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Evaluation of the Effect of the Development of Guidance and Counselling Programmes on Individual Self-Efficacy in the Administration Police Service of Kenya

Zakayo Anyangu Musita

Deputy Director, Department of Psychology, Counselling & Educational Foundations,
Laikipia University, Kenya

Dr. Enos Barasa Mukadi

Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Counselling & Educational Foundations,
Laikipia University, Kenya

Dr. Naftal Michira Nyang'ara

Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Counselling & Educational Foundations,
Laikipia University, Kenya

Dr. David Kabera Muthondeki

Head, Department of Mental Health, National Police Service, Kenya

Abstract:

The research evaluates the effect of the development of Guidance and Counselling programmes on individual self-efficacy in the Administration Police Service of Kenya. The study was guided by the Well-being theory by Martin Seligman. The study adopted the Ex-post-facto research design and stratified random sampling technique was used to select 367 participants from a population of 7,404 Administration Police (AP) officers while 20 key informants were purposively sampled. The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection. Self-administered questionnaires and an interview schedule were used to collect data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to establish the reliability of the instruments which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25.0) was used in analyzing the quantitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed inductively and deductively through thematic content analysis. The study revealed that though the Administration Police Service (APS) offered counselling services to its officers, not many officers had benefitted from the programmed services therefore these services were not effective in training self-efficacy among the officers. The study established that the low uptake of the psychological counselling programme can be attributed to the fact that the program has not been decentralized to the lowest level that is the sub-county which is the lowest centres of service delivery for the APS. Secondly there were few professional counsellors within the APS, the study also revealed that the officers were reluctant to take up the programme due to the fear of being stereotyped by their colleagues. The study recommends, the strengthening of the APS Psychological Counselling programme through the employment of professional counsellors to cater for the counselling needs of the APS; sanitization of the importance of mental health that is advocacy to the police officers and infrastructural development for spaces for carrying out the psychological services and the decentralization of the psychological counselling programme up to the lowest level of service delivery for the AP officers which is the Subcounty level.

Keywords: *Counselling programmes, administration police, guidance, effectiveness*

1. Introduction

Sharma *et al.* (2016) underscored the pivotal role played by guidance and counselling programmes in the police service. They argued that in the absence of a functional guidance and counselling programme, police officers may resort to drug and alcohol abuse and reckless sexual behaviour as strategies to cope with the traumatic or stressful experiences they encounter. Besides, the officers can easily become frustrated, irritable and vulnerable to suicidal tendencies, which may spill over into their relationship with spouse, family and the general public (Morinet *al.*, 2017). According to Papazoglou and Tuttle (2018), angry and frustrated police officers can have negative views towards members of the public. Nixet *al.* (2018) on their part maintain that such frustrated officers are almost more certain than their colleagues to support more physical or aggressive policing techniques. These officers become more insensitive toward individuals, develop a sense of distrust and hold the view that some individuals must be brought to reason the hard, corporal way. El Sayed *et al.* (2018) further argue that frustrated and angry officers are more likely to struggle, fight with or verbally abuse suspects. Clifton (2020) reports that police officers in the US experience psychological challenges like their counterparts from other parts of the world resulting in increased incidents of police suicides. This necessitated the introduction of a

support system for the officers to help them cope with the challenges associated with policing and adjust to their normal lives (Wood *et al.*, 2021). For instance, Violanti, *et al.* (2017) notes that most police agencies in the US have introduced organisational measures to assist their police officers to deal with the potential impact of these psychological challenges. These measures involved the introduction of guidance and counselling programmes within the Police Service (Turgoose *et al.*, 2017). Violanti, *et al.* (2017) observe that these programs have registered commendable success in addressing the psychological challenges faced by the US police.

LaMontagne *et al.* (2016) maintain that in Australia, to address the psychological challenges experienced by police officers, the government introduced a workplace mental health intervention programme whose primary aims were to improve psychosocial working conditions, mental health literacy, and to improve organisational outcomes. Boshoff and Strydom (2017) report that in South Africa the government established counselling programmes that focus on the inhibition of the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder and the advancement of trauma-related stress symptoms soon after exposure to a traumatic event by police officers.

Like their colleagues from the rest of the world, police officers in Kenya experience psychological challenges associated with the policing profession (Republic of Kenya, 2020). Oweke *et al.* (2014) contend that in Kenya the police are the ones who are called out to the scene of crime such as murder or assault, being witness to these horrific circumstances can prove to be incredibly stressful and can at times lead to feelings of depression and disillusionment. According to Republic of Kenya (2016), Police officers in Kenya are further exposed to potentially traumatizing events such as cash in transit heists, armed robberies, mob attacks, suspect attacks, kidnapping, violent riots, hijackings and seeing dead bodies. According to Wasanga *et al.* (2012), such difficult conditions if left unchecked may drain the officers' psychological resources resulting in a sense of low self-efficacy.

Wango *et al.* (2018) further observe that most police officers in Kenya stay long days away from family; they are regularly transferred and are posted far from their families and homes. As a result, their marriages are affected and they do not get to understand nor bond well with their children (Republic of Kenya, 2020). Despite these mammoth challenges, Musyimi (2020) observes that the officers lack regular access to psychological treatment and counselling because their training accentuates physicality with little to no emotional grounding for the unsettling circumstances they face on the job. This leads to psychological trauma resulting in a sense of low self-efficacy (Wango *et al.*, 2018). Accordingly, Ongoro (2015) observes that these psychological challenges encountered by police officers, call for a support system to help them cope and adjust to their normal lives. Additionally, Muthondeki, *et al.* (2014) expressed the need for a counselling programme within the Police Service that would assist the officers to cope with the psychological challenges associated with policing. The Ransley report (2009) found out that the area of guidance and counselling for the police in Kenya had been neglected for a long time. As such, there were no established functional support systems to assist officers who were undergoing distressful situations. Further, the report revealed that guidance and counselling in the police had been left to chaplains some of whom were not trained counsellors. The report further exposed that in some instances, the respective commanders, most of whom lacked any training in guidance and counselling took upon the role of guiding and counselling their juniors. This according to Wango *et al.* (2018), impacted negatively on the self-efficacy of police officers in Kenya. Consequently, Ransley recommended that police training colleges should consider outsourcing professional counsellors to enhance their training capacity in counselling to address the psychological problems experienced by police officers and to enhance their self-efficacy. Muthondeki, *et al.* (2014) recommended that provisions be made for professional counsellors to debrief officers who had experienced serious trauma and to assist those who were preparing for retirement.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Law enforcement is an inherently stressful occupation, which often results in both physical and psychological symptoms (Berg *et al.*, 2006). The very nature of police work includes regular and ongoing exposure to confrontation, violence, and potential harm. There has been a spike in the reported incidents of police officers engaging in self-harming behaviour, for example, suicides, homicides and other odd behaviours which at times spreads to their families. The Administration Police Service (APS) put together a guidance and counselling programme at their training school in Embakasi in the year 2012 to provide psychological support to the officers by enhancing their self-efficacy. A large number of resources have been dedicated by the government and other donors towards ensuring the success of the programme. Despite these efforts, cases of AP officers committing suicide or taking onto other maladjusted coping mechanisms like drug and alcohol abuse continue to be recorded in both the mainstream and social media. However, it is not clear the extent to which this counselling program impacts the self-efficacy of the officers. Therefore, there is need to conduct an empirical study to assess effect of the Development of the guidance and counselling programmes on Individual self-efficacy of the Administration police officers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Historical Development of Guidance and Counselling Programme in the Police

According to Allan and Moffett (2016), guidance is the total programme of activities and services within an organization put in place to assist the individual to conceive and carry out adequate adjustments in all aspects of his/her life. Hughes *et al.* (2019) observe that Guidance and counselling can support individual paths to self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, better well-being and provide stability by addressing trauma, displacement, mental health, transitional readjustment, or simply opening up access to opportunities, and creating new ones. Allan and Moffett (2016) further observe that these services each provide a place and space for individuals and/or groups to find their own identity and to

gain a sense of hope and optimism for a better future. Reddy *et al.* 2018 argue that the guidance and counselling process eventually makes a person self-directed and self-sufficient.

Ellrich and Baier (2017) maintain that police officers the world over faces many challenges that are likely to impact their self-efficacy, these challenges affect officers from both developed and developing countries. Violanti, *et al.* (2017) for example reports that the US Police which has one of the best-funded and equipped Police Services in the world recorded 140 cases of police officers who committed suicide in 2016. Clifton (2020) further reports that the US experienced a greater loss of officers to suicide over line-of-duty deaths for four consecutive years from 2016 to 2019. Turgoose *et al.* (2017) argue that in the US the government introduced organisational measures to assist the officers to deal with the potential impact of psychological challenges faced by its police officers. These measures according to the author, involved the introduction of guidance and counselling programmes within the police service. These programmes provided resources such as counselling, debriefing, peer support groups or supervision to police officers. Further, the programme was designed to enable the officers to have regular opportunities to speak safely about the effect of police work on their psychological well-being (Thompson *et al.*, 2014). According to Thompson *et al.*, the counselling programme in the US focused more on empowering the individual police officer by providing them with skills in anxiety management, self-care, and mindfulness. Witt *et al.* (2017) reported that these interventions had registered impressive improvement in enhancing the psychological well-being of police officers in the US

According to the British Office for National Statistics, the number of officers in Britain whose deaths were classified as suicide increased from 23 in 2015 to 25 in 2016 (Violanti *et al.*, 2017). Gray, and Collie, 2017 argue that, compared with all other occupations in Australia, the police were in the top three highest occupations experiencing work-related injuries and occupational violence. Ménard *et al.* (2016) observe that these psychological and physiological challenges have necessitated the various police organizations across the globe to adopt Guidance and Counselling as a mitigating strategy. LaMontagne *et al.* (2016) maintain that in Australia the government introduced a workplace mental health intervention programme whose primary aims were to improve psychosocial working conditions, mental health literacy, and to improve organizational outcomes. Accordingly, LaMontagne *et al.* evaluated the usage and viability of the working environment psychological well-being mediation in the state-wide police branch of the south-eastern Australian province of Victoria. LaMontagne *et al.* discovered that although there were a few occupation stress interventions for the police in Australia, these interventions focused more on improving individual responses to stressors, rather than on reducing the stressors. Boshoff and Strydom (2017) reported that in South Africa there were programmes that focused on the inhibition of the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder and the advancement of trauma-related stress symptoms soon after exposure to a traumatic event by police officers. As indicated by Boshoff and Strydom, the South African Police Service (SAPS) accentuates critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) as a model for trauma intervention. CISD is defined as a meeting with a group of people (peer support programme) during or after a traumatic event, for instance, an accident or disaster (Boshoff and Strydom, 2017).

According to Wassermann *et al.* (2019), the South African Police has a programme that is designed to assist psychologists and peerdebriefers to help traumatized officers to recover. Wassermann *et al.* however, note that the programme lacks a supportive structure, which they argue has serious implications for the mental health of the organization as well as its members who still need to grapple with extremely serious psychological problems. This, in turn, impacts negatively on the self-efficacy and wellbeing of the South African Police officers (Wassermann *et al.*, 2019). In Kenya, the APS instituted a guidance and counselling programme to mitigate against psychological challenges that are likely to impact its officers' self-efficacy. This study sought to assess the extent to which the programme has been effective in this regard. Nyingi (2016) examined Kenya Police Service (KPS) members' perceptions of the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in curbing suicide ideation and stress management. Nyingi discovered that in Kenya, police officers were not willing to seek psychiatric care, because the officers fear that undertaking a psychiatric assessment can cause sanctions, reassignment, and limitation of firearm privileges missed career advancement opportunities, and stigmatization (Nyingi, 2016). Additionally, Nyingi opined that though the Kenya Police Service (KPS) had sponsored counselling programmes its officers, those who were implementing the programme tended to divert the funds meant for the programme for their gain thus denying the officers the full package which meant that the program was not meeting the intended objectives. Nyingi's study offered valuable insights into the reasons why despite the existence of a guidance and counselling programme in the KPS incidents suicide ideation and stress among the officers were on the increase. Nevertheless, Nyingi's study did not consider the Administration Police Service but only concentrated on the Kenya Police Service. Cognizant of the fact that the police in Kenya is comprised of two Services (The Kenya Police Service and the Administration Police Service) and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) and (Republic of Kenya, 2010), it would be important to conduct a study on the status of guidance and counselling in the other constituents of the police in Kenya. The present study strove to bridge this gap by examining the development of the guidance and counselling programme in the APS and its effect on the self-efficacy of police officers. According to Omoegunet *et al.* (2018), employees who obtain counselling are likely to be greatly satisfied, and well-adjusted which is likely to impact positively on their self-efficacy hence enhanced service delivery. Since police officers in Kenya are key service providers they need to be greatly satisfied and well-adjusted for them to have high self-efficacy, this will, in turn, translate to enhanced service delivery.

2.2. Individual Counselling and Self-Efficacy in Service Delivery of Police Officers

According to Langs, (2019), individual counselling is a process through which clients work one-on-one with a professionally trained Counsellor in a safe, caring, and confidential environment to explore their feelings, beliefs, or behaviours and work through challenging or powerful memories. According to Langs, the goal of this interaction is to help

the client to understand himself or herself, clarify and direct their thoughts, to make a worthwhile decision. Through this process, the clients' problems are alleviated (Tolan & Cameron, 2016). Tolan and Cameron further observe that this interaction is intended to bring about change in the client by altering maladaptive behaviour, learning the decision-making process or averting problems. This, therefore, means that individual counselling if applied in the police, has the potential of enhancing the self-efficacy of police officers. Boshoff *et al.* (2015) argue that police officers are exposed to multiple traumatic incidents, heightened by various contributing factors that may cause intense trauma for the individual, family members and the police service which might lead to reduced self-efficacy. Papazoglou and Tuttle (2018) argue that stress and trauma experienced by police officers in the line of duty can have negative impacts on officers' health, self-efficacy and well-being. Papazoglou and Tuttle, therefore, observe that psychological support is imperative in helping officers develop their self-efficacy thus maintaining their psychological well-being. Boshoff *et al.*, further advocate for individual workplace counselling among police officers. Sonnenstuhl and Trice (2018) maintain that individual workplace counselling is likely to offer police officers an opportunity to discuss their issues and adopt a constructive means of coping with difficult situations. Omoegunet *et al.* (2018) maintain that employees who receive counselling tend to be greatly satisfied which increases their self-efficacy. According to Republic of Kenya (2020) police officers in Kenya experience stressful and traumatic events in the course of their duty which compromises their self-efficacy. The officers, therefore, stand to benefit from individual counselling by working one-on-one with a professionally trained counsellor in a safe, caring, and confidential environment to explore their feelings, beliefs, or behaviours and work through challenging or powerful memories that they may be harbouring.

According to Soomro and Yanos, (2018) individual counselling within the Police Department in America is offered as a voluntary option for troubled officers. Kirschman (2018) further observes that in the US the Police Department has on-staff psychologists who provide these counselling services; additionally, the various police departments occasionally use consulting psychiatrists to assist the officers. Further, police officers are referred to outside counsellors if they are not comfortable dealing with in house counsellors (Kirschman, 2018). Soomro and Yanos (2018) however note that even though counselling services are offered free, within the police departments in America, counselling remains among the most underused tools in a police officer's arsenal. Kirschman, (2018) associates this phenomenon to the age-old stigma within the police department against psychotherapy in general. The APS offers individual counselling to its officers (Republic of Kenya, 2016). It will, therefore, be important to find out whether the APS has on-staff psychologists who provide counselling services to the officers and the referral mechanisms available for those officers who might not be willing to be attended to by the on-staff psychologist. Additionally, it will be useful to interrogate the uptake of the individual counselling services offered to AP officers and its impact on the self-efficacy of the officers.

According to Wassermann *et al.* (2019), the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) created numerous units to assist police officers in coping with the psychological challenges associated with their job. These units offer individual counselling services to police officers, for example, psychological services, chaplaincy services and social services (Wassermann *et al.*, 2019). One of the main objectives of these interventions is to help police officers serving within the SAPS to develop their self-efficacy and adopt pro-active rather than maladaptive and potentially ineffectual coping strategies such as substance abuse, domestic violence and suicide ideation (Wassermann *et al.*, 2019). Wassermann *et al.*, observe that although the helping services in the SAP were aimed at promoting adaptive coping strategies, many police officers continue to use ineffective, maladaptive and even self-defeating coping strategies. Consequently, it will be important to investigate the coping strategies offered under the APS Guidance and Counselling programme and how this impacts the self-efficacy of AP officers.

Wango (2015) observes that the KPS has a counselling programme that was designed to offer counsel and debrief to officers on long-term deployment in potentially stressful and hazardous situations. This includes officers who deal with criminal cases, officers in danger and those working in risky zones (Wango, 2015). The programme was also designed to enhance the self-efficacy of the officers by helping them to identify how maladaptive problem-focused coping styles may contribute to experiences of psychological distress and personal difficulty (Wango, 2015). Wango's work provides useful insights into the design of the counselling programme at the KPS. The work however did not examine the programme in the APS which is another arm of the NPS. Further, the work did not assess the effectiveness of the counselling programme in enhancing the self-efficacy of the individual officers. It is therefore imperative to bridge this gap by finding out the extent to which the individual counselling in the APS is effective in enhancing the self-efficacy of the officers and how it helps them to avoid maladaptive problem-focused coping styles.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The study was based on two theories; the Self-Efficacy theory by Albert Bandura, (1997) and the Well-Being theory of Martin Seligman (2011).

2.3.1. The Self-Efficacy Theory

The Self-Efficacy theory was advanced by Albert Bandura in 1997. The theory postulates that people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects determine the action and behaviours they elect to engage in and how much they endure when confronted with difficulties and challenges (Maddux, 2016). According to Cherniss (2017), the Self-efficacy theory further postulates that, these beliefs play a crucial role in psychological adjustment, psychological problems, physical health, and professionally directed and self-guided behavioural change strategies. Consequently, people have the capacity to influence the events of their lives (Maddux, 2016). Looked at in line with policing, the self-efficacy theory suggests that police officers possess the capability to participate in socially suitable behaviours, to be

tolerant amidst difficulties or challenges and influence the events of their lives by believing in their capabilities to produce desired effects.

2.3.2. The Well-Being theory

This theory was developed by, Martin Seligman in 2011. The theory postulates that five essential elements should be in place for people to experience lasting well-being which is abbreviated as "PERMA" (Seligman, 2018). These are Positive Emotion (P), Engagement (E), Positive Relationships (R), Meaning (M), and Accomplishment/Achievement (A). According to Seligman, by focusing on all five of these elements, individuals can flourish in life, and find the happiness they desire (Seligman, 2018).

Seligman further argues that well-being is not only valuable because it feels good, but also because it has beneficial real-world consequences (Compton, & Hoffman, 2019). For instance, compared to people with low levels of well-being, individuals with higher levels of well-being perform better at work, have more satisfying relationships, are more cooperative, have stronger immune systems, have better physical health, live longer, have reduced cardiovascular mortality, have fewer sleep problems, have lower levels of burnout, have greater self-control, have better self-regulation and coping abilities and are more pro-social and on overall they have a high level of self-efficacy (Butler & Kern, 2016). Looked at in line with policing, the well-being theory implies that for police officers to deliver quality services they need to be in a state of well-being. The study thus sought to establish the extent to which the Guidance and Counselling programme in the Administration Police contributes to the attainment of well-being and the implications this has on the self-efficacy of the officers.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopted the *ex post facto* research design. This is because the variables in this study lied outside the researcher's control and therefore could not be engineered or manipulated by the researcher. The variables of interest included the development of guidance and counselling programme as the independent variable and individual self-efficacy in the APS as the dependent variable. The researcher did not have any control over the development of guidance and counselling programme in the APS and its possible effects on AP officers' self-efficacy. Thus the *ex post facto* research design promised to meet the goal of the study which was to find out whether the dependent variable (the development of the guidance and counselling programme) had caused an effect on the independent variable (self-efficacy of AP officers). As such, the conclusions regarding this cause-effect relationship between the variables were inferred without intervening or varying the independent or dependent variable.

The target population was 7,407 Administration Police officers in Nairobi City County across various ranks. Key informants were counsellors who were implementing the APS guidance and counselling programme. The sample of the study consisted of 367 police officers, ranging from the rank of police constable to the rank of Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG). The research used both probability and non-probability sampling methods to select the 367 respondents. Purposive sampling helped in selecting officers from the APS counselling department, Service Units headquarters and APS headquarters and finally to select sub-county commanders of the 12 sub-counties in Nairobi County.

Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size
Gazetted Officers (IP and above)		
Langata Sub-county	12	01
Kamukunji Sub-county	15	01
Kasarani Sub-county	13	01
Westlands Sub-county	17	01
National Police Collage "A" Campus	135	08
SGB	191	09
RDU	90	04
Non-Commissioned officers (CPL to SSGT)		
Langata Sub-county	61	05
Kamukunji Sub-county	80	07
Kasarani Sub-county	76	06
Westlands Sub-county	83	08
National Police Collage "A" Campus	110	11
SGB	598	40
RDU	210	12
Police Constables		
Langata Sub-county	223	19
Kamukunji Sub-county	211	17
Kasarani Sub-county	195	14
Westlands Sub-county	191	13
National Police Collage "A" Campus	696	41
SGB	3170	91
RDU	1030	58

Table 1: Sampling Matrix

3.2. Research Instruments

The researcher collected data from the police officers using questionnaires and employed an interview schedule to collect data from the key informants within the Administration Police Service. The researcher distributed 178 hard copies of the questionnaire physically and converted the questionnaire into 169 digital copies which were later sent to the respondents via email. The questionnaire contained both structured and unstructured questions which were administered to 347 police officers. To establish the reliability of the instruments a split-half test of reliability was carried out. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was determined using the SPSS version 25.0 Statistics and the questionnaire items yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Individual Counselling and Self-Efficacy of Administration Police Officers in Service Delivery

The study sought to assess the effectiveness of individual counselling on the Administration police officers' self-efficacy in service delivery. The respondents were asked to rate the items aimed at establishing their views on the Administration Police Peer counselling services while key informants were asked to respond to questions aimed at establishing their views on the Administration Police individual counselling services. Two hundred and sixty-six respondents indicated their opinion on the effectiveness of the Administration Police individual counselling on the self-efficacy of the officers. A five-point Likert type scale was developed where a rating value of five indicated they strongly agree with the statements, 4 indicated agreement, 3 indicated neither agreed nor disagreed, 2 indicated disagreement and 1 indicated strong disagreement with the statement. Opinions on strongly agree and agree, strongly disagree and disagree were put together respectively for easier data presentation. The analysis involved getting a percentage response score for each. Table 2 shows the opinion of the respondents.

Statements	SA/A		N		D/SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I am aware of the existence of individual counselling offered under guidance and counselling in our Sub-County/college/camp.	228	85.6	33	12.4	5	2
I have gone through the individual counselling offered under guidance and counselling in our Sub-County/college/camp.	98	36.7	08	3.0	160	60.3
After going through the individual counselling sessions, I normally feel more confident while offering policing services.	67	25.1	195	73.3	4	1.6
After attending individual counselling sessions, I normally feel that I will be able to achieve most of the work-related goals that I have set for myself.	66	24.8	195	73.3	5	1.9
After attending individual counselling sessions, I normally feel that even when things are tough, I can perform my duties quite well.	70	26.3	195	73.3	1	0.4

Table 2: Individual Counselling and Self-Efficacy

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The findings are further discussed in the subsections that follow.

4.2. Awareness of the Existence of Individual Counselling offered under the APS Guidance and Counselling Programme

As indicated in Table 2, 85.6% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the existence of the individual counselling offered under the APS Guidance and counselling programme. However, 2% of the respondents stated that they were unaware of the existence of individual counselling while 12.4% were undecided. This finding was similar to the results of the interviews whereby 90% of the interviewees affirmed knowledge of the existence of individual counselling services in the APS while a minority (10%) indicated that they were not aware of the individual counselling offered by the APS. One interviewee who was a Sub-County CIPU Commander had this to say:

I know the officers working in the counselling department and I have referred some of my officers who have had psychological challenges to them for individual counselling. CIPU Sub- County commander (8)

Another interviewee who was from the training college had this to say:

I think because of the confidentiality associated with individual counselling, most of our officers prefer it to other forms of counselling. We have had a good number of officers visiting our offices for individual counselling either on personal issues or

work-related challenges. We also offer psychological support to those living with physical disabilities arising from police work. Key informant Embakasi 'A' Campus.

This finding indicates that the majority of the respondents were aware of the existence of individual counselling services offered under the APS Guidance and counselling programme and that officers in the sub-counties who experience psychological challenges are referred to the headquarters where they are offered individual counselling. Further, some officers visit the counselling offices where they are offered individual counselling either on personal issues or work-related challenges. This finding is similar to Wassermann *et al.* (2019), who observe that in South Africa, the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) offers individual counselling services to police officers to help them to develop their self-efficacy and adopt pro-active rather than maladaptive and potentially ineffectual coping strategies such as substance abuse, domestic violence and suicide ideation (Wassermann *et al.*, 2019). According to Boshoff *et al.*, individual workplace counselling among police officers offers them an opportunity to discuss their issues and adopt a constructive means of coping with difficult situations. Omoegunet *et al.* (2018) maintain that employees who receive individual counselling tend to be greatly satisfied which increases their self-efficacy. Ensuing from this discussion, therefore, it emerges that the APS offers individual counselling services to its officers and most of the officers are aware of the existence of these services.

4.2. Participation in the Individual Counselling offered under Guidance and Counselling

As indicated in Table 2, 36.7% of the respondents indicated that they had participated in the individual counselling in the APS. However, 3% of the respondents stated that they had not participated in individual counselling while 60.3% were undecided. This finding indicates that though a large number of officers had indicated that they were aware of the existence of individual counselling, those who had participated in individual counselling was still low. The results from the interviews conducted yielded similar results with 20% of the interviewees indicating that they had participated in individual counselling while 80% indicated that they had not participated. An interviewee who was a CIPU sub-county commander stated that:

We have had cases in the past where some of the officers in my sub-county were struggling with alcohol and drug abuse, in such cases, I talked to our counselling unit and they were able to support the officers to manage their condition. In most of these cases, it emerged that the officers had some underlying problems that were pushing them to alcohol and substance abuse and at the moment the officers have adjusted and are working well. However, since trained counsellors are few and the services have not been fully decentralized up to the sub-county level, not many officers experiencing psychological challenges can access these services- Sub- County CIPU Commander (9)

Another respondent who was from the training school had this to say:

Most officers are a bit reluctant to visit our offices to seek individual counselling because of trust issues. They have not realized that as professional counsellors we are obligated to maintain confidentiality. Also, some officers feel that if their colleagues and superiors discover that they have psychological challenges for which they are seeking assistance, they are likely to stigmatize them. -Key informant Embakasi 'A' Campus.

This finding indicates that individual counselling offered to AP officers helps those officers who have psychological challenges like alcohol and substance abuse cope with these challenges. However, it emerged that this help has not been able to reach the desired number of officers due to the limited number of counsellors in the APS. Further, some officers still do not trust the officer counsellors while some fear being stigmatized. This may explain the low number of officers who indicated that they had participated in the guidance and counselling offered in APS.

This, therefore, indicates that there are officers in the APS who require counselling services but are either unable or unwilling to access the services. This finding is consistent with Soomro and Yanos (2018) who reported that even though counselling services are offered free, within the police departments in America, counselling remains among the most underused tools in a police officer's arsenal. Kirschman, (2018) associates this phenomenon to the age-old stigma within the police department against psychotherapy in general. This study, therefore, established that even though individual counselling is offered to APS officers only a small number utilize the service and therefore it can be argued that individual counselling has not effectively helped to enhance the self-efficacy of AP officers.

4.3. Individual Counselling and Confidence in Service Delivery

As shown in Figure 4.7, 25.1% of the respondents indicated that they felt more confident while offering policing services after going through the individual counselling sessions. From the interviews conducted, 66% of the key informants felt that individual counselling helped to enhance the confidence of the officers during service delivery while 44% were not sure.

A respondent from the APS counselling Unit had this to say:

Individual counselling has been instrumental in helping to boost the confidence of the officers while on duty. You will find that most officers out there suffer from stress, depression and some are even traumatized. When we are invited by their respective commanders, we normally visit them and have individual counselling sessions with them. When you go for subsequent sessions, you will discover that the officer is more confident and composed than they were before. Also, their commanders attest to the fact that the officer's level of confidence while on duty normally improves after the individual counselling sessions- Key informant (1) AP Headquarters.

Another respondent from NPS Training College 'A' Campus had this to say:

There are times when we receive officers at the college who have come for refresher courses; these are officers who in most cases have psychological challenges that have hampered their work performance. For such an officer, no amount of training can bring him back on track. When such officers report, we normally assess them and place them

into various categories, some need rehabilitation, and some need psychiatric attention and those who can be helped through individual counselling. Experience has shown us that for those who are taken through individual counselling, their level of confidence is boosted and they leave the college different people from the way they came. Key informant NPS Training College 'A' Campus.

This finding indicates that most AP officers suffer from stress, depression and some are even traumatized and that the APS has on-staff counsellors who offer individual counselling services to such officers. Those with serious conditions are normally referred for psychiatric services or rehabilitation. The officers who receive this assistance have registered a marked improvement in their level of confidence while on duty. This finding is in line with Kirschman (2018) who observed that in the US the Police Department has on staff psychologists who provide individual counselling services to police officers and occasionally consulting psychiatrists are normally called in to assist the officers which help to enhance the level of confidence of the officers.

However, 1.6% stated that they did not feel more confident after going through the individual counselling sessions while 73.3% were undecided. This can be explained by the fact that only 36.7 % of the respondents had participated in individual counselling hence being competent to give a personal evaluation of the experience. Therefore, it seems that only a few officers have been able to reap the benefits associated with individual counselling owing to the low uptake of individual counselling services. An inference can therefore be made to the effect that the individual counselling services offered to AP officers have not been able to reach most officers, however for those that have gone through individual counselling, it has helped to boost their level of confidence. This study therefore established that individual counselling offered in APS has not been effective in enhancing the level of confidence of AP officers in service delivery since a large number of officers have not had the opportunity to participate in individual counselling. This may impact negatively on service delivery by individual officers which might also have a bearing on the overall service delivery of the Administration Police as an organization.

4.4. Individual Counselling and Ability to Achieve Work-Related Goals

Table 2 indicates that 24.8% of the respondents stated that individual counselling helped to enhance their ability to achieve work-related goals they had set for themselves. However, 1.9% of the respondents had a contrary opinion while 73.3% was undecided. This finding indicates that slightly less than a quarter of the respondents believed that individual counselling enhanced their ability to achieve work-related goals with a considerable majority remaining non-committal. This percentage corresponds to the percentage of those respondents who indicated that they had gone through individual counselling thus enabling them to make an informed judgement regarding the ability of individual counselling to enhance their ability to achieve set goals.

However, the interviews with key informants yielded different results, the majority (about 80 %) of the key informants thought that individual counselling helped to enhance the ability of the officers to achieve work-related goals they had set for themselves. A minority (20%) felt that individual counselling did not help to enhance the ability of the officers to achieve work-related goals. This is even though only a small percentage of the key informants had reported having participated in individual counselling. This is understandable since the key informants were not only reporting about their personal experiences but also about the experiences of the officers under them (in the case of the commanders) or those officers who had benefited from their services (for the professional counsellors) One CIPU sub-county commander had this to say:

When we attended the sub-county commanders' course at our senior staff college at Emali sometime back, we were taken through mental awareness training, basic psychological and suicide assessment. As a result of this training, I have been able to identify those officers who are having psychological challenges. Upon identification, the officers are normally referred to our Counselling Unit at the headquarters. Last year I referred two officers to our counselling unit and after being taken through individual counselling, there was a tremendous improvement. They were able to manage their lives well at an individual level apart from also being able to achieve the organizational goals we set for them. CIPU Sub- County commander (11)

This was further corroborated by the sentiments made by a respondent from the APS counselling unit who stated that:

When officers are referred to us from the field, we normally take them through individual counselling and one common underlying issue is the issue of financial management. Some officers are not able to prioritize their needs well and they end up with huge debts; such an officer cannot work well thus delivering poor services to the members of the public. So, we discuss prudent financial management and how to prioritize their needs when setting goals. Afterwards, when we do a follow-up, we notice that the officers are doing well at an individual level and also at work which is a clear indication that our efforts are bearing fruit. -Key informant '2' APS Headquarters

Another respondent who was a sub-county commander commented thus:

...It is true that most of us tend to be influenced by our colleagues when making decisions. This is especially true for newly employed officers. You will find that one was employed just one or two years ago and they want to live like those officers who have been serving for the last ten or 15 years. Through individual counselling, the officers are normally taken through sessions where they are guided on prioritizing their needs. After the officers are taken through the counselling sessions, we have observed marked improvement and the officers can prioritize and take practical steps towards achieving these goals. - Sub-county commander (4)

This finding indicates that some commanders in the APS have been sensitized on how to identify officers who are having psychosocial challenges and referring them for professional assistance. Further, it emerges that those officers who portray deviant behaviour at work could be having unresolved personal issues that could be affecting their service delivery. When such officers are taken through the individual counselling sessions, they were able to improve their service delivery as evidenced by the ability to achieve work-related goals effectively. This finding is consistent with Tolan and Cameron (2016), who argue that individual counselling helps to bring about change in the client by altering maladaptive behaviour, learning the decision-making process or averting problems. Wassermann *et al.* (2019) did a study on stress and coping of police officers in the South African Police Service and reported similar results. According to Wassermann *et al.*, the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) offers individual counselling services to police officers which promote their adaptive coping strategies and helps them to deal with work-related stress. This ultimately helped to increase their work output.

Therefore, it can be correctly argued that individual counselling enhances the ability of officers who have gone through it to achieve work-related goals. However, considering the high number of respondents who had not been through individual counselling and those who were not sure whether individual counselling could help them to achieve set goals or not, it would appear that so far, the individual counselling offered under the APS guidance and counselling programme has not been effective in enhancing the ability of AP officers to achieve set goals.

4.5. Individual Counselling and Ability to Perform Well When Things Are Tough

As shown in Table 2, 26.3% of the respondents stated that individual counselling enhanced their ability to perform well when things were tough. However, 0.4% of the respondents had a contrary opinion while 73.3% were undecided. From the interviews, the majority (about 85 %) of the key informants believed that individual counselling helped to enhance the ability of the officers to perform well when things were tough. However, a minority (15%) felt that individual counselling did not help to enhance the ability of the officers to perform well when things were tough. One respondent from the APS headquarters had this to say:

Police work is quite challenging and at times one feels that they do not have the strength to move on, when an officer reaches this point, it is very easy for them to resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms or even committing suicide. However, to pre-empt this likelihood, we have developed mechanisms of identifying officers who are at risk of committing suicide and offering individual counselling to them. For example, during the 2019-2020 financial year, 112 cases of officers who wanted to commit suicide were reported to our office. The officers were traced before actualizing their plans and were taken through individual counselling. As we speak and they have now adopted and are working well, unfortunately, we lost one of them who committed suicide later-Key informant '4' APS Headquarters.

One CIPU sub-county commander made these comments:

At this time when the country is struggling with the Covid-19 Pandemic, police officers face many challenges. They have to go out there to enforce the government containment measures which exposes them to the risk of being infected. As such, there is a lot of anxiety especially when you hear that your colleague has succumbed to the disease. In such cases, we have had to identify those officers who need individual counselling and then we refer them to our counselling unit at the headquarters. Most of them have been assisted and can continue performing their duties effectively. - CIPU Sub- County commander (12)

This finding indicates that due to the challenging nature of the work performed by AP officers, the officers are normally faced with psychosocial challenges that impede their service delivery. It further emerges that the organization has put in place a system of identifying officers who are experiencing such challenges. Such officers are referred for counselling and this helps them to perform well amidst the challenging working environment. Further, the finding indicates that this initiative has assisted to reduce the number of officers who commit suicide when things are tough.

This could therefore be interpreted to mean that officers who go through individual counselling can perform well when things are tough. This finding is consistent with Thompson and Thompson (2014) who reported that the US offered individual counselling to its police officers. According to Thompson and Thompson (2014), this individual counselling focuses more on empowering the individual police officer by providing them with skills in anxiety management, self-care, and mindfulness. Thompson and Thompson, add that these interventions had registered impressive results in improving the psychological wellbeing of police officers in the US. Wassermann, Meiring and Becker (2019), hold a similar opinion. Wassermann *et al.*, further report that the individual counselling services offered to police officers in South Africa have helped them to work well when things are tough by enabling them to adopt pro-active rather than maladaptive and potentially ineffectual coping strategies when things are tough.

The study established that individual counselling has the potential of improving the ability of AP officers to perform well when things are tough. Those officers who had been through individual counselling reported that the individual counselling sessions boosted their confidence, enabled them to achieve set goals and enabled them to perform well when things were tough. However, the fact that few officers indicated that they had participated in individual counselling could be interpreted to mean that many AP officers are yet to reap these benefits that are associated with individual counselling. Therefore, it can be rightfully argued that the individual counselling that is offered to AP officers under the guidance and counselling programme has not been effective in enhancing the self-efficacy of AP officers in service delivery.

5. Summary of Findings

The study established that there was a high level of awareness of the availability of individual counselling services offered under the AP Guidance and counselling programme. However few officers indicated that they had participated in individual counselling. This could be attributed to the police culture which makes officers reluctant to seek help. The study further established that those officers who had utilized individual counselling reported that individual counselling boosted their confidence, enabled them to achieve set goals and enabled them to perform well when things were tough. However, it is important to note that less than half of the officers interviewed (36.7%) indicated that they had gone through the programme. Therefore, it was established that though the individual counselling that is offered to AP officers under the APS guidance and counselling programme enhances the self-efficacy in service delivery AP officers, only a small percentage had been through the programme. Thus, it can be rightfully argued that the programme has not effectively enhanced the self-efficacy in service delivery in the Administration Police Service of Kenya.

6. Conclusions

The study established that more than half of the officers were aware of the individual counselling services provided to AP officers, however, it should be noted that less than half of the officers had participated in individual counselling. For those officers who indicated that they had participated in individual counselling, they specified that it helped to enhance their confidence, it further helped them to achieve the goals they set and it also helped them to perform well when things were hard. However, considering the low number of officers who had participated in individual counselling, it can be rightfully inferred that though peer counselling which is offered in the APS was designed to enhance the self-efficacy of the officers in service delivery, it has not effectively achieved this objective. This can be attributed to the low number of trained counsellors in the APS and the fact that guidance and counselling services in the APS have not been decentralized to various counties making it difficult for the officers to access these services.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that first, the Administration Police Service introduces incentives for officers to motivate them to undertake guidance and counselling training. This would increase the number of trained counsellors. Secondly, the APS needs to decentralize the guidance and counselling services up to the County level, this will make counselling services accessible to more officers. Thirdly, the National Police Service Commission should employ more counsellors to meet the counselling needs of the APS and that of the NPS at large. Finally, the National Police Service should seek to offer opportunities where officer counsellors can share experiences, exchange ideas and have professional and intellectual discourses. This will create room for consultation, networking, ease communication, and augment case referral and conferencing.

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