

The Role of Guidance and Counselling in Promoting Mental Health Awareness among Adolescents at a Learning Centre in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This study utilises a mixed-methods approach to explore and provide a comprehensive analysis of the role of guidance and counselling in enhancing mental health awareness among adolescents at a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The research aims to assess the current level of mental health awareness among students, evaluate the effectiveness of existing guidance and counselling programs, identify key mental health challenges, and gather feedback on potential improvements. Quantitative data was collected through a cross-sectional survey, while qualitative insights were obtained from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions involving students, teachers, and school counsellors. The findings revealed that, while students were generally aware of the available mental health resources at the school, significant barriers persist, including pervasive stigma and a strong preference for external psychologists over school counsellors. Additionally, the existing guidance and counselling programmes are perceived as ineffective, irrelevant, and inadequate by the majority of students, highlighting critical gaps in the current support system. The study identifies substantial mental health challenges faced by students, such as excessive worry, anxiety, and persistent sadness, which are exacerbated by the limited effectiveness of current interventions. The research underscores the need for more robust mental health guidance and counselling framework, improved professional support, and greater student involvement in programme development. Recommendations include increasing the frequency and quality of mental health programmes, addressing stigma through targeted awareness campaigns, and integrating more specialized mental health professionals into the school setting. Data analysis involved both descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to provide a nuanced understanding of the effectiveness of mental health guidance and counselling and support at the high school level.

Keywords: mental health awareness, adolescents, guidance and counselling programs, stigma, mixed-methods research

Introduction

Mental health issues among adolescents have become a critical global concern as this age group is particularly vulnerable to emotional and psychological challenges due to the complex interplay of developmental, social, and environmental factors. Effective mental health guidance and counselling within schools is increasingly recognised as a vital strategy for addressing these challenges and promoting overall well-being. Schools offer a unique setting to implement preventive interventions and provide support, given their central role in adolescents' daily lives and their capacity to reach a large population of young people.

In Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, a high school presents an ideal environment to examine the role of guidance and counselling programs in fostering mental health awareness and support. Zimbabwe, like many low income countries (LICs), faces unique socio-economic and cultural challenges that impact mental health, including limited resources and prevalent stigma surrounding mental health issues. These factors complicate the implementation and effectiveness of school-based mental health programmes, making it imperative to understand the specific context and needs of students in this setting.

This study utilises a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of mental health guidance and counselling at a high school in Bulawayo. By combining quantitative data from surveys with qualitative insights from interviews and focus groups, the research aims to provide a nuanced analysis of the effectiveness of existing mental health programs, the level of student awareness, and the gaps in current support systems. Despite the presence of mental health resources such as guidance counsellors, the study reveals significant issues, including pervasive stigma and a preference for external psychologists over school-based counsellors. These findings underscore the need for a more robust and responsive mental health guidance and counselling framework.

The objectives of this research are to assess the current level of mental health awareness among students, evaluate the effectiveness of existing guidance and counselling programs, identify key mental health challenges faced by adolescents, and gather constructive feedback from students, teachers, and parents. By addressing these areas, the study seeks to offer actionable recommendations for enhancing mental health support within the school setting and reducing

the stigma associated with seeking help. The insights gained from this research would be valuable in informing policy changes, improving program design, and ultimately contributing to better mental health outcomes for adolescents in Bulawayo and similar contexts.

Literature review

Adolescence is universally recognised as a critical period for mental health, marked by significant emotional and psychological development. Globally, the importance of mental health guidance and counselling during this developmental stage is underscored by extensive research demonstrating its role in fostering well-being and preventing mental health issues. Effective mental health guidance and counselling in schools is pivotal in enhancing students' understanding of mental health, reducing stigma, and encouraging positive mental health behaviours. Studies have consistently shown that school-based mental health programmes can significantly improve mental health literacy, enabling students to identify symptoms early and seek appropriate help (Reinke et al., 2019; Weist et al., 2020). By embedding mental health guidance and counselling within the school curriculum, schools create an environment that supports open dialogue about mental health challenges, which is essential for reducing stigma and fostering a supportive atmosphere.

Across continents, evidence supports the effectiveness of well-designed school-based mental health programs. For example, research from North America and Europe highlights that programmes integrating interactive components and regular activities into the curriculum are particularly effective (Fazel et al., 2019). These programmes often combine classroom instruction with practical skill-building activities and peer support, creating a holistic approach to mental health guidance and counselling. Despite these successes, several barriers impact the implementation of these programmes, including inadequate funding, a shortage of trained mental health professionals, and poor programme evaluation (Karcher et al., 2018). These challenges underscore the need for enhanced resources and structural support to effectively address mental health in guidance and counselling settings.

In the context of Africa, and specifically Zimbabwe, the landscape of mental health guidance and counselling presents unique challenges and opportunities. While there is growing recognition of the need for mental health support in schools, stigma remains a significant barrier to the utilisation of mental health services. Research has shown that stigma can deter students from seeking help and exacerbate mental health issues (Corrigan & Watson, 2022). This reluctance is often driven by fear of negative judgment and social exclusion. Effective

mental health interventions in Zimbabwean schools must address these stigma-related barriers through targeted guidance and counselling campaigns and the promotion of mental health awareness (Pescosolido et al., 2018). Creating a more inclusive and accepting school culture is crucial for encouraging students to seek help without fear.

Similarly, in South Africa, there has been increasing recognition of the need for school-based mental health services, particularly due to the country's high rates of youth mental health challenges linked to socio-political stressors, including high crime rates, poverty, and historical trauma (Pillay & Louw, 2019). Research emphasises the importance of culturally sensitive interventions and integrating community-based resources to address the mental health needs of South African adolescents (Herman et al., 2020). South African schools have been exploring ways to destigmatise mental health and integrate mental health professionals into the education system to meet the diverse needs of students.

In Kenya, efforts to improve adolescent mental health are gaining traction, though challenges remain. Kenyan schools have increasingly recognised the importance of guidance and counselling services to address issues such as substance abuse, depression, and anxiety among students (Omondi et al., 2017). However, barriers such as limited resources, lack of trained professionals, and cultural misconceptions around mental health continue to hinder the effectiveness of these programmes (Kenyatta University, 2021). Recent initiatives in Kenya have focused on training teachers and counsellors to identify and address mental health issues and incorporate mental health education into the broader school curriculum (Mwangi & Kamau, 2020).

From a school perspective, students' preferences for mental health professionals significantly impact the effectiveness of mental health services. Many adolescents express a preference for psychologists over school counsellors, perceiving psychologists as more specialised and impartial (Gonzalez et al., 2021). This preference highlights the importance of integrating specialised mental health professionals into school settings. Having access to professionals with advanced training can provide more effective support for complex mental health issues compared to general school counsellors.

Recent literature offers several recommendations for enhancing mental health guidance and counselling. Increasing the frequency and quality of mental health programmes, incorporating student feedback into its development, and reducing stigma through targeted initiatives are

essential for improving its effectiveness (Kutcher et al., 2021). Additionally, professional development for educators is critical. It equips teachers with the skills to identify and address mental health issues effectively and ensures that interventions are based on evidence-based practices (Durlak et al., 2020). Involving students in the creation and evaluation of mental health programmes can make these interventions more relevant and engaging, thus enhancing their overall impact. This comprehensive approach to mental health guidance and counselling can better address the needs of students and improve mental health outcomes within school environments.

Aims of the study

The main aim of this study was to investigate the role of guidance and counselling in promoting mental health awareness of adolescents at a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The study also sought to identify improvements in mental health support and guidance and counselling.

Study objectives

- i) To assess the current level of mental health awareness of adolescents at a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
- ii) To evaluate the effectiveness of existing guidance and counselling programmes in enhancing mental health awareness of high school students.
- iii) To identify the key mental health challenges faced by adolescents at a high school.
- iv) To gather feedback from students on improving mental health guidance and counselling and support in a school setting.

Methodology

Research approach

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how guidance and counselling programmes enhance mental health awareness of adolescents. This approach enabled the collection of numerical data to assess the extent of mental health awareness and qualitative data to gain deeper insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding mental health guidance and counselling.

Research design

A cross-sectional survey design was utilised for the quantitative component, allowing the collection of data from a large sample of students at a single point in time. This design facilitated an assessment of students' mental health awareness levels and the effectiveness of guidance and counselling interventions. For the qualitative component, a case study design was used within the online survey framework, which included open-ended questions to gather detailed personal experiences and perceptions of students, teachers, and school counsellors regarding mental health guidance and counselling.

Population

The study targeted adolescents attending a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. This population included students from various form levels.

Sample and sampling technique

A random sampling method was employed to ensure a sample across different grades within the high school. This technique helped capture diverse perspectives from various age groups and academic levels. The sample aimed to include a minimum of 30 respondents to achieve statistical significance.

Data collection procedure

Data were collected through an online survey that integrated both quantitative and qualitative elements. The quantitative section of the survey included topics such as awareness of mental health issues, sources of information, perceived effectiveness of guidance and counselling programmes, and attitudes towards mental health. The qualitative section featured open-ended questions designed to capture in-depth responses related to personal experiences with mental health guidance and counselling, and suggestions for improvement. The online format facilitated ease of distribution and response collection, ensuring broad participation.

Data analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM Statistics Version 23). For qualitative data, thematic analysis was performed to identify patterns and insights from the open-ended responses. NVivo software was utilised to assist in organising and analysing the qualitative data systematically, coding responses into themes and sub-themes to provide a thorough understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions.

Integration of quantitative and qualitative data

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data was achieved through comparison of numerical results with qualitative insights, validating and enhancing the understanding of mental health awareness and guidance and counselling programme impacts. The final report synthesised statistical evidence with detailed personal experiences, offering a comprehensive view of the research topic.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were rigorously adhered to throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including locum-parental consent for minors, ensuring that participants were fully informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by removing personal identifiers from the online survey data. The study design was carefully crafted to minimise potential harm and distress to participants, and the findings were intended to contribute positively to understanding and improving mental health guidance and counselling.

Participants' profiles

Table 1 and Figure 1 below show the demographic characteristics of the participants. There were 15 males and 13 females who participated in the study, but 2 participants preferred not to reveal their gender. A majority of participants were Form 4 students (n=10), followed by Lower 6 students (n=8).

Table 1: Respondents' Age and Gender Cross-tabulation

		Respondents' Gender and Form Level			
		Respondents' gender			
Form Level		Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
	Form 1	1	2	0	3
	Form 2	0	1	1	2
	Form 3	1	0	1	2
	Form 4	6	4	0	10
	Form 5	4	4	0	8
	Form 6	3	2	0	5
Total		15	13	2	30

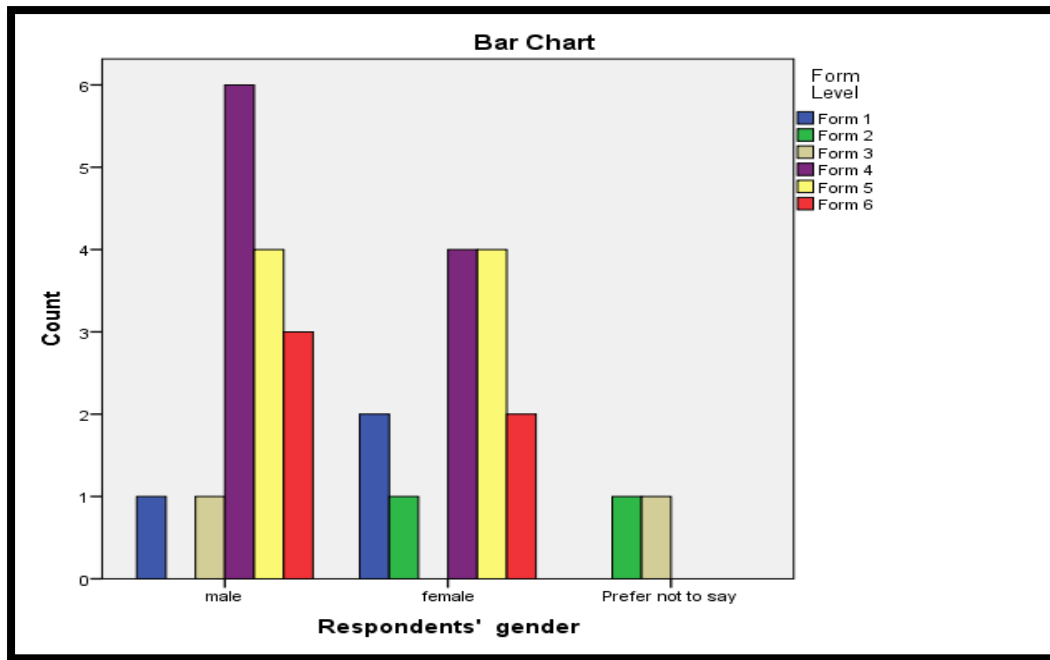


Figure 1: Respondents' gender and form level

Results

This section presents the study results. Researchers analysed data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM Statistics Version 23) and thematic analysis. The results are presented in the order of research objectives.

Level of mental health awareness among students

According to the results, only 5 participants (16.7%) lacked knowledge about where to get mental health services, as shown in Table 2 below. A fifth of the participants (20%) were slightly knowledgeable. The rest were moderately knowledgeable (26.7%), very knowledgeable (33.3%), and extremely knowledgeable (3.3%).

Table 2: Participants' knowledge about where to seek help for mental health issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all knowledgeable	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Slightly knowledgeable	6	20.0	20.0	36.7
	Moderately knowledgeable	8	26.7	26.7	63.3
	Very knowledgeable	10	33.3	33.3	96.7
	Extremely knowledgeable	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Most of the participants (80%) concurred that they had received information about mental health resources available at the school. A smaller percentage of participants (20%) denied receiving such information as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Information about mental health resources at the school

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	26	80	80
No	6	20	100
Total	30	100	

Half or 15 participants (50%) concurred that there is stigma associated with seeking mental health services at the school. A small fraction of the participants disagreed (6.7%), and 13 (43.3%) were neutral. A majority of participants who agreed that there is stigma were Form 4s (5), followed by Form 5 (3) and Form 6 students (3), as shown in Figure 2 below.

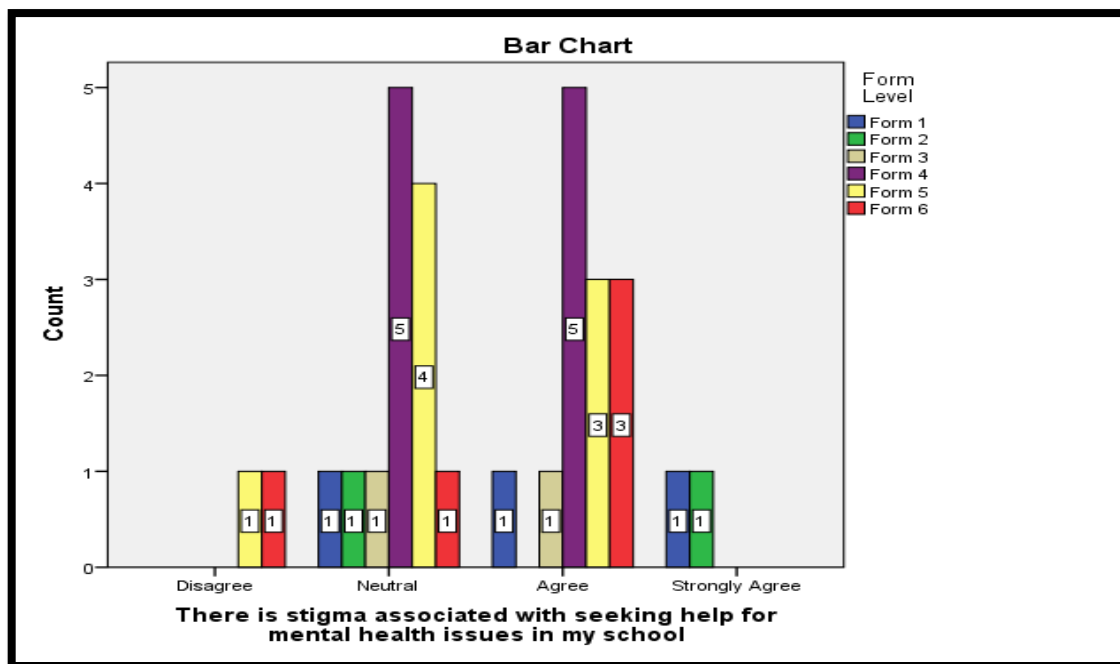


Figure 2: Stigma associated with seeking mental health services at the school

Figure 3 below shows that only 27% of participants reported being comfortable talking to a school counsellor about mental health issues. Almost a third of the participants (30%) were neutral while 43% were not comfortable.

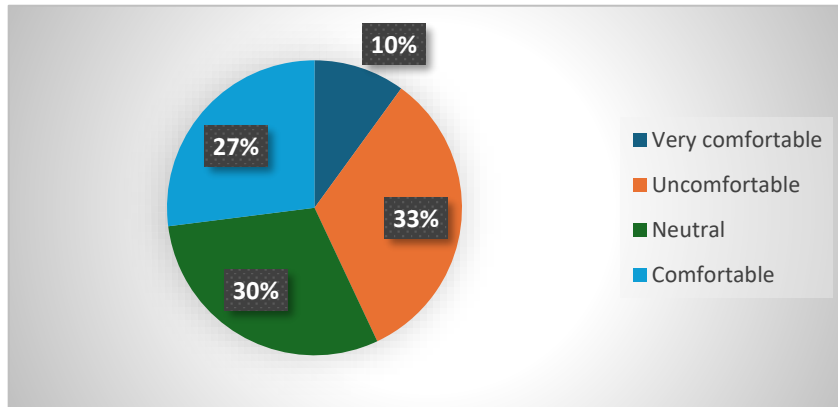


Figure 3: How comfortable would you feel talking to a school counsellor about a mental health issue?

Effectiveness of existing guidance and counselling programmes in enhancing mental health awareness

More than half of the participants (54%) believed that the school is not taking mental health issues seriously. Only a smaller percentage (3%) believed that mental health issues were prioritised at the school. Nearly half of the participants (43%) were not sure as shown in Figure 4 below.

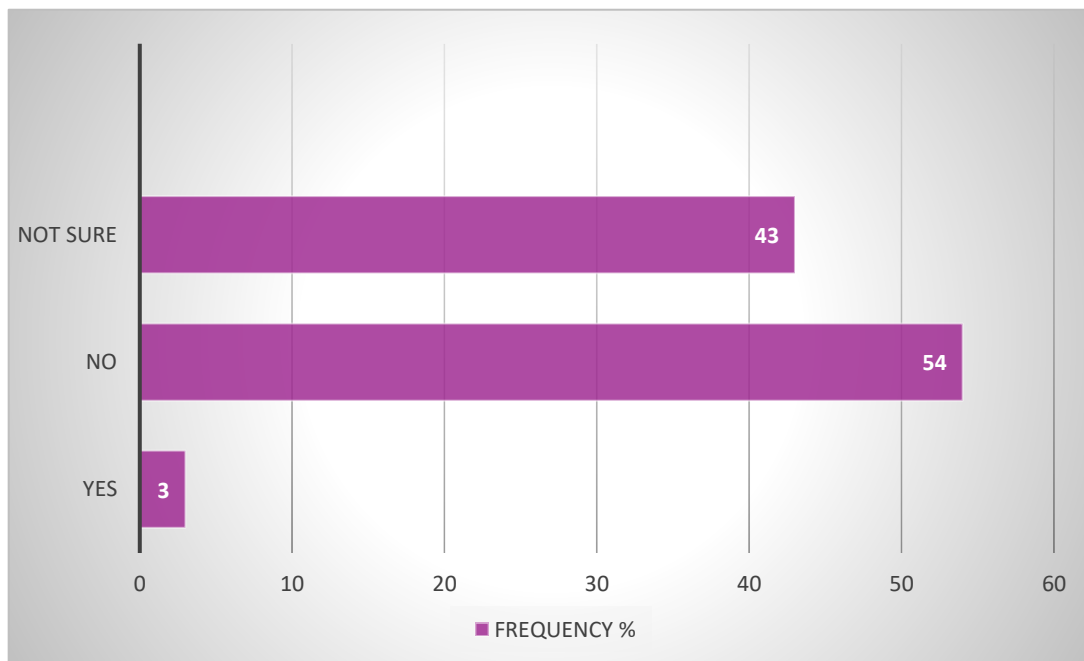


Figure 4: Are mental health issues taken seriously at your school?

Figure 5 below shows that a majority of participants (56.7%) believed that the mental health programmes at their school are slightly effective. A fifth of the participants (20%) reported that the programmes were not effective at all, and 23.3% deemed those programmes as moderately effective.

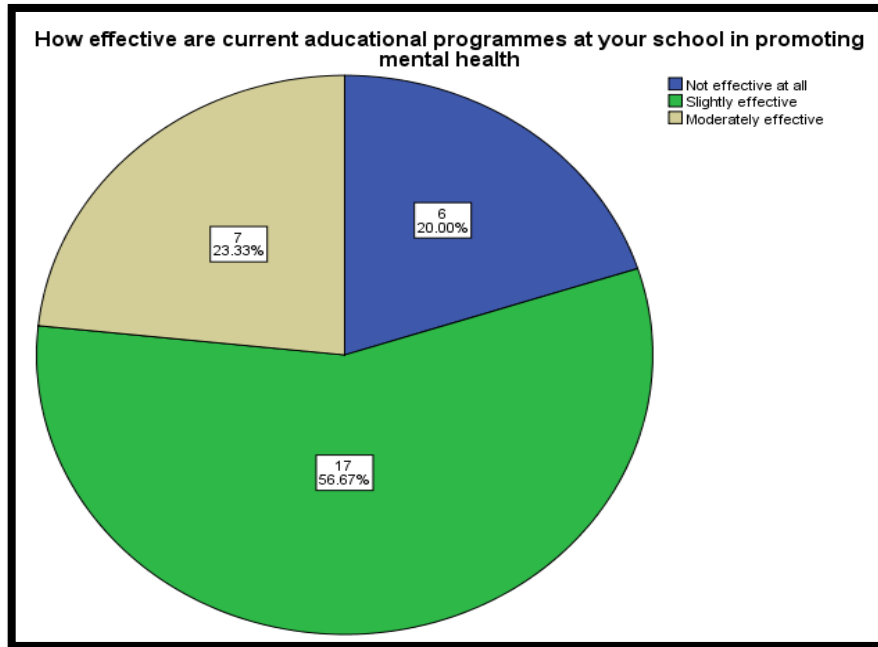


Figure 5: Effectiveness of current guidance and counselling programs in promoting mental health

Key mental health challenges faced by students

Most participants (60%) reported experiencing excessive worry and anxiety from time to time, and 17% reported experiencing it more often. Persistent sadness or depression occasionally affected 44% of the participants while 13 % experienced it more often. The results are clearly illustrated by Table 4 below.

Table 4: Mental health challenges faced by students

	Frequency				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Persistent sadness or depression	10%	33%	44%	13%	0
Excessive worry or anxiety	3%	20%	60%	17%	0
Difficulty sleeping or insomnia	19%	37%	37%	7%	0
Social withdrawal or isolation	3%	50%	40%	7%	0

A greater percentage of male students, as shown in Figure 6 reported that they viewed talking to friends and family as ineffective in dealing with mental health challenges. Most female students believed that talking to friends and family is slightly effective (13.3%), moderately effective (16.7%), and very effective (13.3%).

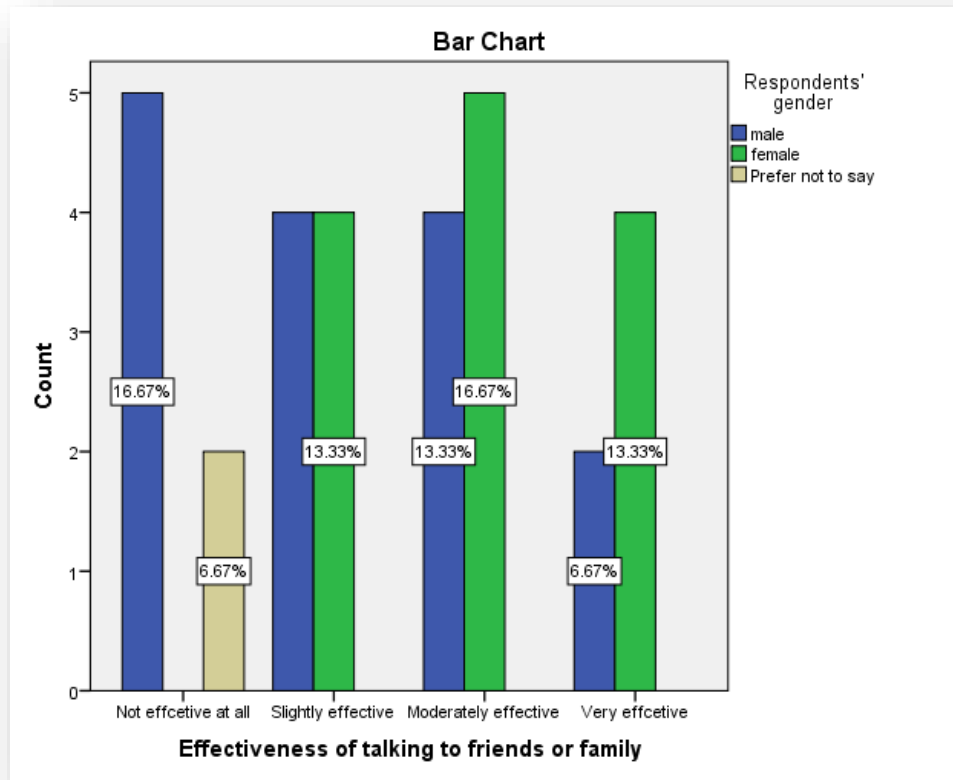


Figure 6: Effectiveness of talking to friends or family in dealing with mental health challenges

Table 5 and Figure 7 below show that participants (73.3%) viewed their school’s mental health support as inadequate. Only 26.7% of the participants agreed that the support is available but needs improvement.

Table 5: Adequacy of support that addresses mental health challenges

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes, but could be improved	8	26.7	26.7
No, not enough support	19	63.3	90
No support available	3	10	100
Total	30	100	

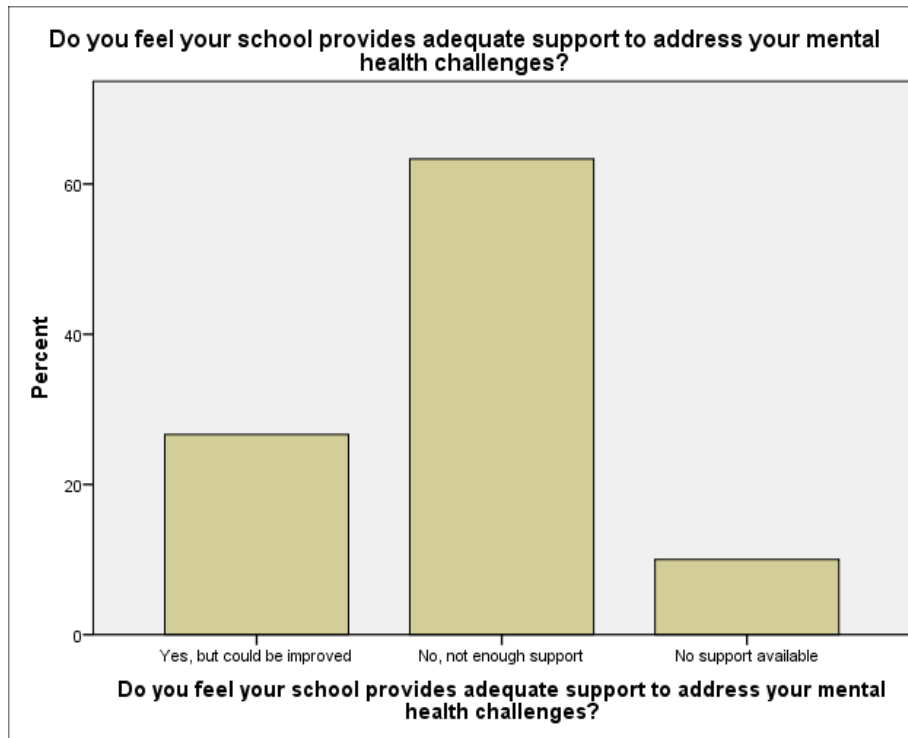


Figure 7: Adequacy of support provided by the school

Feedback on how to improve mental health guidance and counselling at the school

Many Form 4 students highlighted that they needed more help in dealing with academic pressure, anxiety and stress, especially towards the examinations period. They expressed desire to receive mental health support from psychologists rather than guidance and counselling teachers.

Some participants proposed raising of awareness at the school to demystify mental health and get rid of the stigma associated with seeking mental health services. Participant 12 commented:

We need more awareness campaigns so that people get educated. Currently, there is stigma associated with seeking mental health services.

Most participants expressed concern over having guidance and guidance teachers, instead of psychologists, to provide mental health services. Students emphasised the need for a school psychologist for effective management of mental health issues. In addition, they highlighted the need for mental health lessons to equip both teachers and students.

Having more mental health seminars would be helpful. Teachers also need awareness and, in the meantime, we need psychologists at our school until teachers are well-equipped to deal with mental health issues (Participant 16).

We need professionals who are trained to deal with mental health issues, not teachers. The school should hire psychologists (Participant 7).

The school is not allocating enough time for mental health lessons (Participant 5).

We do not want our teachers as counsellors. We need psychologists to come and teach us about mental health issues (Participant 20).

Some participants also proposed students' active involvement and participation in mental health programmes so that their views and contributions would inform intervention strategies.

They wanted to feel understood and heard. Participant 3 highlighted:

They need to know what we are going through and what we need. They should come up with programmes that address our needs, hence it would be helpful if they involved us in mental health programmes.

Participants agreed that the current guidance and counselling programmes that promote mental health at the school were not adequate and there is still room for improvement.

Discussion

The findings from this study offer a detailed snapshot of mental health awareness and support among students at a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative survey data with qualitative feedback, allowed for a nuanced understanding of both the strengths and limitations of the current mental health guidance and counselling programmes. These results are compared with those of other scholars to better contextualise the findings within the broader research landscape.

Level of mental health awareness

The survey results revealed that, while a substantial proportion of students were aware of mental health resources, with 80% acknowledging having received information about available services (Table 3), there remained significant variability in the depth of their knowledge. Only 3.3% of participants considered themselves extremely knowledgeable, with the majority falling into the "very knowledgeable" (33.3%) or "moderately knowledgeable" (26.7%) categories (Table 2). This disparity suggests that, while information dissemination has been successful to an extent, there is a need for a more structured and consistent approach to ensure comprehensive knowledge across all students. Enhanced efforts, such as regular workshops and interactive guidance and counselling sessions, could bridge this knowledge gap and ensure that all students are equally informed about mental health resources and support options. These findings resonate with similar research in South Africa, where studies by Pillay and Louw (2019) highlighted gaps in students' understanding despite extensive awareness programmes,

suggesting that greater emphasis is needed on depth and consistency of mental health education.

Perceptions of stigma and support

The persistent stigma associated with mental health services, as highlighted by 50% of participants (Figure 2), points to a significant barrier in accessing support. This stigma, coupled with the discomfort felt by 43% of students in discussing mental health issues with school counsellors (Figure 3), underscores a critical issue in the current support structure. Research consistently shows that stigma not only discourages help-seeking behaviours, but also exacerbates mental health challenges (Corrigan & Watson, 2022). This aligns with findings from Kenya, where Omondi et al. (2017) observed that stigma remains a substantial barrier to accessing mental health support in schools, often preventing students from seeking help despite awareness of available services. In this context, the discomfort reported by students might be indicative of a lack of trust in or rapport with the existing counsellors or could reflect broader societal and institutional stigma, as observed by Mwangi and Kamau (2020). To address this, schools might consider implementing stigma-reduction programmes, similar to those proposed by Pescosolido et al. (2018), and fostering an environment where mental health is openly discussed and normalised.

Effectiveness of guidance and counselling programmes

The data revealed a general dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of existing mental health programmes, with 56.7% of participants rating them as only slightly effective (Figure 5). This sentiment is supported by the finding that 54% of students believed mental health issues were not taken seriously at their school (Figure 4). This perception of ineffectiveness could stem from several factors, including insufficient programme integration into the curriculum, lack of engaging content, or inadequate follow-up and support. Effective mental health programmes should be integrated into the school's regular activities and tailored to address the specific needs and concerns of students. The results here echo those found by Durlak et al. (2020), who highlighted that integrating mental health programmes into regular school curricula, involving students in the design process, and ensuring follow-up support can significantly increase programme effectiveness. Similarly, research by Kutcher et al. (2021) suggests that programmes should be designed with regular feedback mechanisms to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

Mental health challenges

The prevalence of mental health challenges among students, including excessive worry, persistent sadness, and social withdrawal, is consistent with broader research on adolescent mental health (Fazel, Von Hoebel, & Luntamo, 2019). The high rates of anxiety and depressive symptoms highlight an urgent need for targeted interventions. The significant number of students who reported that talking to friends and family was less effective in managing these challenges (Figure 6) suggests that existing support systems outside the school setting may also be inadequate. This finding is in line with studies in other African countries, such as South Africa, where Herman et al. (2020) found that adolescents often experience limited support from family and peers, thus underscoring the necessity of professional mental health interventions in schools. These results further reinforce the need for the school to provide more robust and professional mental health support to complement external resources.

Support adequacy and recommendations

The overwhelming majority of students (73.3%) rated the school's mental health support as inadequate (Table 5 and Figure 7). This perception is particularly concerning given the reported need for more effective support mechanisms. The students' feedback emphasises a clear demand for professional psychologists rather than reliance on guidance counsellors. Many students also called for more awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and increase the visibility of mental health issues. This feedback aligns with the recommendations in the literature, which advocate for the integration of mental health professionals into school settings and the implementation of comprehensive mental health guidance and counselling programmes (Gonzalez & Tavares, 2021; Kutcher, Wei, & Coniglio, 2021). These findings echo research by Karcher et al. (2018), who emphasised the necessity of enhancing school-based mental health programmes with the support of trained professionals and more frequent mental health literacy campaigns to better address the needs of students.

Conclusion

The study provides critical insights into mental health awareness and support at a high school in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, revealing both progress and significant challenges. The data demonstrates that while most students had some knowledge of mental health resources, their understanding was not uniformly deep or comprehensive. The prevalent stigma associated with seeking mental health support remains a formidable barrier, impacting students' willingness to seek help and affecting their overall mental well-being. The reported discomfort with school

counsellors suggests that existing support mechanisms were insufficient and highlights a need for a more empathetic and professional approach to mental health services.

The effectiveness of current guidance and counselling programmes was notably lacking, with a substantial portion of students rating them as only slightly effective or ineffective. This dissatisfaction was compounded by students' requests for more specialised support and a stronger emphasis on practical mental health guidance and counselling. Persistent mental health challenges, including high levels of anxiety and depression, further underscored the inadequacy of existing interventions. The results suggest that the current system did not fully address the complex and varied needs of students, emphasising the need for a robust, multi-faceted approach to mental health support in schools.

Recommendations

- i) **Revise and expand mental health curriculum:** Schools should undertake a comprehensive review and revision of their mental health curriculum. This curriculum should not only provide foundational knowledge, but also incorporate advanced topics and skills, such as coping mechanisms, emotional regulation, and resilience building. The curriculum should be dynamic, incorporating student feedback to remain relevant and engaging. Collaborative efforts with mental health professionals can ensure the inclusion of evidence-based practices and strategies that resonate with students.
- ii) **Combat stigma through continuous engagement:** To effectively combat stigma, schools should implement ongoing engagement strategies, including workshops, peer-led discussions, and community events that promote mental health awareness. These initiatives should aim to normalise mental health issues and encourage open dialogue. Schools might also consider integrating mental health guidance and counselling into existing subjects to ensure that it becomes a regular part of students' learning experiences.
- iii) **Integrate specialised mental health professionals:** The employment of trained mental health professionals, such as psychologists and counsellors with specialised expertise is crucial. These professionals can offer tailored support and interventions that are more effective in addressing complex mental health issues than general guidance counsellors. Schools should explore partnerships with local mental health organisations or agencies to provide access to these specialists, ensuring that students receive high-quality, professional support.

- iv) **Enhance student involvement in programme design:** To create more effective mental health programs, schools should actively involve students in their design and implementation. This can be achieved through focus groups, surveys, and student advisory boards that provide ongoing input. Engaging students in this way ensures that programmes are aligned with their needs and preferences, fostering a greater sense of ownership and engagement.
- v) **Strengthen support systems and resources:** Schools should conduct a thorough evaluation of their current mental health support systems and resources. This evaluation should assess the adequacy, accessibility, and effectiveness of the available support services. Based on these assessments, schools should make necessary improvements, such as increasing funding for mental health initiatives, expanding the availability of support services, and ensuring that these services are easily accessible and confidential.
- vi) **Implement comprehensive training for educators:** Professional development for educators is essential in equipping them with the skills and knowledge to recognise and address mental health issues effectively. Training programmes should focus on mental health literacy, intervention techniques, and strategies for creating a supportive classroom environment. This would enable teachers to better support students and contribute to a more holistic approach to mental health in schools.
- vii) **Promote parental and community involvement:** Engaging parents and the wider community in mental health initiatives can enhance the overall effectiveness of school-based programs. Schools should develop strategies to educate parents about mental health issues and involve them in supporting their children's mental health. Community partnerships can also provide additional resources and support, contributing to a more comprehensive network of care.

By addressing these recommendations, schools can create a more inclusive and effective mental health support system that better meets the needs of their students. Implementing these changes would not only improve mental health outcomes, but also foster a supportive and understanding environment that promotes the overall well-being of the school community.

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