the second objective. This shows that most peer counsellors were mainly conversant with the counselling skills but not other skills that go along with the counselling.

The fifth objective was to establish the performance /behavioural change of clients (counselees) after counselling. The study revealed that majority of the clients had positive behavioural change and thereby improved their performance. This showed that despite their average competence in the trainings they had, peer counsellors were still able to counsel their clients and produce desired behaviour change. This was a good sign of competence.

The sixth objective was to identify challenges that peer counsellors encountered in the process of their counselling. The study revealed that two main challenges were venue and time. These were kind of institutional based. The other challenges included sexual relationship with clients, being role model and dealing with students who needed practical assistance like money. Sexual relationship with clients was considered unethical because it touched on professional ethics. The researcher observed that the students need to improve on this since it points on the character of the counsellors and may hinder students from approaching them for assistance.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed several facets of this study that are related to competencies of peer counsellors at Moi University. In relation to training back ground, it can be concluded that most of the peer counsellors felt that they did not have proper foundation of training. They felt that they were not competent enough and needed more training. It was only the counselling psychology students that were adequately equipped with skills because of the counselling course they take. The training methods they were exposed to were adequate and provided them with some knowledge on counselling. However, they

still need more practice and exposure in the areas they were incompetent in such as referrals, supervision, follow ups and record keeping.

The duration of practicum was on the average with few supervision contacts from their tutors. The students were not exposed to longer period of practices that would have allowed them gain more skills and experience in counselling. Even those that had longer period of exposure did not have adequate contact with their supervisors. This could have contributed to their competence in some skills. Peer counsellors had positive impact on the performance of the counselees in that majority of them changed after counselling.

Peer counsellors were good at using basic counselling skills such as listening, paraphrasing, questioning, responding and planning action with students. However, they were weak at other skills such as empathy, referral, follow-ups, keeping records and assessing client in readiness for counselling. They experienced challenges such as venue for counselling, time for counselling and how to handle monetary request from the clients. Others had weakness in dealing with sexual relationships with clients which in a way impacted on their competence. The students felt that the level of peer counsellors' competence was average.

It can thus be fairly concluded that peer counsellors' competence at Moi University is average. And probably this could be the reason why peer counsellors do not seem to have an impact among students at Moi University. However, the skills they have are fairly adequate to meet the needs of the students who go to them for assistance. They need more training and adequate exposure in other areas of counselling to bolster their competence and be able to reach many students.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings of this study, it is apparent that the peer counsellors have the competence to counsel their peers at Moi University; however, they need more training in order to sharpen their competencies

and assist their clients effectively. The following are recommendations to peer counsellors' trainers, University administration and policy makers.

5.3.1 Peer Counsellors Trainers

1. Time for training should be increased to enable the trainees to acquire adequate knowledge in all areas related to counselling.
2. More emphasis should be given to referral skill, follow ups, keeping of records, empathy and how to assess clients who need counselling.
3. Supervision and practicum should be intensified. The trainees should be seen several times. This would help them to be aware of their weaknesses and be able to correct and hence improve their competencies.
4. Train more peer counsellors to be able to cope with the large number of students who need counselling.
5. Introduce more group counselling to handle topics such as relationships. This could minimize the number of conflicts that arise in the interpersonal relationships and are to be handled by counsellors. This group counselling can also help to handle other issues like drinking, drugs and stress.
6. Emphasize or have special training on professional ethics. Since most college students are involved in relationships and are sexually active, training on observing professional ethics and being role model should be emphasized.
7. There is need for periodic evaluation of peer counsellors to determine their effectiveness and challenges they experience.

5.3.2 University Administration

1. Recognize the presence of the peer counsellors and the work they do on behalf of University student counsellors.
2. Motivate the peer counsellors by giving allowances or privileges.
3. Publicize and create awareness of peer counsellors by emphasizing their importance to counselling their peers.
4. Avail rooms for peer counselling.

5.3.3 Policy Makers

1. Create an institution that would be responsible to develop and oversee the running of peer counselling in all educational institutions in the country.
2. Intensify peer counsellors training by making it examinable for all students who wish to be counsellors. □This is to make the counsellors be more thorough and adequately prepared and competent to counsel other students.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

1. Longitudinal research should be carried out to establish the level of performance of the clients after being counselled by the peer counsellors.
2. A study should be carried out to compare students who are counselled by their peers and those that are counselled by the university students' counsellors.
3. Another research on peer counsellors' competence should be carried out using other methodologies to critique the findings of this study.

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- Nyaga, 2011)
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- Pope and Vasquez (2008
- Sanders (1996)

Shellcross (2010)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONSENT LETTER

Dear Student,

RE: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I am DPhil. Student in the Department of Social Education and Ethics, Moi University. I am carrying out research on competencies of peer counsellors at Moi University. The purpose of this research is to find out how effective the peer counsellors are in helping students. The information you provide will be used to improve counselling at the university. You have been selected at random to participate in this study.

May I kindly request you to participate in this study by taking a few minutes to respond to the items in this questionnaire attached. Feel free to express yourself as honest as you can. Your responses will be used mainly for this study and all the information given will be treated as strictly confidential. If for any reason you wish not to participate, kindly indicate and sign in the space provided below. Should you wish to get the outcome of the study, it will be availed to you, but only upon request.

Thank you for your co-operation.

John S. Ayieko

Please kindly indicate your acceptance by signing below

I AM WILLING/NOT WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Participant’s Signature.....

**APPENDIX B
COUNSELLEE / CLIENT’S QUESTIONNAIRE**

Instructions

Answer all questions to the best of your Knowledge.

Please tick the appropriate boxes or fill in the appropriate information where necessary.

A: BIO DATA

- 1. What is your gender? Male [] Female []
- 2. What is your year of study at Moi University?
2nd [] 3rd [] 4th [] 5th []
- 3. What is your course of study e.g. (B.Sc. Nursing?)

B: PEER COUNSELLING

- 4. Which of the following counselling competencies have you noticed being demonstrated by peer counsellors at Moi University?
 - a) Good counselling and communication skills
 - b) Ability to understand the clients and help them effectively
 - c) Ability to counsel students /colleagues towards full social and educational potential
 - d) Demonstration of ethical and professional conduct among the students
 - e) Advocate for concerns/ needs of students
 - f) Organize and participate in orientation of first years students
- 5. Which of the following counselling skills are peer counsellors competent in?

- Ability to listen [] Warm acceptance [] Ability to empathize [] Questioning skill []
 Patience [] Ability to refer [] ability to do follow-ups []
6. What problem did you share with the peer counsellor?
 Relationships [] Financial [] Academic [] Family []
 Drinking [] Career [] Stress [] Others (specify) -----
7. What has been your performance in terms of behaviour change since you were last counselled?
 Very good [] Good [] Average [] Below average [] Poor [] No change []
8. Which of the following challenges do you think peer counsellors face while counselling colleagues at Moi University?
 a) Time [] b) Venue [] c) Sexual relationships [] d) Being role model []
 e) How to assist others financially [] f) Lack of proper training []
 Others (specify).....
9. In your opinion what is the level of competency of the peer counsellors at Moi University?
 Very Competent [] Competent [] Average [] Not competent [] Don't know []
10. Which of the following ways would you recommend to improve the quality of peer counsellors at Moi University ?
 a) Training more peer counsellors
 b) Increase the period of training peer counsellors
 c) Increase the topics in the training
 d) Increase the time of supervision
 e) Create more awareness of the peer counsellors
 f) Others (specify).....

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PEER COUNSELLORS AT MOI UNIVERSITY

Instructions

Answer all questions to the best of your Knowledge.

Please tick the appropriate boxes or fill in the appropriate information where necessary.

A: BIO DATA

1. What is your gender? Male [] Female []
2. What is your year of study at Moi University?
 2nd [] 3rd [] 4th [] 5th []
3. What is your course of study e.g. (B.Sc. Nursing?)

B. PEER COUNSELLING

4. Indicate whether you are:
 a) PEER COUNSELLOR [] or b) GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING student []
5. What type of training did you undergo before becoming a peer counsellor?
 a) Am a student of guidance and counselling course []
 b) I have learnt counselling skills through training by peer counsellors club []
 c) I have attended counselling course conducted by other institutions []
 d) Self trained through interacting with fellow students for a long time []
6. Which methods were used in training you as peer counsellor?
 a) Lectures only []
 b) Practical (role plays) only []
 c) Lectures and Practical []
 d) Observation []
7. Indicate the topics that were covered during your training
- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Basic counselling skills [] | Role Plays [] |
| Referrals [] | Follow ups [] |
| Supervision [] | Professional code of Ethics [] |
| Confidentiality [] | Documentation and keeping of records [] |
| Personal development [] | Assessing clients readiness for counselling [] |
8. What was the duration of the practicum?
 More than 10 wks [] 10 wks [] 8 wks [] 6 wks [] 4 wks [] None []
9. How many times have you been supervised?
 Over 10 times [] 7 - 9 times [] 4 - 6 times [] 1- 3 times [] Never []
10. Indicate the skills that you are most competent in when you are counselling
 Basic counselling skills [] Confidentiality [] Follow ups []
 Assessing clients for treatment [] Documentation and keeping of records []

Others (specify).....

11. What nature of problems do students discuss with you during counseling?

Relationships [] Finance [] Academics [] Family []

Drinking [] Others (specify).....

12. What level of performance in terms of behaviour change/s have you noticed on the client/s you have counselled?

A lot [] Moderate [] Little [] Very little [] None []

13. In your opinion what is the level of your competence as a peer counsellor at Moi University?

Very Competent [] Competent [] Average [] Little [] None []

14. Which of the following challenges have you encountered when counseling your colleagues at Moi University?

a) Time []

b) Venue []

c) Sexual relationship []

d) Being a role model []

e) Use of confrontation []

f) When clients need assistance of money []

g) Others (Specify)_____

15. Which of the following ways would you recommend to improve the quality of peer counsellors at Moi University ?

a) Training more peer counsellors []

b) Increase the period of training peer counsellors []

c) Create more awareness of the peer counsellors []

d) Others (specify)

16. List three other ways in which peer counselling can be improved in the university.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c)

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INFORMANTS

Target Group: Hostel staff, Student Counsellors, Assistant Dean of students and Students' leaders.

Questions

1. Are you aware of existence of peer counsellors among students in the university? Yes []
No []
2. Do you think that they are competent to counsel other students?
Yes [] No [] Please explain
7. How would you rate their competence to counsel others?
Very competent [] Competent [] Average [] Little [] Very little []
8. Are you aware of any training they undergo before they become peer counsellors?
Yes [] No [] If YES Please explain
9. According to you, what do you consider to be the most disturbing problems that students would discuss with the peer counsellor instead of bringing to your office?
10. Have you noticed any remarkable changes /outcome that the counselees have exhibited after being counselled by their peer?
11. Which problems do students discuss with you instead of the peer counsellors?
12. Have you noticed any challenges that peer counsellors encounter while trying to counsel their colleagues?
13. Do you have any suggestion on how the quality of peer counselling can be improved in the university

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

Questions

1. What type of problems do students encounter on campus and are able to share with you?
2. Do many students make use of peer counsellors to solve their problems?
3. What type of training do peer counsellors undergo before they counsel?
4. What topics are covered during the training?
5. What are some of the challenges that peer counsellors encounter when counselling their colleagues?
6. How many weeks did you go for practicum? Was the period adequate for you?
7. How many times were you supervised? Was it adequate?
8. Which skills do you think you are competent in? Which ones do you think you are not competent in?
9. What are some of the changes you have noticed on the students who have been counselled?
10. In your opinion are peer counsellors competent to help students on campus?
11. How would you rate the level of their competency?
12. In what ways can we improve the quality of peer counselling in order to help students effectively at Moi University?

APPENDIX F

PEER COUNSELLORS SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM AFTER PRACTICAL

Please DON'T write your name

Date..... Session number.....

This check list is to help you evaluate your own skills and techniques with your clients.

Tick the number that best fits you.

6=Excellent □5=Above average□4= average□3= Fair□□2=poor□□1= Not used

Rate your ability to:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Maintained appropriate sitting position | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Maintained a good eye contact with the client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Attended to the client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Accepted the client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Actively listened to the client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Used open ended questions accurately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Understood the body language | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Empathized with the client appropriately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Observed silence during the session | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Resisted giving advice/offering solutions | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Paraphrased content accurately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Reflected the clients feeling accurately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. Disclosed self appropriately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. Confronted appropriately | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. Control of your emotions | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. Planned action with the client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17. Resisted offering practical help e.g. money | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18. Set deadline for plan of action by client | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19. Referred the client for further help | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

APPENDIX G
LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

Pseudo Names

Focus Group 1

1. Dickson
2. Radebe
3. Milo
4. Peres
5. Allan
6. Brigitte
7. Hazel
8. Romano

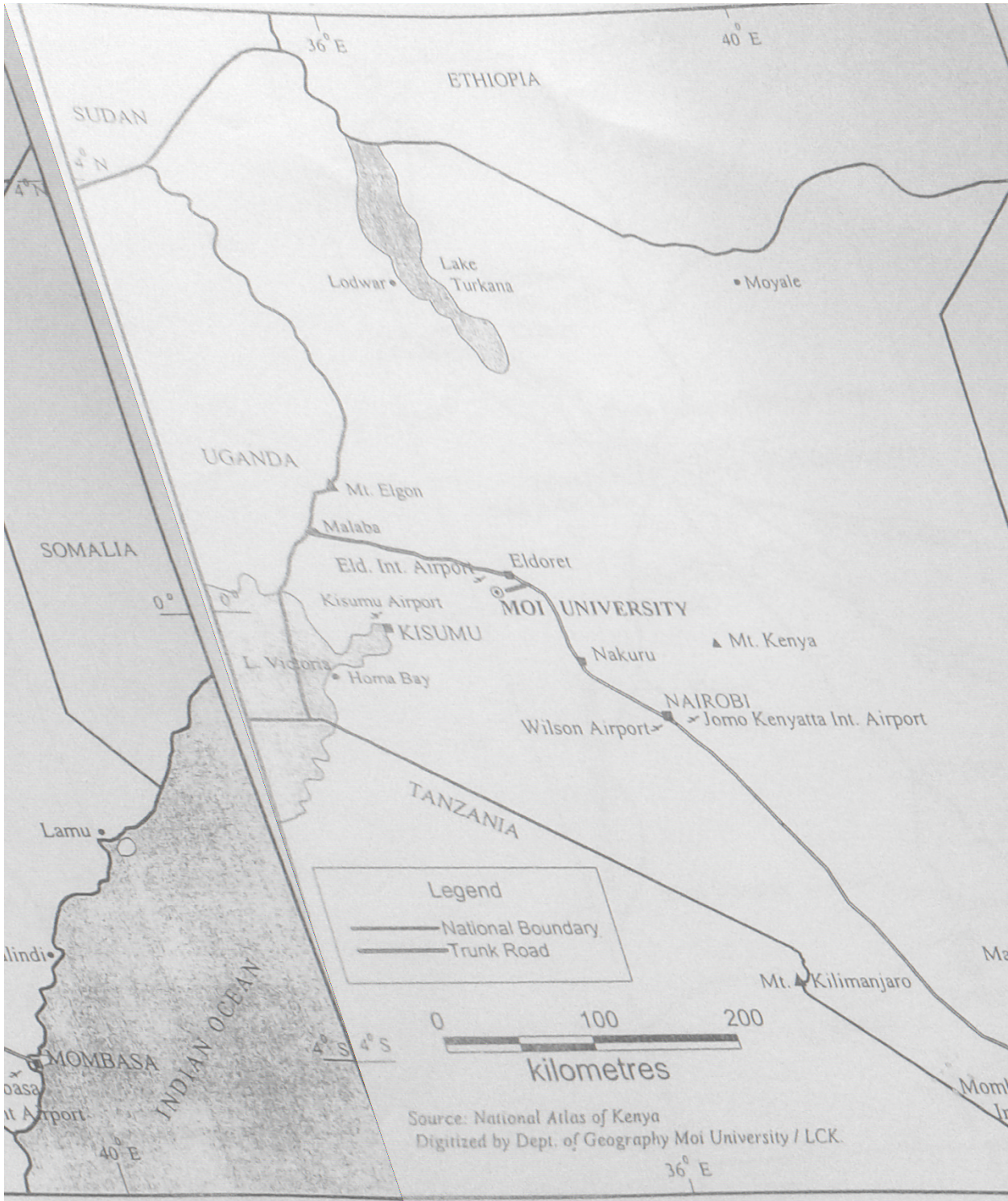
Focus Group 2

1. Kilembe
2. Muhao
3. Ogolude
4. Petros
5. Wilkista
6. Sophie
7. Angelicue
8. Gregory

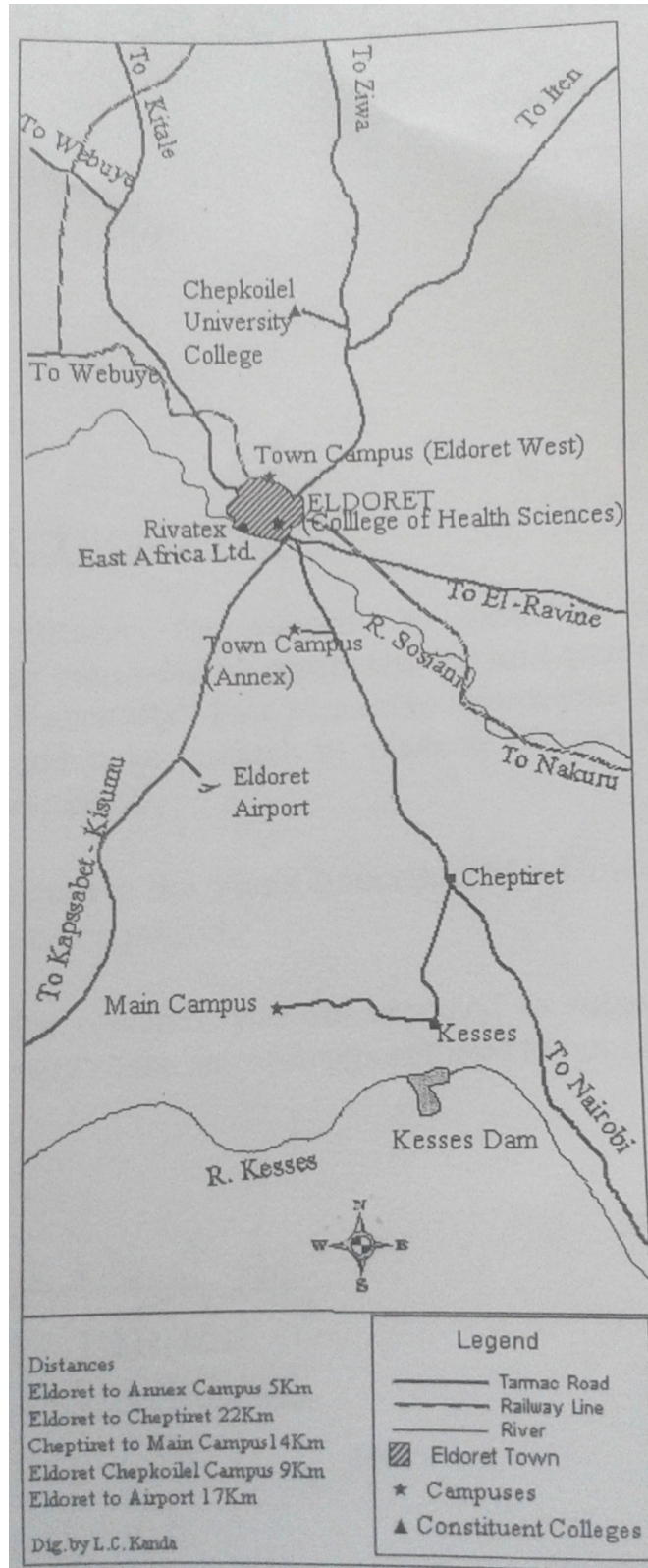
APPENDIX H
LIST OF INFORMANTS (INTERVIEWEES)

1. Assistant Dean of students
2. Senior Assistant Dean of students
3. Students counsellor
4. Students counsellor
5. Students counsellor
6. Hostels officer
7. Housekeeper
8. Housekeeper
9. Students Leader
10. Students Leader
11. Students Leader

APPENDIX I
MAP OF KENYA SHOWING LOCATION OF AREA OF STUDY




APPENDIX J
MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF MOI UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES



APPENDIX K
RESEARCH PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi
Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102
254-020-310571, 2213123.
Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318245, 318249
When replying please quote

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCST/RRR/12/1/SS-011/842/4** Date: **11th July, 2012**

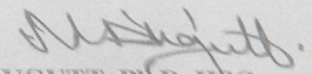
John Sawo Ayieko
Moi University
P. O. Box 3900
ELDORET

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on the "Evaluation of peer counsellors' competencies and performance of counsellors at Moi University" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Wareng District ending 31st December, 2012.

You are advised to report to the Vice Chancellor, Moi University before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **one hard copy and one soft copy** of the research report/thesis to our office.


DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, BSC
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The Vice Chancellor
Moi University
P. O. Box 3900
ELDORET

PAGE 2 PAGE 3


Research Permit No. **NCST/RRI/12/1/SS011/842**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

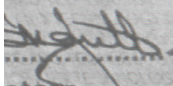
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs/Miss/Institution **Date of issue** **11th July 2011**
John Sawo Ayieko **Fee received** **KSHS 2,000**
of (Address) Moi University
P.O BOX 3900, Eldoret

has been permitted to conduct research in

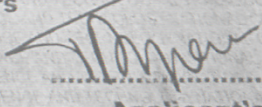
Kesses	Location
Wareng	District
Rift Valley	Province




on the topic: Evaluation of peer counselors' competencies and performance of counselors at Moi University.



Secretary
National Council for
Technology



Applicant's
Signature



Secretary
National Council for
Science and Technology

for a period ending **31st Dec, 2012**



MOI UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 3900
Eldoret, Kenya

Tel. Eldoret (053) 43555
Fax No. (053) 43555

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEAN'S OFFICE, SCHOOL OF

DATE: 10th June, 2011

REF: MUSE/PCS/54

Technology

The Executive Secretary
National Council for Science and Technology
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RESEARCH PERMIT IN RESPECT OF
JOHN SAWO AVIEKO (EDU/D.PHIL/01/02)

SUBJECT: RES
JO

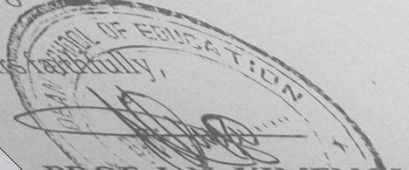
... named is a 2nd year Doctor of Philosophy (D.Phil) student at Moi
University, School of Education, Department of Curriculum, Instruction and
Educational Media.

The above
University
Educ

It is a requirement of his D.Phil studies that he conducts research and produces a
thesis. His research is entitled:

of "Evaluation of Peer Counsellors' Competencies and Performance
Counselees at Moi University."

his research. Any assistance given to him to facilitate the successful conduct of
will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

PROF. J.N. KIMENGI
DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

JNK/66

