



**Challenges to Effective Utilization of Guidance and Counselling Programmes in Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana**

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**Abstract**

This study was conducted to investigate the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes towards effective teaching and learning in Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This study seeks to obtain descriptive and self-reported information from teachers, students and school counselors. The study involved public senior high schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. A total of 380 participants were selected and used for the study. Questionnaire and interview was the main instrument used for data collection. The researcher used 10 % of the accessible population as the sample size of the study. The questionnaires had open ended and closed-ended items. Data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS], version 20. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. (Frequencies and percentage) Data was presented in tables, graphs and charts. Results from the study show that majority of the students go for counseling when the need arise, based on teachers' recommendation, peers influence, personality of the counsellor

and when the counseling environment is relaxing and conducive. The major challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes were observed to be; lack of trust for counsellors, lack of resources in the school, lack of privacy since there were no guidance and counselling offices, inadequate support from parents, lack of government policies and financial constraints. The study concludes that counseling environment in the various senior high schools should be relaxing and conducive for students to go for counselling very often. This study recommends that teachers, students and parents/ guardians should be made to understand, appreciate, accept and support guidance and counselling programmes in the senior high school because of the positive impact on effective teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Guidance and Counseling Service, Students, Counsellor, Teacher, Parents, Peers

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling are essential elements in promoting effective teaching and learning and discipline management of people in all societies even the most primitive societies grew out of the necessity of guiding individual's behavior patterns in the interest of the students (Yuen, 2002). From a historical perspective, guidance and counselling as a movement began in America at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a response to change process in an industrialized society. The poverty, misery and unemployment which came as a result of the transformation of America into an industrialized and urbanized society led to the establishment of organized charities, settlement houses, philanthropy associations, and government bureaus for corrective and custodian service (Clark, 1999).

In Ghana for instance, guidance and counselling is dated back in 1955 when the government of Ghana attempted to organize a national system of vocational guidance by establishing youth

employment services for all youth under 20 years who had the Middle School Leaving Certificate. The system was designed to give vocational guidance to help people find suitable employment (Orodho, 2014). The present dynamics of socioeconomic, socio educational and socio-cultural systems resulting to complex shapes owing to advancement in science and technology poses some challenges to the guidance and counselling programmes in schools. It was absolutely necessary to direct students to exhibit acceptable attitude and behavior within and outside the school. The rapid expansion of student enrolment in most African countries since the attainment of political independence, coupled with inadequate resources to cope with the ever increasing demand for educational provision, had made school management a much more complex and difficult enterprise than a few decades ago. Also, due to the changing nature of human endeavour, the national concept must come with a corresponding change in the guidance and counselling programme which is intimately connected with the curricular and cocurricular programmes in the educational system that is designed to shape the Ghanaian child (Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reform in Ghana, 2002). In the view of Egbo (2013) "the total development of a child can only take place in an environment conducive for teaching and learning". It is in realization of the above that all educational services which can promote teaching and learning in schools are given prominent attention by educational planners. Counselling services are among the school educational services. It is believed that guidance and counselling services in school will develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the competence of the teacher. However, the issue of examination malpractice has increased the last decay. It was upon this background that the researcher intends to find out the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district of the Ashanti region of Ghana.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Despite the effort made by the ministry of education, head teachers and teachers, to manage indiscipline in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district of the Ashanti region of Ghana as evidence by establishment of guidance and counselling department in every senior high schools. A majority of these school leavers are not aware of their potential. There is, therefore, a need to help young people and children to know their abilities, interests, personalities, values and beliefs, and potential. They should also be assisted to acquire the skills they need in order to cope with the different circumstances they may encounter later on in life. Guidance, therefore, can prepare the youth for adult life, as well as help them acquire appropriate attitudes and values that enable them to become productive and active members of their communities (UNESCO, 1998). Indiscipline of varied nature continued in these schools with a new dimension. Not only, were they violent and destructive but premeditated, planned and caused maximum harm to teachers who stop them from cheating in the WASSCE examinations. Resources of unknown value destroyed and academic performance had been adversely affected. Student discipline task force (2009) recognized the use of guidance and counseling service to manage indiscipline. Among the senior high schools in the Kwabre East district the use guidance and counseling in enhancing student discipline was wanting. In considering that, the problem of study was to investigate into the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district of the Ashanti region of Ghana.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To determine the factors that influence students to go for guidance and counselling in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district.

- ii. To investigate into the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school in the Kwabre East district.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the factors that influence students to go for guidance and counselling in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district?
- ii. What are some of the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school in the Kwabre East district?

#### **1.4 Literature review**

##### **1.4.1 The concept of Guidance and Counselling**

The concepts of 'guidance' and 'counselling' carry differing but overlapping meanings. Oviogbodu (2015) describes guidance as a process, developmental in nature, by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and use his/her abilities, aptitudes and interests and attitudinal patterns in relation to his/her aspirations. Popham (2010) on the other hand views guidance as the provision of information to groups or individuals for the purpose of reaching informed decisions. Guidance as an educational construct involves those experiences that assist each learner to understand him/herself, accept him/herself, and live effectively in his/her society. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSCRC) of South Africa (in Ojo, 2005) describes guidance as practice, a process of bringing students into contact with the world of reality in such a way that they acquire life-skills and techniques, which allow them to direct themselves completely in the educational, personal and social spheres and the world of work in order to progress and survive effectively.

Mutie and Ndambuki (2000) add that guidance can also be looked at as a programme or services to individuals based upon the need of each individual, an understanding of his/her immediate environment, the influence of environmental factors on the individual and the unique features of each school. Guidance is designed to help each individual adjust to his/her environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals for him/herself, and improve his/her education. Guidance therefore encompasses those services and programmes of the school, which are specifically intended to promote educational, career, and personal-social development of students (Nnabuike, 2012). Lai-Yeung (2014) maintains that guidance services include processes of consultation, coordination, collaboration, instruction, information-giving, appraisal, referral, and institutional support.

#### **1.4.2 Overview of Guidance and Counselling in educational systems**

Guidance and counselling in schools, according to Nnabuike (2012), had its origin in vocational issues during the early 1900s in the United States of America, during the industrial revolution. In Mutie and Ndambuki (2000) view, the industrial revolution was a period of rapid industrial growth, social protests, social reform, and utopian idealism. Guidance and counselling was introduced to assist individuals to adapt to the rapidly changing vocational environment while pursuing idealized behaviourism. School guidance and counselling was therefore introduced to address the negative social conditions associated with the industrial revolution. Gysbergs (2004) asserted that in Africa, many school leavers end up on the streets, and quite a sizeable number keep on moving from job to job trying to explore, within the world of work, which job meets their interests and capabilities. A majority of these school leavers are not aware of their potential. There is, therefore, a need to help young people and children to know their abilities, interests, personalities, values and beliefs, and potential.

### 1.4.3 Techniques of Counselling

According to Orodho (2013) the psychological counselling process follows a defined path of steps in a sequence. It is important to follow this process because of the power of human emotions and because of the real need to arrive at a desired outcome of the counselling. Orodho argues that the first step is one of active listening and observing the client. Is he or she relaxed or disturbed and agitated? Can eye contact be held or is the person's attention darting and being deflected everywhere? Is the body language telling you something? Is the body posture generally open or closed and defensive? Orodho further contends that one should observe whether there are clearly dominant negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, anger or guilt. These will need to be acknowledged and 'fed back' to the client as being observable, real events that need to be dealt with. Unless these negative feelings are actively confronted, no progress can be made with behaviour modification and with goal setting. This task of providing feedback on negativity and bringing strong emotions into the light of day may take a considerable amount of time over several one hour sessions.

Critically, Okoye (2010) has observed that faith is the most critical step in creating success. If a person does not believe in themselves or in what they are doing, it becomes almost impossible to accomplish any project or task. In other words, the more you believe in something, the more you increase your chances of being successful at it. The concept of belief in oneself or belief in a process seems simple and we can usually agree about the necessity of it, but there are still those who fail because they do not possess the strength of faith to accomplish their goals. One of the reasons people will suffer great and enduring emotional distress is that they do not believe counselling or psychotherapy can help them. They have seen multi-media programmes that disparage individuals who seek counselling, or portray counsellors and psychotherapists in an unflattering manner. Some may view counselling as for the weak and cowardly.

#### **1.4.4 Challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes**

Ojo (2005) stated that the main aim of guidance and counselling is to assist the student to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and educationally to cope with the learning situations within and outside the school environment. Some of these services provided by counsellors are hindered because of the following problems;

1) Lack of trained counsellors: Despite the fact that there are many holders of higher degrees in guidance and counselling in Cameroon today, not as many are qualified to be real counsellors because they lack the skills necessary for the practice. There is limited number of trained counsellors in Cameroonian schools and the ones already trained choose to go into non-school settings.

2) Doubt about the efficacy of guidance and counselling: Some people such as uninitiated colleagues, teachers, principals or administrators doubt the efficacy of counselling. They are skeptical about reliance on its use (Oketch, 2012).

3) Lack of commitment of Government officers: although the Government entrenched the guidance and counselling programme in the Cameroon University education system, there is still much to do when it comes to practical support and its implementation. He noted that more committed action will help the growth of the profession.

4) Lack of or inadequate funding: Guidance and counselling is not well funded today, the education enterprise has become a costly venture. Enough funds are not allocated to each University to run its various services. Where funds are available, very little is earmarked for counselling purposes. It seems the government do not want to stretch their budgets with extra demands from emerging unit such as guidance and counselling, yet it is known that effective counselling demands adequate funding to purchase items such as psychological tests, journals and various publications, play gadgets, cardboards and various felt pens as well as money to

organize activities such as Orientation, Excursions, career clubs and Career Day/week and furnishing a counsellors office.

5) Confidentiality: Clients expect that their secrets or privileged information be kept secret or confidential and not exposed to others. However, referrals agents such as teachers, peers, parents, principals etc expect counsellors to divulge such information to them. Failure of the counsellor to reveal the “secret” may raise the degree of suspicion of his activities. Revealing the secrets lead to loss of faith in counselling and counsellors on one part will lose clients. Yet all these are happening.

6) Counsellors created problems: Counsellors also create major problems to guidance and counselling delivery. Some are not fully committed to the counselling profession. Instead of being serious minded in their counselling duties, some join in the staff room discussions.

7) Feeling of suspicion of the role/of integrity of counsellors: Some school personnels still see the counsellor as having a “hidden agenda” or something to hide when a client goes into the counselling room (where this is available) some give counsellors negative or derogatory labels. This is more so where the other workers doubt the moral integrity of counsellors who give individual counselling to young ones. This feeling becomes more serious when a male counsellor treats female students and gives the interaction high confidentiality.

8) Blurred role of the guidance counsellor: Several people in the society do not know the specific roles of the counsellor. Even in the school settings, where awareness is expected to be high, school personnel such as teachers and principals do not understand or they misconstrue the functions of the counsellors. For instance, Oviogbodu (2015) wrote that head teachers see them as rivals instead of helpers.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

Guidance and counseling theories are tools used by counselors to help them become more effective observed by Engelks and Vandergoot (1982) counselors integrated those theories in

their counseling framework to direct them in decision they made and methods of guidance and counseling they used. This study was guided by the following theories: Social learning theory and personality theory. Social learning theory as proposed by Albert Bandura in 1986 stress that behavior is not solely determine by inner drives or the environment, but is a result of an interactive association between inner processes and environmental variables. The inner processes are covert events based on earlier experiences and are controlled by external environment al influence to bring about overt responses observed by Feltham and Horton (2006). Bandura view verbal representation and imaginable representation of the environmental guide a person's behavior. Thus; one can use both insight and foresight to solve his or her problems. Learning also occurs through observational learning in a process known modeling. Therefore student can acquire competencies such as academic, social and personal through modeling. The counselor needs to act as a role model to the student in each of the environment. These processes can be enhanced through guided participation, modeling and system desensitization.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This method is appropriate for obtaining factual and attitudinal information. This study seeks to obtain descriptive and self-reported information from teachers, school counselors and head teachers. The study involved public senior high schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. A total of 380 participants were selected and used for the study. Questionnaire and interview was the main instrument used for data collection. The researcher used 10 % of the accessible population as the sample size of the study. The questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect the raw data. The questionnaires had open ended and closed-ended items. In the study, the items were considered reliable if they yield a reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above. Reliability coefficient of 0.81 was

obtained indicating that the research instruments were reliable and therefore adopted for data collection.

### **1.7 Data Analysis Procedure**

The raw data collected was first examined and organized by the researcher. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. (Frequencies and percentage) Data was presented in tables, graphs and charts. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, version 20) was also used to analyse the data.

### **1.8 Results and Discussion**

Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The collected data was analysed. Results were presented for each of the theme drawn from the objectives and were interpreted and discussed.

#### **Demographic Information of Respondents**

Results from the study revealed that majority (54 %) of the students were females while 46 % were males. This means that more females in the Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East District responded to the questionnaire. The result obtained also implies that female students are more sensitive to guidance and counselling as compared to their male counterparts. This result is in agreement with the findings of Kipkemboi *et al.* (2016) who examined the role of guidance and counselling in improving students discipline and academic performance and reported 56.5 % and 43.5 % female and male students respectively. Most of the students representing (97 %) in the various senior high schools were between the age range of 10-20 years. Most of the students were at the peak of adolescent age and require guidance and counselling.

## Factors that Influence Students to go for Guidance and Counselling

The result on the factors influencing students to go for guidance and counselling in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana is shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Factors that influence students to go for guidance and counselling**

Factors that influence students to go for guidance and counseling	Response levels			
	SA	A	D	SD
Students go for when they need it.	237 (62.3 %)	108 (28.5 %)	12 (3.1 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Based on parents instructions.	47 (12.3 %)	120 (31.5 %)	190 (50.0 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Based on teachers recommendation.	67 (17.7 %)	155 (40.8 %)	114 (30.0 %)	44 (11.5 %)
When peers also go for counselling.	15 (3.8 %)	26 (6.9 %)	178 (46.9 %)	161 (42.3 %)
Through advice from peers.	56 (14.6 %)	96 (25.4 %)	67 (17.7 %)	161 (42.3 %)
Peers impression about counselling.	20 (5.4 %)	26 (6.9 %)	149 (39.2 %)	184 (48.5 %)
Discouraged by peers.	26 (6.9 %)	47 (12.3 %)	94 (24.6 %)	213 (56.2 %)
Perceived to be delinquent by peers.	56 (14.6 %)	79 (20.8 %)	129 (33.8 %)	117 (30.8 %)
Trust for counselor	161 (42.3 %)	126 (33.1 %)	53 (13.8 %)	41 (10.8 %)
Personality of the counselor	58 (15.4 %)	205 (53.8 %)	82 (21.5 %)	35 (9.2 %)
If the counselling environment is relaxing and conducive.	82 (21.5 %)	158 (41.5 %)	70 (18.5 %)	70 (18.5 %)
Experience from first counseling.	129 (33.8 %)	123 (32.3 %)	70 (18.5 %)	58 (15.4 %)
Ethical issues of the counsellor.	117 (30.8 %)	146 (38.5 %)	58 (15.4 %)	58 (15.4 %)
If I feel that others won't know about my problems.	196 (51.5 %)	126 (33.1 %)	35 (9.2 %)	23 (6.2 %)

*Key: % = Percentage, SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly disagree*

Most of the students representing 237 (62.3 %) and 108 (28.5 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the fact that they only go for counseling when the need arise while few 12 (3.1 %) and 23 (6.2 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to that assertion. This means that students are willing to share their problems with counsellors when the need arise (La'ah, 2015). This will also help them to have their problems solved (La'ah, 2015 and Ndu, 2004). This result

is in agreement with Ajowi and Simatwa (2010) who reported that students are always willing to go for counselling when there is the need for it.

The study (table 1) revealed that majority of the students representing 113 (56.2 %) does not go for counselling despite their parents had instructed them. However, few of the students representing 167 (43.8 %) are more likely to go for counseling after their parents instruct them. This could be attributed to the fact that their parents are not always with them in school to ensure that the affected student go for the counselling after they had instruct them (Akinade, 2012). Hence, teachers should enforce such students to avail themselves for counselling. According to Anyi (2017) most students failed to go for counselling knowing that their parents are not in the school. Teachers' recommendation is a major factor which influence students to go for counselling as majority representing 67 (17.7 %) and 155 (40.8 %) of the students strongly agreed and agreed respectively to that effect while few 114 (30.0 %) and 44 (11.5 %) of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to this assertion. This implies that students had a good relationship with their teachers. Hence, they will go for counseling ones their teachers recommend to them. This assertion agrees with the findings of Egbo (2013).

Students are more likely to follow their peers in decision taken. However, in this study the opposite was observed as few 15 (3.8 %) and 26 (6.9 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while majority 178 (46.9 %) and 161 (42.3 %) of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to that assertion. Most of the students representing 67 (17.7 %) and 161 (42.3 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the assertion the opinion of peers is important in decision to partake in counseling programmes while few of the students representing 56 (14.6 %) and 96 (25.4 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively. This implies that students take more advice from their teachers rather than their peers due to the good relationship established. Hence,

they will make decisions in line with what their teachers and parents wish for them. This assertion agrees with the findings of Egbo (2013).

Peers impression about counseling had little effect on students in decision to partake in counselling as majority of the students representing 149 (39.2 %) and 184 (48.5 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the assertion peers negative impression will stop them from partake in counseling as few of the students representing 20 (5.4 %) and 26 (6.9 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively. On the issue of if my peers discourage me from seeking counselling then I wouldn't seek for counselling service, majority of the students representing 94 (24.6 %) and 213 (56.2 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively while few of the students representing 26 (6.9 %) and 47 (12.3 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively. This study had revealed that students take more advice from their teachers rather than their peers due to the good relationship established. Hence, peers impression about counseling and discouragement won't prevent the students to go for counselling when the need arise. This also implies that students will pay more attention to guidance and counselling programmes in school. This assertion agrees with the findings of Egbo (2013).

On the issue of if I am going to be labeled as a delinquent or mentally ill by my colleges if I go for counselling, then I wouldn't participate even if I need it. Majority of the students representing 129 (33.8 %) and 117 (30.8 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively while few of the students representing 56 (14.6 %) and 79 (20.8 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively. With regards to the assertion I would only go for counseling if the counsellor has a trusting appearance majority of the students representing 161 (42.3 %) and 126 (33.1 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 53 (13.8 %) and 41 (10.8 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. The integrity of a counsellor is very paramount to students as far

as guidance and counselling is concern. If students had the impression that their problems will be treated with respect and kept confidential, then they will always go for counselling (Akinade, 2012). According to Anyi (2017) most students failed to go for counselling due to the lack of trust in counsellors. This implies that ones they have trust in guidance and counselling coordinators visitation will be very active.

With regards to the assertion I would only go for counseling if the counsellor has am appealing personality, majority of the students representing 58 (15.4 %) and 205 (53.8 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 82 (21.5 %) and 35 (9.2 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. On the issue of I would only go for counselling if the counselling environment is relaxing and conducive, majority of the students representing 82 (21.5 %) and 158 (41.5 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 70 (18.5 %) and 70 (18.5 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. The personality and counselling environment are two major factors which influence students to go for counselling. This study confirms that when the counsellor have am appealing personality and operating in a conducive and relaxing environment, students find it safe to go for counselling as reported by Anyi (2017) and Heyden (2011).

Regarding the assertion if I am dissatisfied with my first counselling experience then I will never go for school counseling again, majority of the students representing 129 (33.8 %) and 123 (32.3 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 70 (18.5 %) and 58 (15.4 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. With regards to the assertion if there is a rumour that the counselor is unethical then wouldn't go for counselling, majority of the students representing 117 (30.8 %) and 146 (38.5 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 58 (15.4 %) and 58 (15.4 %) disagreed and strongly

disagreed respectively. On the issue of I would only go for counselling if I feel that others won't know about my problems, majority of the students representing 196 (51.5 %) and 126 (33.1 %) strongly agreed and agreed respectively while few of the students representing 35 (9.2 %) and 23 (6.2 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Satisfaction and ethical issues of a counsellor are another important factors influencing students utilization of guidance and counseling service. It is a fact that when students are satisfied with their teachers and guidance and counselling coordinators they always share their problems with them according to Heyden (2011). With high level of trust, satisfaction and good ethics students will pay more attention to guidance and counselling programmes in school. This assertion agrees with the findings of Egbo (2013).

### Challenges to Effective Utilization of Guidance and Counseling Programmes

The result on the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school is shown in table 2.

**Table 2: Challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counseling programmes**

Factors that influence students to go for guidance and counseling	Response levels			
	SA	A	D	SD
Perception that counseling is meant for ill minded people.	0 (0.0 %)	2 (0.6 %)	94 (24.7 %)	284 (74.7 %)
People knowing your problems after counseling service.	26 (6.9 %)	105 (27.7 %)	190 (50.0 %)	59 (15.5 %)
Counsellors not able to solve problems.	73 (19.2 %)	120 (31.5 %)	164 (43.1 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Feeling shy to go for counseling.	61 (16.2 %)	167 (43.8 %)	105 (27.7 %)	47 (12.3 %)
Lack of trust for counselors.	109 (28.7 %)	143 (37.7 %)	105 (27.7 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Poor relationship between counselors and students.	70 (18.5 %)	146 (28.5 %)	129 (33.8 %)	35 (9.2 %)
Fear of punishment.	38 (10.0 %)	105 (27.7 %)	143 (37.7 %)	94 (24.6 %)
Counselors not able to explain issues well.	27 (7.1 %)	248 (65.4 %)	82 (21.5 %)	23 (6.2 %)

Inadequate rooms and facilities.	190 (50.0 %)	120 (31.5 %)	47 (12.3 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Inadequate support from parents.	190 (50.0 %)	108 (28.5 %)	70 (18.5 %)	12 (3.1 %)
Lack of government policies.	202 (53.1 %)	167 (43.8 %)	11 (2.9 %)	0 (0.0 %)
Financial constrains	225 (59.2 %)	155 (40.8 %)	0 (0.0 %)	0 (0.0 %)

*Key: % = Percentage, SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly disagree*

According to the findings (table 2), majority of the students did not perceive the assertion that counseling is meant for ill minded people, poor relationship between counselors and students and fear of punishment as the major hindrances to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana as majority of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed to that effect as shown in table 2. Similarly, people knowing your problem after counseling service was not seen as a challenge by majority (248) of the students representing 65.3 % of the total population. The students agreed to the fact that counsellors not able to solve problems, feeling shy to go for counseling, lack of trust for counsellors, counsellors not been able to explain issues well, inadequate rooms and facilities, inadequate support from parents, lack of government policies and financial constrains are the major challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana as majority strongly agreed and agreed to that effects as shown in table 2.

Results of the study is in line with the findings of Oyieyo (2012) who conducted and experiment on the influence of guidance and counselling on students' discipline and reported that the main issues hindering guidance and counselling service in secondary school are lack of resources in the school, lack of privacy since there was no guidance and counselling office. Oyieyo (2012) further reported that guidance and counselling coordinators lacked funds to sponsor the guest speakers and attend workshops. The need for human resources suggests that schools need more

professional school guidance personnel (Egbo, 2013). This not only means that more manpower be allocated to schools to carry out guidance duties and activities, but also entails that these people should receive appropriate and professional training before they become qualified guidance teachers (Ajowi and Simatwa, 2010).

## **Conclusions**

The study concludes students only go for counseling when the need arise, based on teachers' recommendation peers influence, personality of the counsellor and when the counseling environment is relaxing and conducive. The further concludes that the major hindrances to guidance and counselling programmes were lack of trust for counsellors, lack of resources in the school, lack of privacy since there were no guidance and counselling offices, inadequate support from parents, lack of government policies and financial constrains are the major challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high school.

## **Recommendations**

The study makes the following recommendations;

1. Government in collaboration with head teachers in senior high schools should provide conducive environment such as counselling office where privacy is made a priority for guidance and counselling coordinators. This will motivate more students to go for counselling when the need arise.
2. Parents should provide maximum support for guidance and counselling coordinators to ensure effective cooperation between students towards effective teaching learning.
3. Government in collaboration with head teachers in senior high schools should support Guidance and counselling coordinators financially and materials to run more programmes

which will help students physically, emotionally and above all academic performance of the students.

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