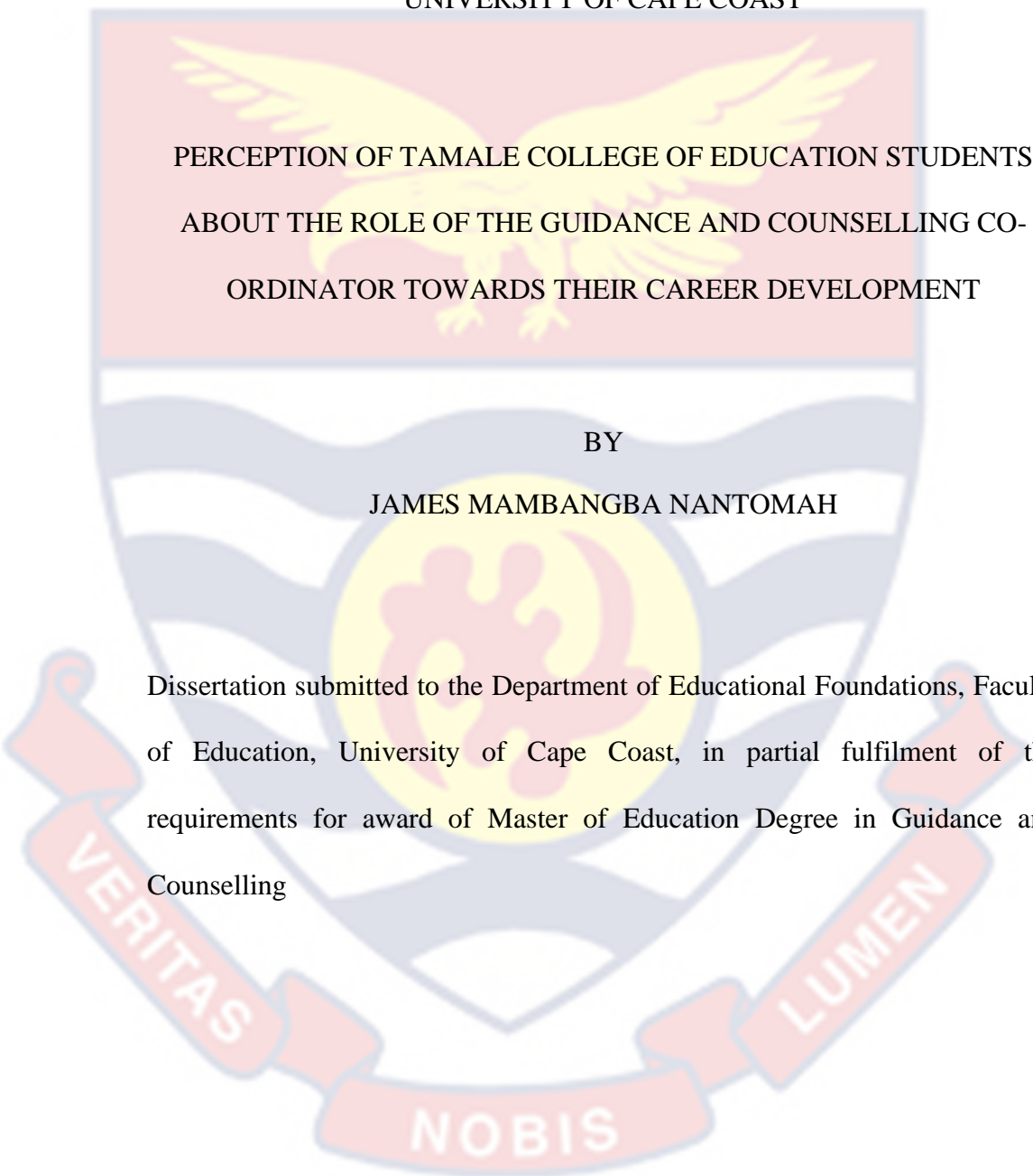UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PERCEPTION OF TAMALE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS

ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING CO-

ORDINATOR TOWARDS THEIR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

BY

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Dissertation submitted to the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling

AUGUST 2014

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.
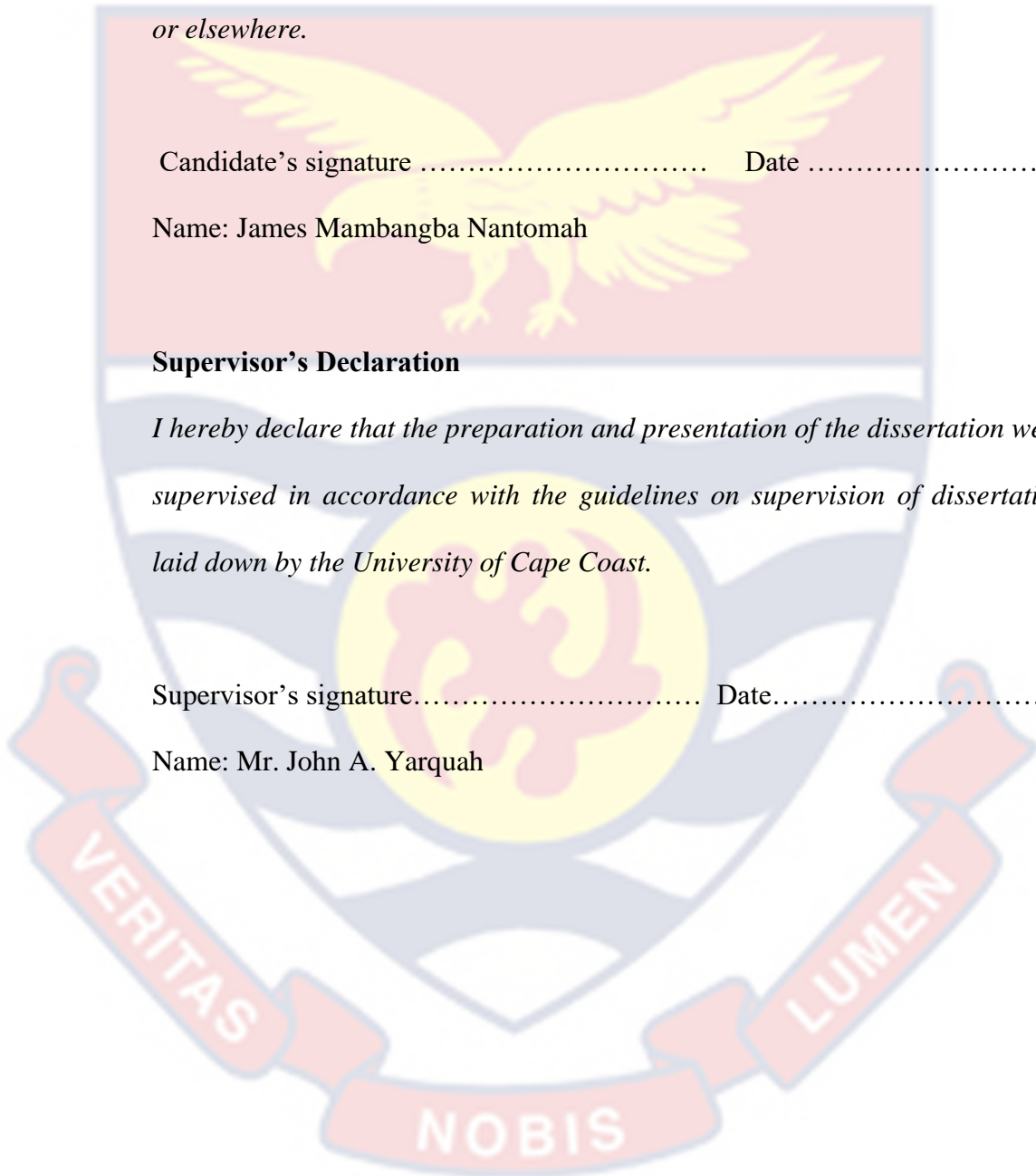
Candidate's signature …………………………   Date ……………………

Name: James Mambangba Nantomah

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's signature………………………… Date…………………………
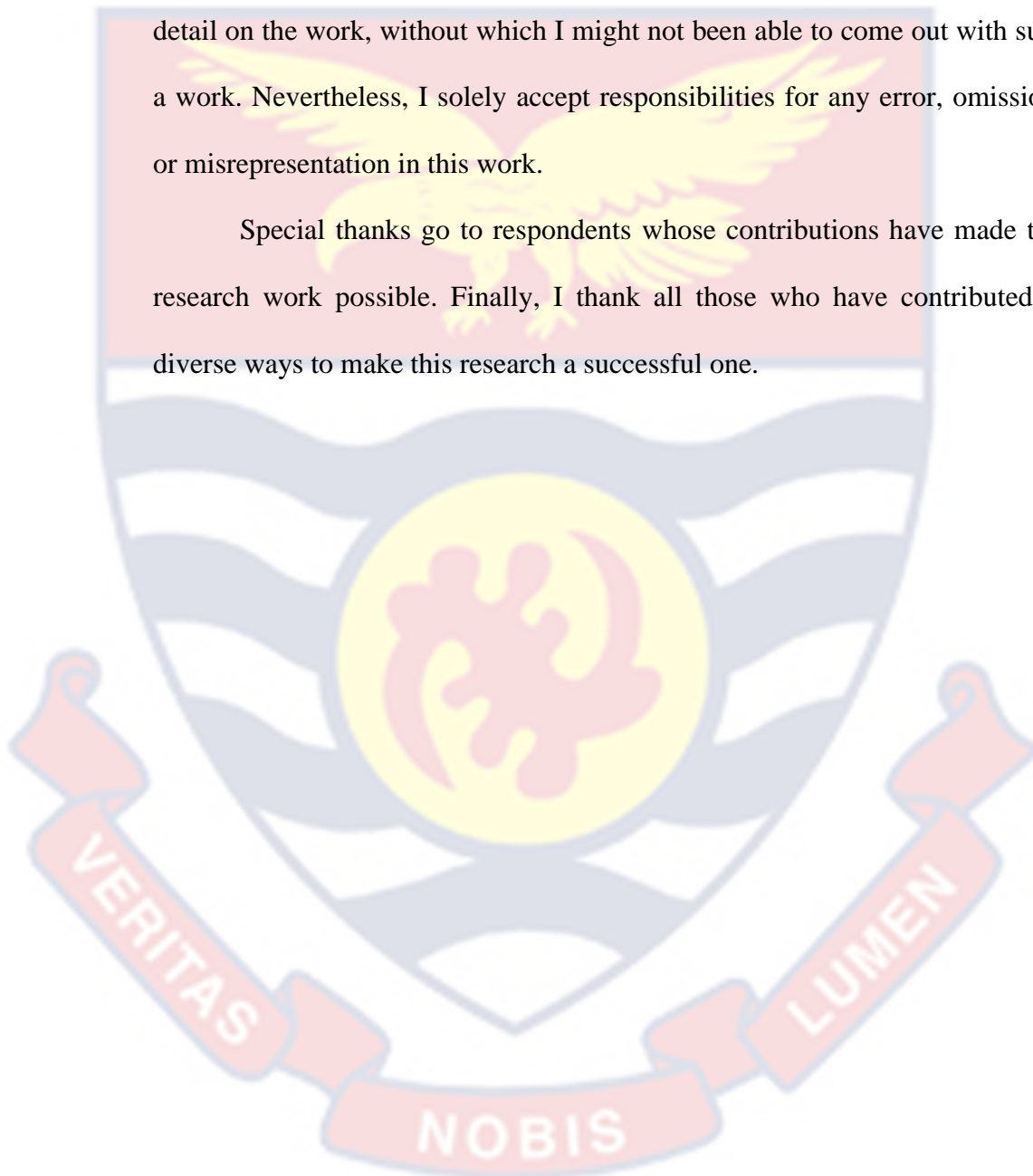
Name: Mr. John A. Yarquah

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to find out the perception of Tamale College of Education students about the role of Guidance and Counselling Co-ordinator towards their career development in the Northern Region of Ghana. Three research questions were used for the study. What school counsellor's roles do students perceive to be important to their career development? How does students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by level? How does students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by gender? The descriptive research design was employed for the study. Also, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 students. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. The data gathered were analysed and presented in frequencies and percentages.

The study revealed that most of the teacher trainees perceived the roles of the counsellor as most important to their career development; the entire first and the second years perceived the roles of the school counsellor as very important; and there was a difference between males and females response with regards to their perceptions of the roles of the school counsellor on providing students with marriage counselling. Based on the research findings, it was recommended that it would be constructive to replicate this study using a larger sample that incorporates various geographical areas. The school counsellors should be encouraged and motivated to perform their roles in counselling to avoid any misunderstanding in the performance of their roles as counsellors. School counsellors should endeavour to expand their services to cover more varied needs of students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DEDICATION

To my family and relatives for their support and all those who

contributed to the success of this work.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The roles of school counsellors have undergone significant transformation over time. At the turn of the twentieth century, school counsellors did not exist. Teachers used part of their daily instructional time to provide students with vocational guidance (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Guidance and counseling as an academic discipline in schools have been conceptualized by scholars as a programme of activities that provide a gateway out of the present problems in this time of complex scientific, social, economic and technological development (Okobiah & Okorodudu, 2004). Guidance and counselling have also been described by the United Nation Education Scientific and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) as programmes of services for individuals based on needs and depending on the influence of the various environments in which they live. It is, at the same time, a broad professional field with a wide range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to better understand themselves, their problems, their school environments and their world and to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions in life (UNESCO, 2004).

Guidance and counselling as a professional field has a broad range of activities and services aimed at helping students to understand themselves,

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their career problems, their school environment and the world around them (Egbochuku, 2008; Oniye & Alawane, 2008; Lunenburg, 2010). In relation to this, Idowu (1990) views guidance and counselling as a process of planned intervention within a school system by which the total development of students are stimulated in areas relating to their career, personal, social, emotional and academic concerns. Oniye and Alawane (2008) in their view added that the development of effective study habits of students in relation to how one can utilise his/her assets and manage his/her abilities for optimal development as an essential service of guidance and counselling services.

More significantly, guidance and counselling is a broad field containing services in the form of appraisal, information dissemination, placement, decision-making, orientation, evaluation, referral, and follow-up (Denga, 2001). Besides academic problems such as failure, indiscipline and dropout from schools, students face numerous psycho-social, vocational and personal-social problems which call for the need for guidance and counselling (Eyo, Joshua, & Esuong, 2010).

In other words, the growing number of social, economic and family problems has resulted in an increased need for School Guidance and Counselling (SGC) services. For instance, Paisley (2001) calls for SGC services to be restructured so that they become responsive to the existing social, economic and political realities within today's complex and diverse society. It is agreed that guidance and counselling are made up of three major components in the form of educational, vocational and personal-social services (UNESCO, 2000a).

Counselling today has assumed a different dimension; school counsellors serve as leaders, effective team members and above all, an integral part of students' educational programme. Arguably, school counsellors have "switched" their emphasis from service-centered for some of the students to programme-centered for every student (Bowers & Hatch, 2002, p.8). The school counsellor is also supposed to facilitate the optimum development of students, remedy faulty development and prevent shortcomings (Makinde, 1984).

According to Karangu and Muola (2011), biological theories assume that different people are genetically predisposed to perceive things differently. Environmental theories also assume that we learn to respond differently to stimuli in our environment. Cognitive theorists on the other hand, argue that our mental appraisal and analysis of a situation will determine the way we respond to issues. These theories explain why students have different perceptions about the guidance and counselling services in colleges.

Much research has been carried out on how the various stakeholders view the counsellor's role in schools and colleges. These stakeholders include all those who play diverse roles in the school system. These stakeholders invariably lend some support to school counsellors in the execution of their work. For instance, school administrators help to lay a firm foundation that encourages counsellors and teachers to work together in a harmonious manner. They also assist counsellors to develop broad and comprehensive guidelines for the successful implementation of the school's guidance and counselling programmes (Denga, 2001).

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The guidance and counselling coordinator is one who always takes first year students through a one week orientation programme when they are admitted into colleges. Such orientation programmes help students to adjust and acclimatize to the college environment. The expected close relationship between the college counsellor and students should last until the students successfully complete their courses of study. The all important role of the school counsellor to the life of students need not be over emphasized. The disturbing issue is the fact that many college students in the first year seek counselling services but these numbers suddenly drop as the students' progress into the second and third years. Could this situation be attributed to the fact that the college counsellor is unable to address the counselling needs of students?

Statement of the Problem

The issue of guidance and counselling in Tamale College of Education in the past was not encouraging until now. The College had no trained counsellor until 1st September, 2001. The role of the school counsellor was assigned to any tutor who at least got the opportunity to attend a counselling workshop. Counselling became a secondary activity to the core duties of the tutor so assigned to play the role of the College counsellor. He or she will do normal classroom teaching and counsel students during his free time. Counselling was formerly a topic under general education studies.

The first trained guidance and counselling coordinator was posted to Tamale College of Education in September 2001 from the Regional Education Office in Tamale to assume the role of a counsellor. In addition to his role as a counselling coordinator, he teaches twelve periods in a week. The counsellor

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under the circumstance was constrained to render counselling services to students outside classroom contact hours.

Guidance and counselling became a course in the college in 2004 when the Diploma programme came into being which replaced the certificate "A" programme. It is now taught as a course in the second semester in the first year and second semester in the second year. When students are admitted every year into the college, the guidance and counselling coordinator takes them through an orientation during which they are formally introduced to all the activities in the college. Students in their first year patronize counselling services for the first academic year but the situation gradually begins to change with fewer students now going for counselling services. In the second year, students do not go for counselling. A few students go for counselling in their third year first semester when they are about to go out for their one year teaching practice.

In spite of the important role that counselling plays in the life of students, the students of Tamale College of education fail to understand the work of the counsellor in the college. Some simply seem not to appreciate and understand the important role of the counsellor.

Yet another emerging phenomenon is the fact that the majority of those who come for counselling are mostly the women. Some of the concerns of the female counselees bother on marital rather than educational issues. It appears from the issues raised in the preceding paragraphs that students of Tamale College of Education do not seem to understand the role of the guidance and counselling coordinator. Some of them only come for counselling when they are in trouble and when they sense the danger of being sacked or suspended.

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It is in the light of the issues raised that the researcher considers it a worthwhile venture to investigate the perception of Tamale College of Education students about the role of the school counsellor towards their career development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out the perceptions of Tamale College of Education students about the guidance and counselling programme in the college. Specifically, it was to determine whether:

1. students' perceive the roles of the college counsellor to be important in their career development;

2. students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by level; and

3. students' perception of the school counsellor differ by gender.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study;

1. What school counsellor's roles do students perceive to be important to their career development?

2. How does students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by level?

3. How does students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by gender?

Significance of the Study

The study highlighted the perceptions of students on the roles and functions of the school guidance and counselling programme. It helped to establish the perceptions of students of Tamale College of Education with the view to help counsellors better understand how to address students' needs.

The study would be useful to educational planners, policy makers, administrators, and guidance and counselling co-coordinators who wish to understand the students' perceptions about the guidance and counselling co-coordinator. This by no small measure would help in planning effectively towards the delivery of guidance services in Tamale College of Education.

Also, the findings of the study may help to identify the challenges of guidance and counseling in the Tamale College of Education. The deficiencies identified in guidance and counselling may be useful to stakeholders in education who wish to find remedies to such problems. Hence, the results of the study will provide clear directions for policy formulation in the area of guidance and counselling. Finally, the results of this study will be an addition to the existing knowledge on guidance and counselling. The results may serve as a baseline study for further research studies.

Delimitation of the Study

A study of this nature should have assumed a nation-wide dimension, but as a result of inadequate resources and time, the study was therefore confined to the Tamale Colllege of Education in the Northern Region of Ghana. The study focused on the perception of students of Tamale College of Education on the importance of the roles of the guidance and couselling coordinator.

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The study was focused on examining school counsellor's roles that students perceive to be important in their career development, whether students' perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by level, whether students' perception of the school counsellor differ by gender.

Limitations of the Study

A study of this nature requires a census on all the students but because of the out segment programme which involved all final year students, it was difficult if not impossible to get all the students to participate in the study. A sample was therefore used for which generalizations were made.

In conducting a study of this nature, the researcher encountered certain limiting factors that might affect the validity and reliability of the results of the study. A crucial limiting factor was inability of the researcher to employ multiple instruments to collect varied data from the respondents. The use of only questionnaire was not adequate since such instrument is liable to subject motivation (McMillan, 1996). The researcher took adequate steps to minimize the effects of these factors on the outcome of the study.

Organisation of the Rest of the Study

The study has been organised into five chapters. Chapter Two is devoted to the review of related literature captured under various sub-headings. Chapter Three presented the methodology used in carrying out the study. The methodology has been sub-divided into Research design, population, sample and sampling techniques and Research instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis.

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Chapter Four focused on the analysis of the research data and as well presented the findings of the study. Chapter Five summarized the entire study and gave conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is concerned with the review of related literature pertaining to the study and works done by others on similar studies. Emphasis is put on the perception of students about the role of guidance and counselling co-ordinator towards students' career development. Literature in support of the study is reviewed in both theoretical and empirical studies. Specifically, the literature review was done in the following areas;

1. Meaning of guidance and counselling,
2. Historical perspectives of counselling in Ghanaian schools
3. Theories of perception,
4. Importance of counsellor's role to career students development,
5. Students' perceptions of the roles of the school counsellor by level
6. Students' Perceptions of school counsellor's role based on gender.

The Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided us with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development (Okobiah & Okorodudu, 2004).

The UNESCO module on guidance and counselling (2000a) also posited that Guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their

needs and the influence of environmental factors. Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions. There is agreement among experts that there are three major components of guidance and counselling. These are educational guidance, vocational guidance and personal social guidance (UNESCO module 2000a). Under these three major areas, there are several guidance and counselling services such as appraisal, information, placement, orientation, evaluation, referral, and follow-up (Denga, 2001). Each of these major components of guidance and counselling alone with their services address students' needs, challenges and problems.

On the part of Biswalo (1996, p.2) "Guidance is a term used to denote the process of helping an individual to gain self-understanding and self-direction (self-decision making) so that the individual can adjust maximally to home, school or community environment." Biswalo further stated that "Counselling is a process of helping an individual to accept and to use information and advice so that he/she can either solve his/her present problem or cope with it successfully". Burks and Steffre (1979) see counselling as a professional relationship between a trained counsellor and client. This relationship is usually person-to-person, although it may sometimes involve more than two people (group counselling). It is designed to help clients to understand and clarify their views of their life space, and to learn to reach their self-determined goals, through meaningful, well informed choices and through resolution of problems of an emotional or interpersonal nature.

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Kankam and Onivehu (2000) see counselling as a wide range of procedures meant to bring about a positive behavioural change in individuals. The procedures may include, support in times of trouble or need, encouragement, information giving, test interpretation and making suggestions. They regard counselling as interpersonal relationship in which one person assist another to resolve a problem or conflicts in his life.

In the view of Pietrofesa, Hoffman and Splete (1984) counselling is a relationship between a professionally trained and competent counsellor and an individual seeking help in gaining greater self-understanding, improved decision making, behaviour change skills for problem solution and or developmental growth.

The views of Kankam and Onivehu (2000) and Pietrofesa, Hoffman and Splete (1984) are similar in many respects. Key among the similarities is the fact that the overall goal of counselling is to achieve the desired impact of behavioural change. The change in behaviour should lead to self-realization and self-assertiveness of one's personality. Counselling must therefore have a predetermined goal of changing behaviour of the counselee.

There is overwhelming convergence among various scholars on the goals of counselling. Changing behaviour seems to be the most important objective of counselling. Ipaye (1990) is of the opinion that counselling is primarily concerned with creating opportunities and suitable environment for personal, social, educational and vocational growth of the individual. Gibson and Mitchell (1990) concur with the view of Ipaye (1990) by noting that counselling relationships focuses on a person's growth, adjustment, problem

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solving and decision-making needs. A closer look at the definitions affirms the following characteristics of counselling;

    i.   That there must be a client who needs some help from a counsellor based on his/her own volition. There is therefore no compulsion in counselling.

    ii.   Counselling serves as a vehicle to help the client arrive at a resolution to a problem.

    iii.   Counselling is a two way affair between a counsellor and a counselee.

    iv.   Counselling relationship is characterized by a warm relationship and understanding between the counsellor and the counselee.

Historical Perspectives of Counselling in Ghanaian Schools

The development of guidance and counselling in Ghana can be viewed from two broad perspectives. These are the informal or traditional guidance and formal or organised guidance (Taylor & Buku 2003). Before organised and scientific guidance came to being in our schools, the traditional African practitioners were functioning as advisers. They could give advices on various aspects of social issues; for example, work, marriage, moral and societal conducts and sanctions. Other forms of counselling operated through such media as forces of nature and agencies like poetry, music, dance, traditional medicine, religious beliefs and practices to bring to bear on the individual, societal and psychological checks. (Taylor & Buku, 2003).

Initially, guidance and counselling in Ghana was the traditional type which took the form of advice-giving (Taylor & Buku, 2003). It was a kind of voluntary service that was administered in schools by heads of institutions,

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housemasters and mistresses, teachers, chaplains and sometimes school prefects.

According to Taylor and Buku (2003), it was the duty of parents, guardians and family elders to guide their children, wards and relations as they were naturally expected by society to do so. In the churches too it was the duty of the priests, pastors and Sunday school teachers to serve as guidance persons. They also did peer counselling which took place among age mates and class mates (Dankwa, 1981).

Formalized guidance and counselling was first established in Ghana in 1955 when the ministries of labour, social welfare and ministry of education came together to establish a youth employment department. This was in response to the outcry of Ghanaians for meaningful education for their children. This reflected the manpower needs of the country. The youth department was created to cater for unemployed middle school leavers who were less than twenty years of age. The intention was to place them into suitable jobs after giving them vocational guidance. In 1961, about thirty youth employment centres were established in the country (Ackumey, 1989).

According to Taylor and Buku (2003) the establishment of guidance and counselling in Ghanaian schools began in the late 1960s when the Curriculum Research Development Unit (CRDU) was instituted to cater for programmes in school welfare services, education for the handicapped and guidance and counselling. Professionals in guidance and counselling experimented with the introduction of cumulative record cards in Ghanaian schools. The experiment failed because of their inability to determine which level they should concentrate on and work.

The cumulative record cards were launched in 1971 in elementary schools in a number of districts in five regions in Ghana. The regions were: Eastern, Volta, Western, Greater Accra and Central. The cards were also introduced to students in teacher training colleges. The students were taught how to use them (Dankwa, 1981).

Some teachers from the rank of assistant superintendent and above in the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S) were trained to serve as welfare officers in elementary schools in 1975. Their duty was to help pupils, teachers and parents in problem resolution. A great stride in the establishment of guidance and counselling occurred in 1976. The government of Ghana came out with a policy through a directive issued by the GES to establish guidance and counselling programme in the country's second cycle institutions. The Ghana Education Service wrote to all second cycle institutions stating categorically in its circular that "The Ghana Education Service has decided to establish a systematic Guidance and counselling programme in all second cycle institutions in the country; that is secondary, Technical, commercial, vocational, and teacher training colleges. (Taylor & Buku, 2003). The directive also made the University of Cape Coast to be responsible for the training of guidance and counselling personnel who upon completion of their programmes of study served in the second cycle institutions as guidance and counselling co-coordinators. By the year 1981, about two hundred (200) guidance and counselling co-coordinators had been trained and were working in second cycle schools, in the regional and district offices of the Ghana Education Service. With the introduction of guidance and counselling degree course at the University of Education in Winneba to complement the efforts of

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the University of Cape Coast in training professional guidance and counselling co-ordinators, it is quite evident that the concept of guidance and counselling come to stay in Ghanaian schools but much of the problem has to do with how counselling services would be delivered effectively.

Theories of Perception

Self-Concept Theory

Self-concept theory has always had a strong influence on the emerging profession of counselling. Roger (1947) contributed to the notion that self-consistency is a primary motivating force in human behaviour. Raimy (1948) introduced measures of self-concept in counselling interviews and argued that psychotherapy is basically a process of altering the ways that individuals see themselves.

By far the most influential and eloquent voice in self-concept theory was that of Carl Rogers who introduced an entire system of helping built around the importance of the self. In Rogers' (1947) view, the self is the central ingredient in human personality and personal adjustment. Rogers described the self as a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency. He maintained that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

Based on his experience as a psychotherapist, Rogers postulated that persons possess resources of self-knowledge and self-healing, and that personality change and development are possible if a definable climate of

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facilitative conditions is present (Rogers, 1980). The implication of Rogers' position is some persons and environments foster growth and development in human beings, and some undermine and inhibit growth. The person's inherent self-directive processes promote greater self-differentiation, more efficient self-regulation, self-understanding, and acceptance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Rogers utilized the construct of the "actualizing tendency" to describe the organism's motivation to realize and enhance inherent potentials (Goldstein, 1940; Rogers, 1959; Bozarth & Brodley, 1991). The therapeutic relationship has been identified repeatedly as a significant part of successful outcome in psychotherapy (Patterson, 1984; Wampold, 2001). Regardless of therapeutic orientation, therapists who provide Rogers' core conditions at a high level are likely to attain better outcomes than therapists who do not.

While most self-concept theorists continued to write and conduct research during the 1970's and 1980's, general interest in self-concept declined. In a recent article explaining the likely causes for the decline of "humanistic" education, Patterson and Gallardo (1987) presents reasons for the decline of interest in self-concept as well. He offers four likely causes: A cornucopia of contrived games, gimmicks, and techniques that were introduced and controlled by unprepared professionals. A national mood of "back to basics" in education prevailed where concern for the emotional needs of students was viewed as inimical to academic excellence. Poor judgment by counsellors and teachers in selecting suitable materials for values clarification programmes resulted in public opposition to any attempt to introduce values in school. There was Strong opposition by those who objected to any

consideration of personal development of students because they believed it to be secular humanism and, therefore, an effort to undermine religion.

Fortunately, there is a new awareness on the part of both the public and professionals that self-concept cannot be ignored if we are to successfully address such nagging problems as drug and alcohol abuse, drop-out rates, dysfunctional families, and other concerns. In addition to this growing awareness, new ways are being developed to strengthen self-concepts. For example, research by cognitive theorists (McAdam, 1986; Ryan, Short & Weed, 1986) suggests that negative self-talk leads to irrational thinking regarding oneself and the world. Many of the successes and failures that people experience in many areas of life, are closely related to the ways that they have learned to view themselves and their relationships with others.

Importance of School Counsellor's Roles to the Career Development

Although the American School Counsellor Association (ASCA) has provided criteria to be followed in defining the School Counsellor's roles, the school systems continues to experience tremendous difficulty when attempting to define these roles. As a consequence, school counsellors have a difficult and torrid time understanding and interpreting what their role should be at the different levels of developmental processes (Tennyson, Miller, Skovholt, & Williams, 1989). The role of the professional counsellor as outlined by ASCA and its National Standards, addresses the needs of students through a comprehensive developmental school programme. According to ASCA, counsellors are specialists who provide assistance to students through four primary interventions: counselling (individual and group), large group guidance, consultation, and coordination. "Above all, school counsellors are

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student advocates who work cooperatively with other individuals and organizations to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of children and youth" (ASCA, 1999, p.12).

Counsellors' roles and functions continue to be an ongoing discussion in the literature even though they have been in existence for more than a decade, and specifically delineated by ASCA. The role of the school counsellor has been studied, examined, defined, and redefined through a multitude of past research (Brott & Myers, 1999; Coy, 1999).

Moreover, the actual, ideal, and perceived roles of school counsellors differ in meaning among researchers. Examples of how the role of the school counsellor has been perceived in several different ways are many. For instance, Paisley and Borders (1995) acknowledged the role of school counsellors as moving through several models: in the early 1900's, the vocational model started the movement and provided a focus on career development; in the 1940's, the personal growth model focused on the affective and interpersonal domains; in the 1970's, the responsive/reactive model focused on handling crisis and on crisis interventions; and finally in the 1980's, the developmental model encompassed all stages of the developmental process. Research indicates that the developmental model should be designed to reflect the unique and distinct school population for which it represents (Neukruq, Barr, Hoffman, & Kaplan, 1993).

Despite the lack of clarity or inconsistencies regarding the role and functions of school counsellors, the tasks performed by college school counsellors are consistent across the board: college selection processes and knowledge of programmes available to assist with financial aid; meeting with

students to prepare schedules; adhering to the changing needs of graduation requirements; being knowledgeable of special education needs; promoting college and job fairs; writing college recommendations; administering academic and/or career inventories; and having a familiarity with a variety of services and programmes offered throughout the school and community (Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall, 2001; Hutchinson & Reagan, 1989).

In addition, College or School counsellors deal with a number of individual student-related issues, which can also be challenging at times. These issues might include poverty, physical, and mental disabilities, the student's decision to drop out of school, physical and emotional abuse, pregnancy, lack of motivation, and behaviours deemed inappropriate by school officials. School counsellors may also be responsible for developing programmes helpful to the success of students within their schools, conduct and participate in research studies through their professional organizations, and perform duties as assigned by the Principal and Director of Guidance and Counselling (Coy, 1999). Some communities have specific concerns indicative of only their community and may need to address these issues within the school as well as the community. This can include gang-related activities, homeless families, or other related circumstances that require a school counsellor to know and understand available resources to assist with specific circumstances with specific populations (Lehmanowsky, 1991).

As leaders, school counsellors are engaged in system wide change to ensure student success. They help all students gain access to rigorous academic preparation that will lead to increased academic achievement, and ultimately, greater opportunities. Additionally, school counsellors work as

leaders to close the existing achievement gap between poor or underachieving students, students of colour, and their more advantaged peers (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). School counsellors strive to remove the barriers that may be hindering students from succeeding. For instance, school counsellors teach students how to help themselves by providing students with organizational skills, study skills, and test-taking skills. They work as resource brokers to identify all available resources inside and outside of school. School counsellors also remove barriers to learning by educating parents and guardians about the importance of enrolling their children in demanding classes that will lead to college. When working in the school system, school counsellors offer staff development training for school personnel and encourage administrators to reevaluate the existence of low-level and unchallenging courses (House & Martin, 1998).

In addition to being a leader, school counsellors are also advocates. They advocate for the success of every student by working to ensure that students' needs at every level of education are addressed. They organize community activities to provide support for high standards for all students and advocate for exposing students to experiences that will broaden their career awareness and knowledge (Erford, 2003). School counsellors support, promote, and believe in every student's ability to achieve in school. By minimizing barriers and promoting equity, school counsellors will help more students to complete school prepared to choose from a wide range of post-secondary options, including college (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). Administrators, teachers, and parents are three of the primary stakeholders vital to supporting the school counsellor. These stakeholders influence the roles that school

counsellors fulfill. For instance, most often the school counsellor is supervised by the principal. If the counsellor's principal does not have a complete understanding of the school counsellor's role, the school counsellor may be expected to perform non-counselling functions. In this case, it is the school counsellor's responsibility to educate the principal (Erford, 2003).

Likewise, teachers can be hesitant to invite the school counsellor into their classroom for guidance lessons. Too often teachers feel as though guidance lessons take away from academic time. Hence, school counsellors need to work collaboratively with teachers to incorporate guidance lessons that relate to the academic topics that are being covered in class. School counsellors need to educate teachers about the positive effects guidance lessons have on career development (Coy, 1999). It is important that school counsellors work with all stakeholders, inside and outside of the school system, to encourage collaboration, and thus, a team effort to work toward equity, access, and academic achievement for every student. By encouraging teaming and collaboration, school counsellors develop a sense of unity among students, staff, parents, and community members. School counsellors consult with teams to solve problem in order to respond to concerns that may be present in the school, such as equity and cultural diversity issues (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Furthermore, school counsellors collaborate with staff in developing staff training, parent/guardian workshops, and community activities in response to the academic, social, emotional, and developmental needs of students (Erford, 2003). Overall, effective working relationships with

stakeholders enhance the educational opportunities for students and their families (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Working as a counsellor is another important role for the school counsellor. It is imperative that school counsellors conduct brief counselling sessions with students individually, in groups, and with their families. Borders and Drury (1992) report that "school counselling interventions have a substantial impact on students' educational and personal development" (p.495). Unfortunately, too often non-counselling tasks, such as lunch duty, leave the school counsellor with no time to provide counselling services to students. In addition to being a counsellor, school counsellors are coordinators. They coordinate resources for students, families, and staff in order to enhance student achievement (House & Martin, 1998).

Again, school counsellors act as data utilizers. They assess and interpret student needs in order to identify barriers to learning, recognize differences in culture, and develop goals for the school's comprehensive counselling and guidance programme (Erford, 2003). School counsellors also use data to implement systemic change. "Systemic change occurs when policies and procedures are examined and changed in light of new data" (Bowers & Hatch, 2002, p.23). This change occurs as a result of the involvement of all critical players in the school system. School counsellors are in a unique position to lead the school in system change, for they have ability to use local, regional, and national data to demonstrate the need for change, such as the existence of an achievement gap (House & Martin, 1998). School counsellors have access to data about student placement, student course-taking

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patterns, and students' career development or failure (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). They use this data to ensure equity and access for every student.

In addition to the five schools counsellor roles of leader, advocate, collaborator, counsellor and coordinator, and data utilizer, school counsellors are being asked to adhere to the national standards for school counselling programmes. Developed by the American School Counsellor Association (ASCA), the national standards are the "essential elements of a quality and effective school counselling programme" (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 3). The national standards were created in order to outline the goals and define the mission of school counselling programmes in education reform. The content of the school counselling programmes focus on three developmental areas: academic, career, and personal/social. "Each of these areas of student development competencies encompasses a variety of desired student learning competencies, which in turn are comprised of specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills, which form the foundation of the developmental school counselling programme" (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 11).

Over the years, much research has been done to illustrate how stakeholders view the school counsellor's role. Stakeholders are those individuals who play an important role in the school system in supporting school counsellors. For instance, administrators are stakeholders who encourage counsellors and teachers to work cooperatively. They support and assist with the development and implementation of the school's comprehensive counselling and guidance programme. Furthermore, parents and guardians are stakeholders who work as partners with school personnel to help their students achieve success. For example, parents or guardians often

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serve on committees, such as the Parent and Teacher Association (PTA), in order to take part in decisions that affect their children. In addition to administrators and parents, teachers also serve as stakeholders. Teachers work as partners with school counsellors to develop and infuse guidance activities into class instruction. It is necessary for teachers and counsellors to work together in order to help each student attain achievement (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Lastly, students are stakeholders. Students are the main recipients of school counselling services. In other words, they are the primary beneficiaries of the individual counselling, group counselling, and classroom guidance provided by the school counsellor. The school counsellor assists students in attaining the attitudes and skills to be successful. Various stakeholders' perceptions of the school counsellor's roles and functions have been studied over time. However, students' perceptions have not been assessed to the degree that other stakeholders' perceptions have been assessed. For instance, a study conducted by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983) looked at how administrators, parents, and the business community view the school counsellor, but did not look at how students view the school counsellor. The study proclaimed that "students were not included in the sample group because of the cost and complexity of drawing a sample group of students" (p. 597).

Students' Perception of School Counsellor's Roles by Level

School counsellors address the needs of students through individual and group counselling, large group guidance, consultation, and coordination (ASCA, 1999). They help students to resolve or cope with developmental

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concerns. Employed in elementary, middle/junior high, and high schools, a school counsellor's work vary according to the developmental stages of their student population. Students in elementary school are developing their understanding of the self, peers, family, and school. They are beginning to gain communication and decision-making skills as well as character values. Elementary school counsellors focus on peer relationships, effective social skills, family issues, self-image, self-esteem, and multicultural awareness. In addition, school counsellors assist students in developing interests regarding the world of work to increase students' career awareness (ASCA, 2002). When describing middle school, the word transition is often used. Physical and psychological changes occur during the middle school years. At this age bracket middle school students are often in dilemma to establish their own unique identity, and therefore turn to look more toward their peers than to their parents for acceptance and affirmation. Middle school counsellors teach students skills to help them through this changing time. To ease the transition, school counsellors assist students in working to connect school with home life and they emphasize the importance of peer and adult relationships (ASCA, 1997a).

According to ASCA (1997b), in high school, students begin to evaluate their skills, strengths, and abilities as they begin to plan for their future. High school is a time of both excitement and frustration. School counsellors help to ease students' decision-making process with regards to their future by providing them with support, encouragement, and career guidance. Counsellors at the high school level network with post-secondary schools and maintain a library of career and post-secondary options. It is important that

students receive accurate information as well as concrete experiences in order to be productive and successful. ASCA further indicated that school counsellors have many duties and responsibilities. They are most often the only individuals in the school who have formal training in both mental health and education. School counsellors are team players, and they understand the importance of sharing responsibilities within the school system, but they cannot be fully effective when they are taken away from vital counselling tasks to perform non-counselling functions (ASCA, 1997a).

In a post-secondary study conducted by Rowe (1989) the respondents who were freshmen disclosed their perceptions of guidance they received from their high school counsellor's regarding options after graduation. This study found that seniors who visited their high school counsellor perceived their counsellor primarily as a college advisor. Secondary school counsellors are historically identified as helpers and experts in the area of educational and vocational opportunities (Hutchinson & Reagan, 1989). By comparison, Ghiliani (2000) conducted a study that suggested high school students perceived their high school counsellors' role as encompassing much more than college advising. Moreover, student perceptions may be strongly influenced by the individual experiences they have actually had with their counsellor. If their school counsellor worked predominantly from an academic perspective, then the counsellors' role is viewed only as academic (Wells & Ritter, 1979; Van Riper, 1971). Teacher trainees are in a position to make important decisions regarding their future. These decisions could include further education, career plans, preparing for marriage or developing a personal value system (Carlson & Lewis, 1998; Gibson & Mitchell, 1990).

Students' Perception of School Counsellor's Roles Based on Gender

The way male and female students perceived the roles of the school counsellor differ. Various studies have revealed that the perception of students depend to a large extent on gender. Both male and female students have different needs and this can influence their perception about the roles of the school counsellor.

Abasi (1995) reported that gender is a factor that influenced students' perception of counselling services. He reported that females had more favourable perception towards the services provided by the school counsellor such as helping students to discuss their personal and social problems than males. This is supported by Denga (2001) study which found that females were more positive than males in their opinion of the assistance they had or would receive from their counsellors with vocational and personal/social problems. In the same vein, Esere and Idowu (2000) found that boys were more apt to be involved in a counselling situation that involved helping students with learning problems than girls. Similarly, Bowers and Hatch (2003) reported that male subjects were more satisfied with the counselling process than female subjects. However, some researchers report no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female clients of guidance experience and the counselling center (Mallum, 1998; Sotonade, 1997). In another study, Muro and Kottman (1995) found that younger males and females were more apt to being involved in a marriage counselling situation than older ones. Sotonade (1997) reported that students who had favourable attitudes towards University marriage Counselling services were younger (age 18 and below). Likewise, Nwadinigwe (2006) reported that adolescent

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undergraduates are more willing to discuss their social and personal problems than the adult undergraduates. On the level of education, it was the conclusion of Nwadinigwe (2006) that men perceived vocational choice problem as more appropriate for discussion than did the female students.

Summary of Literature Review

The study examines the perceptions of students about school counsellor's role. It was revealed that, the school counsellor plays the role of college selection processes and knowledge of programmes available to assist with financial aid; meeting with students to prepare schedules; adhering to the changing needs of graduation requirements; being knowledgeable of special education needs; promoting college and job fairs; writing college recommendations; administering academic and/or career inventories; and having a familiarity with a variety of services and programmes offered throughout the school and community (Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall, 2001; Hutchinson & Reagan, 1989)

In addition, it was realized that college school counsellors deal with a number of individual student-related issues, which can also be challenging at times. These issues might include poverty, physical, and mental disabilities, the student's decision to drop out of school, physical and emotional abuse, pregnancy, lack of motivation, and behaviours deemed inappropriate by school officials. School counsellors may also be responsible for developing programmes helpful to the success of students within their school, conduct and participate in research studies through their professional organizations, and perform duties as assigned by the Principal and Director of Guidance and Counselling (Coy, 1999).

More so, the study shows that, administrators, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the school counsellor's role have been studied over the years. Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) looked at future administrators' perceptions of the school counsellor's role and concluded that many misperceptions of the role of the school counsellor still exist.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods used in designing and carrying out the study. Specifically, it describes the research design, population, the sample and sampling procedures, the research instruments, data collection procedures and the methods employed in analyzing the data.

Research Design

A research design, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), refers to all the processes needed for collecting and analyzing data gathered for a research. This study employed the descriptive analytical study research design. It is non-experimental, conducted without interfering with the natural setting or manipulation of study variables. The data gathered are directed toward the determination of the nature of a situation as it existed at the time of study. This design was appropriate because the study attempted to describe some aspects of a population by selecting samples of individuals who were asked to complete a questionnaire. The above does not suggest that descriptive research design is without problems. But it is known that the design leads to the situation where respondents make responses when completing a questionnaire. Also, the behaviour of individuals in such a study may not be static or normal and may affect the result of data gathered.

A descriptive research is basically designed to find out existing situation of a particular phenomenon of concern. Descriptive research deals with the relationship among non-manipulated variables. In descriptive research, the events or conditions either already exist or have occurred and the researcher mainly selects the relevant variables for an analysis for their relationships. The descriptive survey was used because the data collected was qualitative in nature. It was also to enable the researcher explain and describe situations on the ground in relation to the variables of the study. The rationale for descriptive survey is that:

1. It tells what a situation is in a systematic manner.

2. It involves hypothesis formulation and testing or research questions and answers describing the situation.

3. It involves collection of accurate data for the purpose of determining the current nature of the subject of study.

4. It uses logical methods for inductive/deductive reasoning to arrive at generalizations (Best & Kahn, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

The descriptive survey follows specific procedures and makes possible interpretation of data collected. Here, research questions are raised and answered in a descriptive way. Any other person, therefore, can follow the same procedure and come out with the same results. The descriptive survey minimizes personality values; beliefs and predisposition of the researcher since there are laid down procedures to follow. The descriptive survey also provides the researcher with an instrument (questionnaire) which is easier for the collection of data for the study (Best & Kahn, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

Notwithstanding these strengths, descriptive survey has its own weakness. The main weakness of descriptive survey is that, it is not sufficiently comprehensive to provide answers. Also, the descriptive survey cannot establish cause and effect relationships. More so, the research cannot deduce conclusively the cause of the phenomena or predict what the future phenomena will be. Although descriptive survey design in the opinion of McMillan (1996), cannot help the researcher to establish a causal relationship between variables, it was used to conduct this study because it enabled me to observe, describe and interpret the prevailing factors that are associated with the topic under study. Moreover, the use of this design permitted me to study and describe in a systematic manner, all factors as well as other events and conditions that already existed with regard to the issue under investigation. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) also state that descriptive survey has the potential of providing a lot of information from quite a large number of individuals in a study. Hence, it was employed to carry out the study because the design could enable the researcher to obtain evidence from a large group of respondents concerning the topic under study.

Population

The population for the study was 750 students comprising 500 males and 250 females. A census survey was thought to be most appropriate for a study of this nature. The researcher was constrained in doing so because of the fact that final year students of the college were out of campus for the out-segment or teaching practice. The accessible population was therefore made up 1st and 2nd year students only. Best and Khan (1998) have expressed the view that the primary purpose of a research is to discover principles that have

universal application but to study a whole population to arrive at generalization would be impracticable, if not impossible" (p. 10). In line with the views expressed by Best and Khan (1998) a representative sample of the accessible population was therefore used in carrying out the study.

The reasons cited and the earlier constraint raised compelled the researcher to use a representative sample of the population. This was done to ensure that findings from the study can be valid enough to draw generalizations on the entire population. The distribution of the population of level 100 and 200 students in Tamale College of Education according to level and gender are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: **Distribution of Students in Tamale College of Education According to Level and Gender**

Level	Male	Female	Total
100	175	100	275
200	140	85	225
Total	315	185	500

Source: Tamale College of Education Admission Records (2011).

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample for the study was 250 students. The sample was determined using the table for determining sample size from a given population by Sarantakos (2005). The table indicates that a population of five hundred (500) respondents sample size of 250 respondents is adequate.

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A simple random sampling technique was employed to select respondents. This sampling technique helped to avoid bias in selecting respondents. The simple random sampling technique gave every student within the population an equal chance of being selected. The student list for each level was obtained from the school administration. The names of the students were stratified according to gender for each of the two levels. Proportional sampling methods were used to select both male and female respondents for each level. Walliman (2004) is of the view that when proportions of different groups in a population are known, then each group must be represented in the sample proportions within the overall sample.

Based on the theoretical exposition highlighted above, both genders were selected to constitute the sample according to the percentage of representation in the overall population. Table 2 presents the distribution of the population of students and the selected sample by gender.

Table 2: Distribution of the Population and Sample by Level and Gender

Level	No. of student	Sample selected	No. of male	No. of female
100	275	140	80	60
200	225	110	60	50
Total	500	250	140	110

Source: Field data, May 2012

Instrument

The instrument that was used to collect the data was the questionnaire. The questionnaires were of the Likert scale type. Likert scale questionnaires

were used because the respondents were literate and could easily respond to the questions without any difficulties. (Best & Kahn, 1995).

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A elicited information on the biographic data of the respondents, whilst Section B sought information on the roles of the school counsellor that students consider important to their career development. Section C was designed to find out about student's perception of school counsellor's roles by level, and Section D was designed to find out the perception of students on the roles of the school counsellor based on gender.

The items in the questionnaire were of both closed and open ended type. The closed ended questionnaires were of the Likert scale type while the open ended questionnaires allowed free responses from the respondents. Section B, C, and D in the likert scale as SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree respectively. The combinations of both response types of questionnaires made it possible for the researcher to address any inherent weaknesses in the instruments used. The questionnaire was used because the researcher was dealing with trainees who could read and understand the items and respond appropriately. It was used because of its time saving advantage.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Content validity of the instruments was obtained through an examination of the research questions by the supervisor of the research. Other experts in research made useful suggestions to help in fine tuning the questionnaires. The reliability of the instruments was obtained through pilot testing of the instruments on a cross section of the target population.

Respondents used in pilot testing the instrument made useful comments on the clarity of the questions. These comments were taken into consideration to make the questions as clear as possible. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.83.

Pilot-testing of the Instrument

Pilot-testing of questionnaires on a sample of respondents drawn from the target population is useful in fine turning aspects of the questions that could otherwise make it difficult for respondents to interpret questions as intended (Foddy, 1995). Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) have stressed the need for pilot-testing of survey instruments before administering the instruments to the respondents.

The researcher did a pilot-testing of the study by using fifty students from Bagabaga College of Education. The reliability of the instruments was confirmed by examining the individual test items with the Crombach's Alpha (Gall et al. 1996). The Crombach's Alpha values for the pilot test were 0.83 and 0.81 for the first and second set of the fifty questionnaires respectively. This shows that the instruments were reliable and could be used for the data collection.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast addressed to the principal of Tamale College of Education. Upon getting the express permission of the principal the researcher met the students in their various classes to explain to them the rationale and purpose of the study and appealing to them to participate in the study. Rigorous procedures were followed in

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selecting respondents for each class, eventually culminating in the selection of the respondents for each level.

Two hundred and fifty (250) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Two hundred and forty-five questionnaires representing a return rate of 98% were retrieved from the students after one week. Out of the number retrieved five were rejected for non-completion. Effectively, two-hundred and forty questionnaires representing 96% were used for the data analysis.

Data Analysis

The raw data collated from the students was processed by coding the close ended questionnaires by assigning values to each item. Values ranging from 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were assigned to 'unimportant, somewhat important, important, very important and extremely important. Responses to the questionnaires were summarized using percentages and means and used to provide answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the presentation and discussion of the results that were collected from the respondents in order to find answers to the research questions. This chapter is in two sections; A and B. It comprises discussion of both preliminary and major findings. The results are discussed in relation to the research questions as well as the literature review. The descriptive design was employed in this study. Frequencies and percentages were used in presenting the results.

Background Information of Respondents

This section gives background information about respondents. The biographic data captured for the study include the gender and level of respondents. Table 3 shows the distribution of the respondents by gender.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	No.	%
Male	144	60.0
Female	96	40.0
Total	**240**	**100.0**

Source: Field data, May 2012.

From Table 3, out of the total number of 240 teacher trainee respondents 144 (60.0%) were males, whereas 96 (40.0%) were females. From the result males represented the majority. This difference reflects the

disparities in the enrolment of more males than females into Tamale College of Education over the years.

Level of Respondents

Item 2 of the questionnaire sought to elicit information on the levels of the respondents. The respondents were varied in levels. Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents by levels.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Levels

Level	No.	%
1st year	144	60.0
2nd year	96	40.0
Total	**240**	**100.0**

Source: Field data, May 2012.

From Table 4, it was realised that majority of the teacher trainees 144 (60.0%) were in the first year, whiles 96 (40.0%) of the respondents were in the second year.

Analysis of Research Questions

This section deals with the presentation and discussion of the major findings that emerged from the research. These main results are organized and discussed in accordance with each research question.

Research Question 1

What School Counsellor Roles do Students Perceive to be Important to their Career Development?

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Research question 1 sought to find out from respondents the roles of the school counsellor they perceived to be important to their career development. Items 4 to 16 of the questionnaire under section B were designed to find answers to the research question. Table 5 presents the results.

The results from Table 5 revealed that trainees rated the following seven roles of the school counsellor as the most important: helping students to make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers192 (80.0%), bringing resource persons for students to learn more about jobs and careers 216 (90.0%), organizing orientations for students on new jobs and careers 192 (80.0%), creating of awareness of new jobs 216 (90.0%), Assisting in maintaining discipline in school (100.0%), Working with teachers to help students make decisions (100.0%), Assisting students to make career choices (100.0%). This confirms the study of House and Martin (1998) that school counsellors strive to remove the barriers that may be hindering students from succeeding. For instance, school counsellors teach students how to help themselves by providing students with organizational skills, study skills, and test-taking skills. They work as resource brokers to identify all available resources inside and outside of school. School counsellors also remove barriers to learning by educating parents and guardians about the importance of enrolling their children in demanding classes that will lead to college. When working in the school system, school counsellors offer staff development training for school personnel and encourage administrators to reevaluate the existence of low-level and unchallenging courses.

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Table 5: Importance of School Counsellor's Role to Students' Career Development

Statement	Unimportant		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important		Extremely Important	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Helping students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers	24.	10.0	24	10.0	96	40.0	96	40.0		
Bringing resource persons for students to learn more about jobs and careers			24	10.0	168	70.0	24	10.0	24	10.0
Organizing orientations for students on new jobs and careers			48	20.0	168	70.0	24	10.0		
Creating of awareness of new jobs to students	24	10.0			72	30.0	120	50.0	24	10.0
Assisting in maintaining discipline in school					72	30.0	96	40.0	72	30.0
Working with teachers to help students make decisions					48	20.0	144	60.0	48	20.0
Assisting students to make career choices					120	50.0	96	40.0	24	10.0
Maintaining students records	192	80.0	48	20.0						
Writing of recommendation letters for students	48	20.0	96	40.0	96	40.0				
Promoting of college and job fair	120	50.0	72	30.0						

Source: Field data, May 2012

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The trainees rated the following three roles of the school counsellor as the least important: Maintaining students' records 192 (80.0%), Writing of recommendation letters for students 144 (60.0%), promoting of college and job fair 192 (80.0%). This contradicts the findings of Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall (2001), Hutchinson and Reagan (1989) about the roles of the school counsellor as promoting college and job fairs; writing college recommendations; administering academic and/or career inventories; and having a familiarity with a variety of services and programmes offered throughout the school and community. The study by Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) concluded that many misperceptions of the role of the school counsellor still exist.

Research Question 2
How does Students' Perception of the Roles of the School Counsellor Differ by Level?

Research question 2 sought to find out from trainees their perceptions about school counsellor's roles by their levels. In order to know the perceptions of students about the counsellor's roles by levels, students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed to the statement. The result is illustrated in Table 6.

The study revealed from Table 6 that the responses of first year and second year teacher trainees were not the same. Statistical information presented in Table 6 show that 144 (60.0%) of the total sample which represented first year teacher trainees all agreed that they perceived the role of the school counsellor as developing interest regarding the world of work to increase students' career awareness, 72 (30.0%) of the second year trainees

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also agreed to the statement, but 24 (10.0%) of the second year trainees disagreed.

With regards to teaching students effective social skills such as peer relationship, self-esteem, and family issues, the first and second years' ratings of their perceptions about the school counsellor's role were not the same. The results revealed that first years 96 (40.0%) rated the role as more important than second years 24 (10.0%). Similarly, differences were found between the ratings of first years and second years on providing students with career plans and career guidance, 144 (60.0%) first years rated the role as important, whereas second years 84 (35.0%) disagreed. Ghiliani (2000) conducted a study that suggested high school students perceived their high school counsellors' role as encompassing much more than college advising. Moreover, student perceptions may be strongly influenced by the individual experiences they have actually had with their counsellor. If their school counsellor worked predominantly from an academic perspective, then the counsellors' role is viewed only as academic (Wells & Ritter, 1979; Van Riper, 1971).

The entire first and the second years perceived the following roles of the school counsellor as significantly important: helping to ease students' decision making process, providing students with information on existing career opportunities, and providing students with information on existing educational opportunities. Teacher trainees are in a position to make important decisions regarding their future. These decisions could include further education, career plans, preparing for marriage or developing a personal value system (Carlson & Lewis; Gibson & Mitchell, 1990).

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Table 6: Perceptions of Students about School Counsellor's Roles by Levels

Statement	First Year				Second Year			
	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %
Developing interest to increase students' career awareness	24 10.0	120 50.0				72 30.0	24 10.0	
Teaching students effective social skills	24 10.0	72 30.0	24 10.0	24 10.0		24 10.0	72 30.0	
Helping to ease students' decision making process	144 60.0				96 40.0			
Providing students with career plans and career guidance	72 30.0	72 30.0				12 5.0	84 35.0	
Providing students with information on existing career opportunities	72 30.0	72 30.0			96 40.0			
Providing students with information on existing educational opportunities	144 60.0				96 40.0			

Source: Field data, May 2012

Research Question 3
How does Students' Perception of the Roles of the School Counsellor
Differ by Gender?

The researcher was equally interested in finding out how students' perceptions of the roles of the school counsellor differ by gender. Research question 3 sought to find answers to this. Trainees were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree to the statement. Table 7 represents the results.

From Table 7 differences were found between males and females with regards to their perceptions of the roles of the school counsellor on providing students with marriage counselling. The males 100 (69.4%) perceived the role to be less important than the females 96 (100.0%). Again, differences were found between males and females with regards to the role of the school counsellor as assisting students to discuss their social and personal problems. The males 144 (100.0%) perceived the role to be less important and therefore disagreed to the statement, but the females 70 (72.9%) perceived the role to be significantly important, though 26 (27.1%) disagreed to the statement.

Abasi (1995) reported that gender is a factor that influenced students' perception of counselling services. He reported that females had more favourable perception towards the services provided by the school counsellor such as helping students to discuss their personal and social problems than males. This is supported by Denga (2001) study which found that females were more positive than males in their opinion of the assistance they had or would receive from their counsellors with vocational and personal/social problems. Sotonade (1999) also reported that students who had favourable attitudes towards marriage counselling services were younger (age 18 and

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below). Again, on the level of education, it was the conclusion of Nwadinigwe (2006) that men perceived vocational choice problem as more appropriate for discussion than did the female students.

Furthermore, there were no difference between males and females concerning helping students with learning problems, all the males 144 (100.0%) perceived the role to be significantly important, in the same vein, 96 (100.0%) of the females perceived the role as significantly important. Also, all the entire males and females perceived the role of the school counsellor as assisting students to make career choices as significantly important. The study conducted by Mallum (1998) and Sotonade (1997) reports no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female clients of guidance experience and the counselling center.
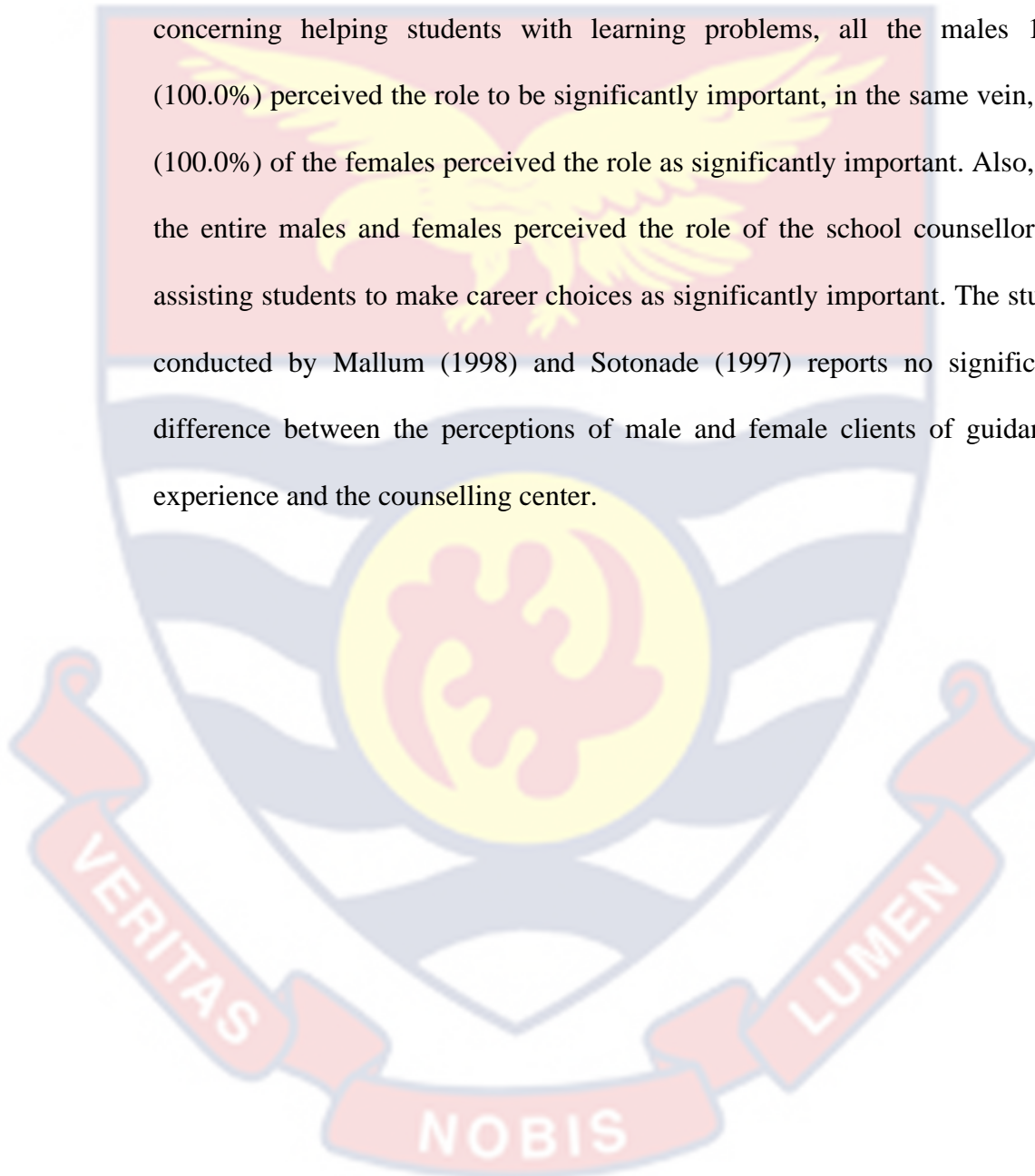
Table 7: Perceptions about the Roles of the School Counsellor by Gender

Statement	Male								Female							
	SA		A		D		SD		SA		A		D		SD	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Helping students with learning problems	100	69.4	44	30.6					60	62.5	36	37.5				
Providing students with marriage counselling			44	30.6	100	69.4			80	83.3	16	16.7				
Assisting students to discuss their social and personal problems					90	62.5	54	37.5	70	72.9			26	27.1		
Assisting students to make career choices	144	100.0							96	100.0						

Source: Field data, May 2012

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of guidance and counselling co-ordinators has been of much importance to educationists for several decades. In the light of this, administrators, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the school counsellor's role have been studied over the years.

This chapter therefore seeks to present a summary of the study as well as the key findings that emerged from the research. The chapter also contains the conclusions and recommendations that were made based on the findings of the study. Regarding the findings of the study, this chapter also contains suggestions made for further studies.

Summary

Overview of the Study

This study generally, was aimed at finding out the perception of Tamale College of Education students about the role of the guidance and counselling co-ordinator in their career development. However, in specific terms the study sought to:

i. Determine the school counsellor's roles that students perceive to be important in their career development;

ii. determine whether students perception of the roles of the school counsellor differ by level

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iii. determine whether students perception of the school counsellor differ by gender.

The descriptive type of research was employed for the study. The target population for the study was both first and second year teacher trainees of Tamale College of Education. The sample was made up of both sexes. The sample was drawn using the simple random sampling technique. The sample size was made up of 240 teacher trainees.

The researcher used the questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. This was because the researcher was dealing with teacher trainees who could read and understand and respond appropriately to each of the items posed to them. The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS version 16). The results were presented in the form of tables using frequencies and percentages. Each result was discussed and interpreted in relation to the literature.

Key Findings

Based on the analysed data and discussion of the results, the following represent the summary of the findings.

1. A greater number of the respondents perceived the following roles of the counsellor as most important to their career development; assisting in maintaining discipline in school, working with teachers to help students make decisions, and assisting students to make career choices. Also, they perceived the role of the counsellor as bringing resource persons for students to learn more about jobs and careers, organizing orientations for students on new jobs and careers, and creating of awareness of new jobs.

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2. The study revealed that first year teacher trainees all agreed that they perceived the role of the school counsellor as developing interest regarding the world of work to increase students' career awareness, providing students with career plans and career guidance. Again, the entire first and the second years perceived the following roles of the school counsellor as important: helping to ease students' decision making process, providing students with information on existing career opportunities, and providing students with information on existing educational opportunities

3. Also, it was realized that all the entire males and females perceived the role of the school counsellor as assisting students to make career choices as significantly important. Furthermore, concerning helping students with learning problems, all the males 144 (100.0%) perceived the role to be significantly important, in the same vein, 96 (100.0%) of the females perceived the role as important. More so, differences were found between males and females with regards to their perceptions of the roles of the school counsellor on providing students with marriage counselling. The males 100 (69.4%) perceived the role to be less important than the females 96 (100.0%).

Conclusions

From the findings and subsequent discussions, it can be concluded that;

1. Students perceived the following roles of the counsellor as most important to their career development; assisting in maintaining discipline in school, working with teachers to help students make

decisions and assisting students to make career choices. Also, they perceived the role of the counsellor as bringing resource persons for students to learn more about jobs and careers, organizing orientations for students on new jobs and careers, and creating of awareness of new jobs. It can be concluded that these roles are important to students' career development.

2. Students' perception of the roles of the School Counsellor differs by level. Therefore school counsellors should try organizing career guidance programme for students in the Colleges of Education. This would help to improve their perceptions about the roles of the guidance and counselling co-ordinator towards their career development.

3. Students' perception of the roles of the School Counsellor differs by gender. It can therefore be concluded that the perception of males and females about the role of the school counsellor varies in terms of gender with respect to marriage counselling. This is so because both males and females have different needs and this can influence their perception about the roles of the school counsellor.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions that have been drawn, the following recommendations are made to help improve the perception of teacher trainees about the role of the school counsellor towards their career development.

1. The roles of the school counsellors in the Tamale College of Education should be strengthened to enable them work effectively and efficient.

2. The school counsellors should be encouraged and motivated to perform their roles in counselling to avoid any misunderstanding in the performance of their roles as counsellors.

3. Both the teachers and institutional authorities should be encouraged by the government and Ghana Education Service to support school counsellors in counselling students. Also, Government and Non-governmental organisations should give support and proper training to school counsellors to enable them perform their roles effectively and efficiently. This will help to improve upon the counselling services provided to students towards their career development.

4. Guidance programmes should be given to the trainees to help supplement the existing one to enable them make career choices. This would help to develop positive perceptions about the roles of school counsellor towards their career development.

5. Although it was revealed that differences did exist between the males and females perception about the role of the school counsellor, school counsellors should endeavour to expand their services to cover more varied needs of students. This will help the students to develop their total personalities thus,

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promoting positive attitude towards counselling service by helping to promote their career development.

Suggestions for Further Research

Just like any other research works, this study had certain limitations. It must be emphasized that this study forms part of other similar research conducted in different areas. Taking into consideration its limitations, the researcher wishes to suggest that further research work should be conducted on the following areas:

1. The factors that influence students' perception of the role of the school counsellor.

2. The impact of in-service training on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in schools.

3. The influence of the gender of the school counsellor on the counselling services to students
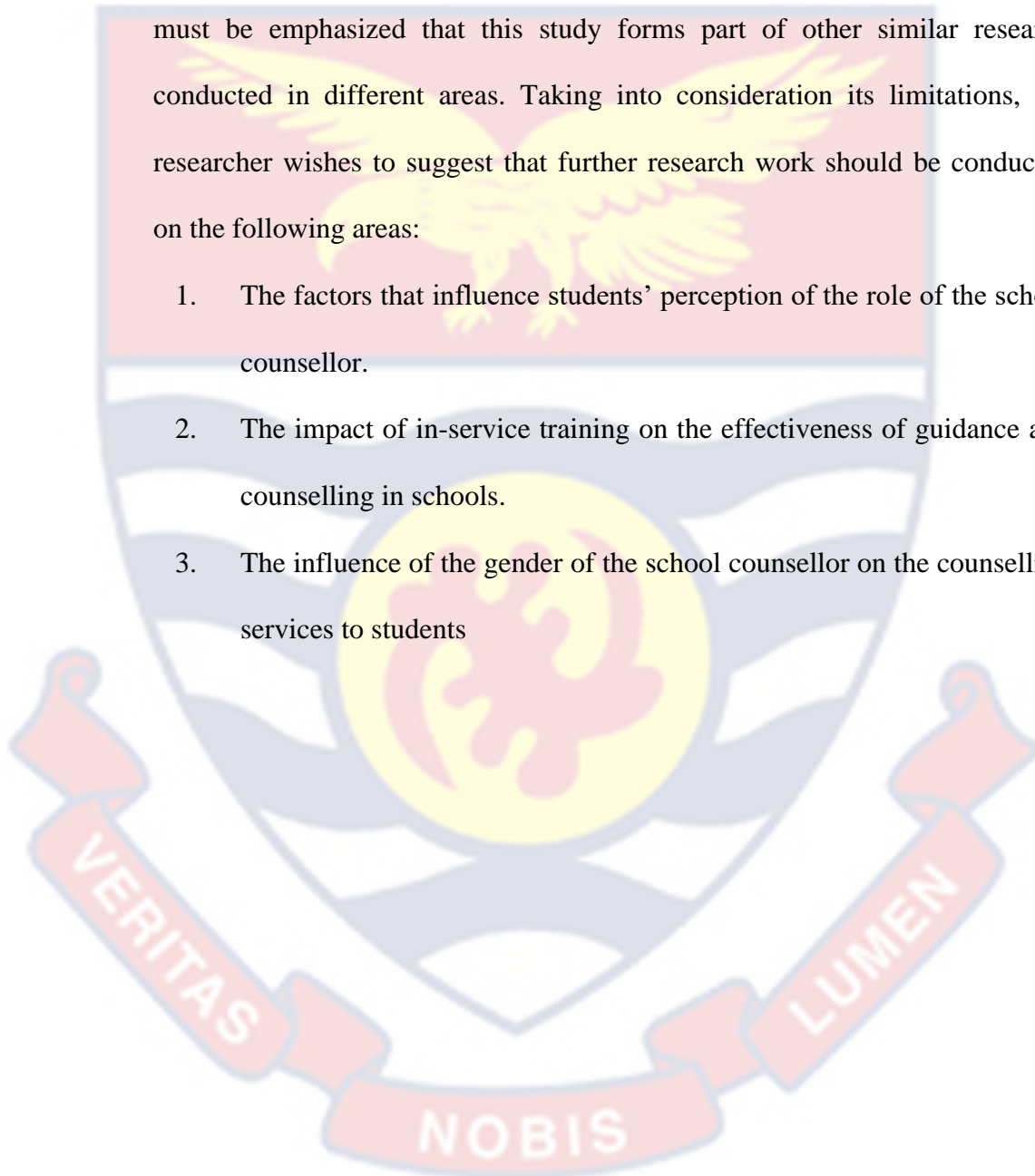
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APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHER TRAINEES

You have been selected to participate in this exercise to provide information for the study. It is hoped that you will voluntarily provide the information that is needed for the success of this research. Please answer the questions as frankly as you can. The confidentiality of the information provided to these questionnaires is absolutely guaranteed.

SECTION A

PERSONAL DATA

Please indicate your response to the following questions by ticking [√] beside the appropriate responses

1. Gender: Male [   ]   Female [   ]

2. Class / Level: 1st Year   [   ] 2nd year [   ]

3. Course of study: Science   [   ]   General   [   ]

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SECTION B

Please respond to the following statements by rating the role of the school counsellor you consider important to students' career development.

Statement	Unimportant	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers.					
Bringing resource persons for students to learn more about Jobs and careers					
Organizing orientations for students on new jobs and programmes					
Promoting of college and job fairs for students					
Creating of awareness of new jobs to students					
Assisting in maintaining discipline in school					
Working with teachers to help students to make decisions					
Assisting students to make career choices					

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Providing students the opportunity to talk about personal and social problems					
Assisting students to select challenging courses					
Maintaining students records					
Talking with teachers and parents about personal and social problems of students					
Writing of recommendation letters for students					

Others, specify……………………………………………………………….

SECTION C

Please respond to the following statements about your perceptions of the school counsellor's role. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement using the tools below; SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

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Statement	SA	A	D	SD
Developing interests regarding the world of work to increase students' career awareness				
Teaching students effective social skills such as peer relationship, self-esteem, family issues				
Helping to ease students' decision-making process with regards to their future by providing them with support and encouragement.				
Providing students with career plans and career guidance.				
Assisting students in marriage counselling and developing personal value system.				
Providing trainees with information on existing career opportunities				
Providing trainees with information on existing educational opportunities				

Others,

specify……………………………………………………………………

SECTION D

Please respond to the following statements about your perceptions of the

school counsellor's role by ticking your gender. Indicate the extent to which

you agree with the statement using the tools below; SA-Strongly Agree, A-

Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

Statement	SA	A	D	SD
Helping students with learning problems				
Providing students with marriage counselling				
Assisting students to discuss their social and personal problems				
Discussion vocational choice problems with students				
Assisting students to make career choices				
Assisting students to select challenging courses				

Others,

specify……………………………………………………………