

Group Counselling Techniques and Risk Behaviour Management among Secondary School Students: From a Curriculum Implementation Viewpoint

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Abstract

This study investigated “the extent to which group counseling techniques can influence risk behavior management among secondary school students”. The tenacious adoption of irrational behaviors among secondary school students in Cameroon due to psychosocial pressures, lack of direction, affection and social education motivated the researcher to carry out this study. Related literature was reviewed on group counseling and risk behaviour management. The client/Person-Centred theory, Problem behavior theory and the self-determination theory were used to give meaning to the problem of study. Observation and Interview research methods were applied to carry out the investigation. Data were collected using a semi-structured observation guide and semi-structured interview guide. Guidance counselors from Government Bilingual High School (G.B.H.S.) Etoug-ebe, Yaounde were selected for the study through non-probability sampling technique. The data collected were analysed thematically following the main objective of the study. Overall, the results of this study revealed that group counseling techniques influence risk behavior management among secondary school students. The findings of the study offer new evidence as well that guidance counselors in schools can improve their services through effective group counseling sessions with students in the classroom. Group counseling can serve as an alternative to individual counseling as it contributes to rational thinking and good behavior in students.

Keywords

Group Counseling, Counseling Techniques, Risk Behaviour, Behaviour Management, Students, Curriculum Implementation

1. Introduction

Over the years, group counselling has re-emerged as an important part of the curriculum and the educational process in developing countries including Cameroon. Education can be defined as a process whereby teachers, counsellors, parents, guardians and the society as a whole mould the individual by subjecting him or her to a controlled environment for the purpose of attaining social competence and a holistic development. However, some aspects of our society seem to have negative influences on the adolescents rendering some of them vulnerable. The adolescent may have all the riches, the best and up-to-date information academically yet still lacks direction, affection and social education. It is, then, in these neglected areas that counselling finds its place in the school curriculum. The National Educational Forum which took place in Yaounde from 22nd to 27th of May, 1995 observed the lack of specialized staff in counselling and the misuse of those who are qualified and the placing of more emphasis on theoretical rather than practical training due to the absence of practising centres. According to Law № 98/004 of 14 April 1998 to lay down Guidelines for Education in Cameroon, section 29: “Educational counselling and psychological activities shall be carried out during the child’s period of schooling at all levels of education”. Despite this, guidance and counselling is still facing a lot of conflicts with the other members of the educational system. To aid in the visibility and legibility of the school counsellor, the circular letter № 06/B1/1464/MINEDUC/CAB of 19/02/2001 was set up to define the missions of the school counsellor in secondary schools in Cameroon.

The problem envisaged by this study is how to handle risk behaviours adopted by adolescents using group counselling. The tenacious adoption of irrational behaviours among secondary school students in Cameroon due to psychosocial pressures, lack of direction, affection, peace education and social education motivated the researcher to carry out this study. Secondary school students in Cameroon are children aged 11 years and above. These are children in the formal stage of cognitive development as defined by Jean Piaget. To Piaget, at this stage, children’s cognition is fully developed (Ginsberg and Opper, 1988) [1]. They can consider multiple points of view when solving a problem. Thought is more abstract and the adolescent can incorporate principles of logic. Adolescence being a period of rapid change in an individual’s life caused by biological change, the transition from childhood to adolescence brings about cognitive, social and emotional changes. Some of these changes lead to antisocial behaviours, sexual behaviours, and all forms of addiction. Adolescents, according to Erikson’s Theory of psychosocial development, are faced with the conflict between identity and role confusion (Santrock, 2004) [2]. During adolescence an identity crisis occurs and if this crisis is not resolved, the young people experience role confusion. A number of students are victims of early pregnancy, rape, drug and alcohol abuse and violence, just to cite a few. All of these have a direct and/or indirect consequence on their academics. World Bank (2018) [3] points out that

many countries especially in Africa are failing to provide learning for all. The role of the counsellor here is to understand why these behaviours have been adopted by the adolescent and develop strategies to help the client deal with the problems he or she is facing. These problem behaviours necessitate urgent attention from teachers, counsellors, parents and the community as a whole.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Framework

The main concepts that form the basis of the theoretical framework in this study include group counselling techniques and risk behaviour management. The study considers group counseling on a large scale in class. It also considers making group sessions in the classroom more practical and more effective as concerns risk behaviour management. Group counseling techniques in the work refers to counseling behaviours such as group expectation, group motivation, group interaction and obtaining feedback. Risk behavior management in this study denotes students' abilities to take worthwhile decisions and adopt rational behaviours when faced with psycho-social challenges in school. Group expectation in the study refers to counseling practices which have as premise that counseling is an activity that is goal oriented and organized. For the clients to pay attention, develop trust and construct their knowledge, skills and attitudes, counseling objectives have to be made known from the beginning. The role of the counselor at this level is to define the objectives of the counseling session with the clients, carry out problem identification and analysis, and identify the different strategies for building up trust. These activities are clearly presented in the guidance and counseling plan.

Group motivation in the work refers to counseling practices which are based on the premise that counseling consists of building trust, confidence, respect and empathy. The aspects studied include the attitude of the students in class and motivation of students. Good counselors continue to think and are challenged to extend the use of their mental abilities to gain clients' trust and confidence. Counselors can use their language skills to motivate and share knowledge with their clients. Moreover, group interaction in the study denotes counseling practices which are based on the belief that counseling consists of methods and techniques which facilitate interactions between the counselor, the client and the problem. The delivery skills of the counselor can determine the success of the counseling session. Group interaction methods studied include animation strategies, problem-solving strategies and students' participation. Obtaining feedback denotes those counseling practices during counseling sessions which are based on the principle that counseling consists of processes and procedures that are aimed at helping clients. The assessment skills of the counselor can determine the effectiveness of the counseling session. The assessment practices studied include provision of prompt or immediate answers and giving adequate referrals.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The main theories underpinning this study include client/Person-Centred theory, Problem behaviour theory and the self-determination theory. The Client-Centred approach to counseling developed by Carl Rogers remains one of the most valuable contributions in guidance and counseling. The theory lays emphasis on the client more than the problem, the present rather than the past, feelings rather than thoughts or acts, understanding rather than explaining, acceptance rather than correcting, the child's direction rather than the therapist's instruction, and the child's insight rather than the therapist's knowledge. His theory capitalises on the implications of trust, frankness, unconditional positive regard, acceptance and empathy in a group counseling relationship. Rogers believed that through an accepting relationship, clients were able to gain increasing insights into the nature of their problems and then take constructive actions based on their new self-understanding (Rogers, 1970) [4]. According to him, everyone needs positive regard and acceptance from significant others. Individual's perceptions of the positive regard they receive from others have a direct impact on their own self-regard. If children believe that others value them, they are likely to develop a sense of self-worth or self-regard (Sharf, 2010) [5].

The problem behaviour theory presumes that factors arising from both the environment and individual's personality play an active role in adolescent risk-taking behaviours. Problem behaviours are those behaviours that can put the life of an individual in danger and can be harmful to his/her health (DiClemente, 1996) [6]. Problem behavior is inevitable for adolescents and widely observed during adolescence. According to Jessor (1987) [7], problem behaviours hinder adolescents from achieving development tasks. Defining risk-taking behaviour as problem behaviour, Jessor (1991) [8] has reported that problem behavior observed in adolescence involves characteristics of both the personalities of adolescents and the unconventional behaviour in social environments partially created by adolescents. Bonino, Cattelino, and Ciairano (2003) [9] stressed that it is based on developmental tasks that adolescents carry out self-regulated actions aimed at achieving personally significant objectives.

The self-determination theory is focused on the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-motivated and self-determined (Ryan and Deci, 2017) [10]. It emphasizes three psychological needs which include competence, autonomy and psychological relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2002) [11]. This theory of motivation looks at the quality of motivation to be more important than quantity. Concerning quality, the theory capitalizes on the gains that can be derived from intrinsic motivation. Offering unexpected positive encouragement and feedback can increase intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 1985) [12].

A lot of research has been carried out on the potentials of individual or psychological counseling in the developmental process. But more is still to be known about group counseling techniques and risk behaviour management. The study aims to answer the question "*To what extent can group counseling tech-*

niques influence risk behaviour management among secondary school students?”. The researchers experience over the years as a lecturer assisting in the training of school counselors, secondary school teachers and teacher trainers in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde helped him to operationalize the main variables of the study (group counseling technique and risk behaviour management). As already seen, group counseling techniques in the study is defined by four main constructs. These include group expectation, group motivation, group interaction and obtaining feedback. Thus, the study examines the extent to which these constructs contributes to risk behaviour management in secondary schools,

3. Research Methodology

The study was carried out in Government Bilingual High School (G.B.H.S) Etoug-ebe. G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe is in Yaounde in the Centre Region of Cameroon, Mfoundi Division, Yaounde six Sub-Division. Yaounde is the political capital of the Republic of Cameroon. G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe was created as a secondary school in 1990 and became a Government Bilingual School in 1991. It was later transformed to a Government High School in 1997. The school accommodates two sub-systems of Education. That is the English Sub-system of Education and the French Sub-system of Education. Since its creation, G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe has had six principals. The current principal is assisted by 20 vice principals. Out of the 20 vice principals, nine (9) are English speaking (Anglophones) and eleven (11) are French speaking (Francophones). The vice principals are assisted by twenty (20) discipline masters. Out of the twenty discipline masters, five (5) are Anglophones and fifteen Francophones. The school has two hundred and ninety seven (297) teachers. One hundred and fifty (150) English speaking teachers and one hundred and forty-seven (147) French speaking teachers. The school has a population of 5400 students. It has 70 classrooms. G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe has twelve (12) guidance counselors coordinated by a chief of service. The school has an infirmary with two nurses, a multimedia centre, a sport service and a service for curricular activities. These structures help in the proper functioning of the school. The population of the study was made up of school guidance counselors. School counselors are professionals par excellence in the domain of psychological follow-up. School counselors carry out individual counseling in their offices and group counseling in Classrooms. Purposive sampling technique was applied to select the sample. The sample was made up of four (4) counselors. The choice of the counselors to take part in the study was based on their prior experiences in the field. Those who have worked for three years and above in the institution were selected. The table below presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the cases studied:

The Guidance Counselors were named G.C #1, G.C #2, G.C #3 and G.C #4 as can be seen on **Table 1**. Out of the four (4) counselors who took part in the study, two (2) were female and two (2) male. Their work experiences ranged

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

Guidance Counselor (G.C)	Gender	Experience	Longevity in G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe
G.C #1	Male	12 years	7 years
G.C #2	Female	10 years	5 years
G.C #3	Male	10 years	3 years
G.C #4	Female	6 years	4 years

from six (6) years to ten (10) years. All the cases have spent at least three (3) years in G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe. The methods used for data collection were observation and interview. A semi structured observation guide and semi structured interview guide were carefully constructed following the objectives of the study and applied respectively to collect data. The observation guide was designed thanks to inspiration drawn from Ned A. Flanders (1985) cited in Reed and Bergemann (1995:16) [13]. The variables presented in the instruments include group expectation, group motivation, group interaction and prompt feedback. Interviews permitted the participants to express themselves freely. It also helped the researcher to have a verbal interaction with the participants. Observation helped the researcher to collect real and firsthand information from the participants. It also served as a check against subjective reports from the respondents. The data collection process began with a presentation of the project and the researchers to the participants. My student called Abaka Abegunak Batoko Suzy who was on internship at the school assisted in the collection of data. Confidentiality of participants and information collected was assured. Each observation took a maximum time of 30 minutes. This phase of the project took place from the 1st to the 28th of April, 2017. The interviews were conducted from the 28th of April to the 5th of May 2017. Interviews were carried out in the guidance and counseling office at G.B.H.S Etoug-ebe. Information provided was recorded using a multimedia phone and a note book. Each interview was transcribed. Transcription was done by listening carefully to the recorded information in audio format and writing down every word that was used by the participants. This process was repeated several times to avoid leaving out some vital information. The transcribed interviews were typed in a tabular format, printed out and read as many times as possible to crosscheck if there were some useful information left out. Comments and field notes which resulted from informal talks were also taken into consideration. Data were analysed using content analysis. The data collected was categorized according to the themes and sub-themes which defined the study.

4. Presentation of Findings

4.1. Findings of Observation

Table 2 presents the overall analysis of observation on group counseling and risk behaviour management.

Table 2. Presents the overall analysis of observation on group counseling and risk behaviour management.

Theme	Activity Observed	Tally (frequency) per Guidance Counselor				Total Frequency	Percentage (%)
		G.C.#1	G.C.#2	G.C.#3	G.C.#4		
Group Expectation	Stating of Objectives	1.00	2.00	0.00	1.00	4.00	5.71
	Problem identification and analysis	1.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	5.00	7.14
	Strategies for building up trust	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.43 14.29
Group Motivation	Attitude of students in class	2.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	8.00	11.43
	Motivation of students	3.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	7.00	10.00 21.43
Group Interaction	Animation Strategies	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	4.29
	Problem solving strategies	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	9.00	12.86
	Active participation of students	1.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	10.00	14.29 31.43
Obtaining Feedback	Giving immediate answers	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	16.00	22.86
	Giving adequate referral	4.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	7.00	10.00 32.86
Total		19.00	12.00	26.00	13.00	70.00	100.00
Percentage		27.14	17.14	37.14	18.57		

The general analysis of observed elements which constituted group counseling and risk behaviour management showed varying results as seen in **Table 2** and **Figure 1**. Findings show that “obtaining feedback” had the highest percentage (32.86%). This was closely followed by group interaction with a percentage of (31.43%). Group motivation scored (21.43%) while group expectation had the least percentage (14.29%).

Figure 2 shows that G.C#3 scored the highest percentage (37.14%) as concern observed elements. G.C#1 recorded a percentage of (27.14%), G.C#4 registered a percentage of (18.57%) and G.C#2 had the least score with a percentage of (17.14%).

4.2. Results Obtained from Interview

Concerning group expectation, G.C #1 pointed out that objectives should be stated as simple as possible, so that no further explanation is needed. To him, “*when introducing a new module, either you write the objective on the board or you state it orally.*” Concerning the question on building trust, the response received was “*you just do your session and at the end students come up to you with their issues. This is a sign of their trust in the counselor.*” G.C #2 was in accord with G.C #1 on the question of objectives. She responded that “*we do not invent anything, the objectives are written in the ‘Guidance Counselor’s Terms*

Thematic Results

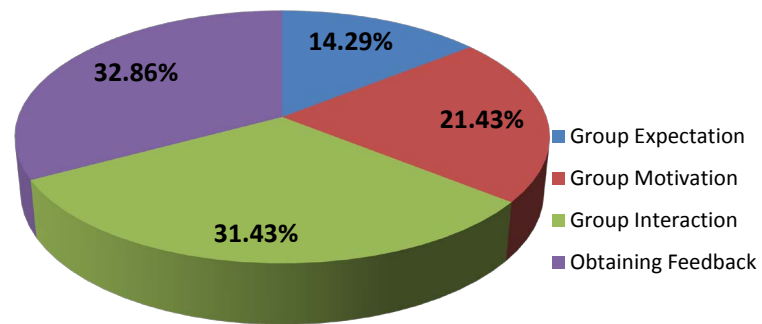


Figure 1. Findings according to the various themes studied.

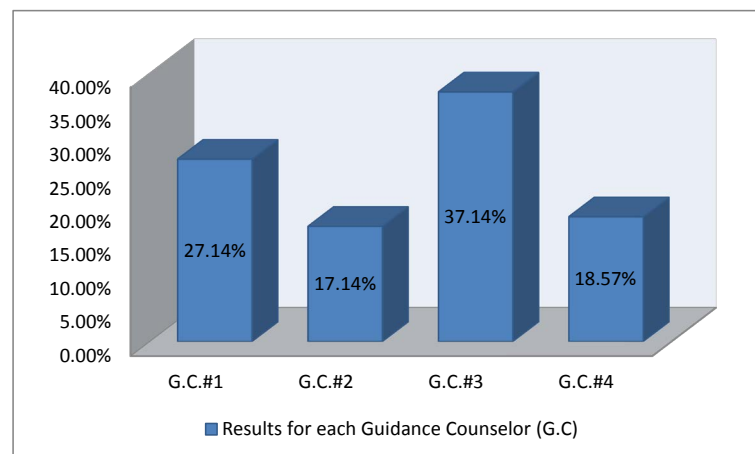


Figure 2. Findings of the study per Guidance Counselor (G.C.).

of Reference book' and we get them from there". On the question of building trust, she answered that "We expect the students to come to us after every session, which they do". G.C #3 and G.C #4 affirmed that objectives are presented to the students on the chalkboard as stated in the Guidance Counselor's Terms of Reference. G.C #4 further explains the question of building trust by saying that "in group counseling it is the way the counselor relates with the students in class that helps to gain their trust".

On the part of group motivation, G.C #1 stated that "many students do not know the importance of counseling and for that reason; their motivation depends on the time of the day when the counseling session is scheduled." To G.C #2, "as students move to upper classes as from form four to upper-sixth classes, they become less concerned about counseling sessions." When asked about how to motivate them, the response was "you cannot force the students to attend the counseling sessions." When asked the question of group motivation, G.C#3 responded that "I do my sessions based on the different problems that the students come up with for individual counseling. I group them and do a session on the various topics. I do this to get their attention and make them want to attend my sessions." He further explains that this strategy motivates his students and even

students from other classes to attend his counseling sessions in class. Still on the question of group motivation, G.C #4 responded that *“everything comes from how you handle your sessions. Make the students know that there is no taboo subject that you are ready to talk about everything and just anything concerning their wellbeing.”* To her, by being open to the students, not feeling ashamed to talk about any subject, the counselor gain not only trust but also motivates the students to come for counseling sessions.

As for group interaction, G.C #1 admitted that *“as counselors, we strive to make each session to be participatory, to facilitate interaction between the students, and the counselor.”* He further explains that *getting to know the students facially, helps the counselor to know and retain their names as time goes by. The manner in which sessions are handled, determines how the students will relate to the counselor.”* Still on the question of group interaction, G.C #2 acknowledged that animation is the best method of making the students to participate actively during counseling sessions. He made it clear that the counselor has to be open and available all the time. G.C #3 asserted that he uses practical examples and this helps to mesmerize their attention. To him, *“the counselor should be simple and friendly with the students.”* G.C #4 concluded that *“training sessions are animated when you make the students to participate, when they ask questions, when you use practical examples.”*

Concerning getting feedback, G.C #1 stated that he *“gives immediate answers to all the questions asked by the students.”* He further explained that *“at the end of each session, there is time for questions and answers.”* He continued by saying that *“the most effective feedback a counselor can obtain is when students can come for individual counseling concerning the issues discussed in class.”* G.C#2 shared the same view with G.C #1 on the question of feedback. She made it clear that *“a counselor must be well informed, carry out research on the issues to be discussed in the sessions before going to class.”* G.C #3 added more to the views of G.C #2 and G.C #1 when he responded that *“I try my best to give them an appropriate answer but when I am not too sure, I tell them I will go and find out. It is better to say that than to give the wrong information.”* G.C #4 had a similar response with G.C #1 that she gives prompt answers to all the questions asked by the students.

5. Analysis and Discussions of Findings

5.1. Group Expectation

The inquiry on group expectation in the study was based on the manner in which objectives are stated and the way confidentiality is guaranteed. The findings obtained from both observation and interview revealed that group expectation had the least influence on risk behaviour management among secondary school students. Group expectation with respect to risk behavior management following the results of the observation had the least tally scoring 14.29%. Problem identification and analysis had the highest frequency scoring (7.14%). This

shows that most of the counselors make an effort to identify and define psychological problems and issues with their students in class during counseling sessions. Still under this technique, strategies for building trust had the least percentage (1.43%). This percentage reveals that some counselors have difficulties in building trust in students during counseling sessions. These results were later buttressed by the results of the interview. The responses obtained on the question of group expectation showed that counselors have difficulties in planning their counseling sessions. *“Personally, I take the objectives from the terms of reference book. So what I can say is that it is simple and clear for all to understand. For the form one, two and three, the objectives are written on the board for the other classes it is done verbally” (G.C#2)*. Almost all the participants affirmed that objectives should be stated as presented in the counselor’s reference document. This showed limited understanding, creativity and professionalism on the part of the counselors. However, the counselor has the duty to help the students understand the expectations of the counseling session. In stating group counseling objectives, the counselor has to ensure that there is clarity of focus. Counseling objectives have to be clear and simple, measurable, attainable, feasible, time bound and developmental. Also, problem identification and analysis is an important starting point for both the counselor and the students. There is also need for analysis of strategies, methods and techniques for building up trust. Before talking about confidentiality, a relationship that is based on trust must be established between the students and the counselor. In the Person-centred theory, a group is considered an organism with its own direction that could be trusted to develop positively. This trust can be extended to the goals of the group which are to come from the group members, and not from the facilitator. The counselor should provide conditions that can help the students to become genuine. Rogers (1970) [4] recognized the need for the facilitator to make the atmosphere in a group psychologically safe for each other.

5.2. Group Motivation

The investigation on group motivation was based on intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. The researcher sought to find out what inspire students to attend counseling sessions, participation during group counseling and the zeal in the long run to continue attending counseling sessions in school. In a nutshell to find out what counselors do to motivate their students. The results on group motivation revealed that group motivation to an extent contribute to risk behavior management among secondary school students. The findings from observation showed a tally of (15) scoring (21.43%). Students’ attitudes and types of motivation as determinants of group motivation in the study scored good percentages (11.43%) and (10%) respectively (**Table 2**). This was later buttressed by results of the interview where out of the four (4) counselors who took part in the study, two (2) were of the opinion that students are highly motivated in the lesson and that it depends on how the counselor handles the class. At the core of

counseling is motivation because positive and sustainable results must likely occur when a client becomes actively engaged and personally invest in change (Ryan and Deci, 2002) [11]. Motivation is particularly useful for students who are reluctant and ambivalent about changing. They just need but a little motivation for their self-determination to be built. Once they realize that they have the skills and the resources needed, they will make a lasting change. The counselor is expected to use the different types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) to create an atmosphere of trust, so that the students can become motivated to participate in counseling sessions and to begin the process of change for those with specific difficulties. Carl Rogers believed that through an accepting relationship, the clients were able to gain insights into the nature of their problem. The objectives of the client-centred theory are to facilitate the client's trust, promote self-esteem and self-awareness, and empower the client to change. This theory is used to create an environment that facilitates the process of self-awareness. It also focuses on reflecting and clarifying the feelings of individual clients.

5.3. Group Interaction

As for group interaction, the researcher sought to find out the different animation strategies used by counselors during their counseling sessions in class and how they relate with their students. The findings obtained from both observation and interview revealed that group interaction has an influence on risk behaviour management among secondary school students. Group interaction with respect to risk behaviour management following the results of the observation had a high tally scoring (31.43%). Active participation of students, a determinant of group interaction had the highest percentage (14.29) in this technique. This shows that counselors are conscious of the importance of clients' participation during the counseling process. Still in the same vein, animation strategies scored the least percentage (4.29%). This shows that some counselors have difficulties in applying animation strategies during counseling sessions with students in class. These results were later supported by findings obtained from interview where all the four (4) participants had a positive response on the question of group interaction and risk behaviour management. From the different discussions, the counselors made it clear that animation is done by making the students to participate during the counseling sessions in class. All the students are encouraged to ask and answer questions on specific issues that concern them. Counselors must make an effort in knowing the socio-demographic characteristics of the students in class and also identifying the students by name not only facially. Animation strategies such as role play, the use of real life situations, the use of didactic resources help to keep the counseling sessions interesting and easy to understand. Ryan and Deci (2002) [11] argued that motivational interview is designed to strengthen an individual's motivation towards a specific goal. The main concern of the counselor during the counseling session is that of stu-

dent participation.

5.4. Getting Feedback

The inquiry on getting feedback was centred on the counseling practice of giving immediate, accurate answers and the practice of giving adequate and appropriate referrals. The findings obtained from both observation and interview revealed that getting feedback had the highest influence on risk behavior management among secondary school students. Obtaining feedback following the results of the observation had the highest tally scoring (32.86%). As seen on **Table 2**, the act of giving students prompt answers during counseling sessions in class had the highest percentage in this construct (22.86%). This shows that counselors are aware of the importance of giving students immediate answers during counseling sessions. Still in the same light, the act of giving students adequate referrals scored (10%). The results obtained from observation were later reinforced by the results of interview where all the counselors demonstrated a good mastery of the question of getting feedback in group counseling and risk behaviour management. Feedback is often directed to something that is happening in the group at that moment and will tend to elicit a reaction from persons receiving it. Group feedback can motivate students to meet the counselor at the end of the session for more information and solutions to individual challenges.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall findings of this study have revealed that group counseling techniques influence risk behaviour management among secondary school students. Results have also shown that group expectation, group motivation, group interaction and obtaining feedback contribute to risk behaviour management at different levels. Group counseling techniques during counseling sessions in the classroom help a large number of students to avoid risk behaviours that are not rational and relevant. This study offers new evidence as well that guidance counselors in schools can improve their services through effective group counseling sessions with students in the classroom. Group counseling can serve as an alternative to individual counseling. Individual psychological follow up helps the client to go through a difficult experience with the guidance of a counselor. Group counseling has the potential to motivate students facing challenges to consult the guidance counselors. Group counseling also has a direct consequence on the implementation of the school curriculum, the school climate and the school culture. The implementation of the curriculum is determined by psychological state of all the stakeholders.

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations are made to school guidance counselors to improve on Group counseling as it addresses the needs and concerns of a larger number of students in secondary schools. Group counseling in some environments consists of a maximum number of 10 members. In our context, the counselor has to deal with a far larger number but the counsel-

ing sessions can still be made more effective. The large class size can be grouped into smaller manageable sizes by the counselor. Counselors need to pay attention to the expectations of the group. They should make efforts to help clients understand the expectations of the counseling session so that after every session, the students have a clearer focus and have many possibilities to handle stress or any other problem they may face rather than recurring to risk behaviours. Counselors should blend motivational strategies and techniques with animation during interaction with clients. Life situations and experiences can be used to motivate the learners. Counselors should use varied methods and techniques with educational media to motivate the students during group counseling sessions. The competency based approach should be applied as it places the student at the centre of the counseling sessions. Counselors should provide relevant and prompt feedback to the clients in class during group counseling sessions. Students are also encouraged to attend and participate effectively in group counseling sessions. Counselors need to redefine their interaction strategies with the students by paying attention to group counseling where students can present their concerns and challenges to the counselors. It is important to note that guidance and counselling in the educational system of Cameroon is still in search of its place. It is imperative for the school administration, teachers, students and parents to understand the important role that a school counsellor can play in the curriculum implementation process and in the development of the learners. The study was limited in its scope and methodological approach dominated by the qualitative approach which was however relevant for the study. The study suggests that a similar study should be carried out with a larger scope and sample.

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