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RESEARCH ARTICLE · PSYCHOLOGY

NAVIGATING THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE: EXPERIENCES OF DESIGNATED GUIDANCE COUNSELORS IN LOCAL COLLEGES

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological inquiry aims to explore and understand the experiences of non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the selected public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. At this stage in the research, navigating the experiences of non-registered guidance counselors is generally defined as a learning goal for them to develop their skills in managing students who serve as their clients; this also involves non-registered guidance counselors' analysis, understanding, and evaluation of ideas about their difficulties.

Keywords: *educational landscape, guidance counselling, phenomenology*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Title Page

Table of Contents

Chapter

1. **INTRODUCTION**

    Purpose of the Study

Research Questions

Theoretical Lens

Scope and Limitations

Importance of the Study

Definition of Terms

Organization of the Study

1. **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**
2. **METHODOLOGY**

Research Design

Research Participants

Role of the Researcher

Data Sources

Data Collection Procedure

Data Analysis

Trustworthiness of the Study

Ethical Considerations

REFERENCES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling assist students in directing their academic and personal lives, aiming for excellence and proper adjustment in institutions and society. They help students overcome challenges in school education, such as performance, subject choices, competition, and interpersonal relationships (Rahman & Azmi, 2023). Despite that various researchers have noted the pressing importance of guidance counseling to students (Akhter et al., 2023; Shaheen et al., 2023; Šipuš & Milić, 2024; Singh, 2022). However, it is noted that without proper guidance, students may develop maladjustments and struggle with performance, competition, and interpersonal relationships (Rahman & Azmi, 2023). Relative to this context, children spend most of their time growing up in a school, so much that they have been considered a child’s second time. Due to the nature of development, children must be cared for in many avenues to grow into wholesome adults. Thus, school guidance counselors play a critical role in assisting and guiding students through adaptation and developmental difficulties, especially those who are non-registered counselors assigned to a school.

In the field of education, several studies have explored the facets of the problems in guidance counseling among guidance counselors across institutions (Pizzo et al., 2024; Rahman & Azmi, 2023; Jacob & Obioma, 2023; Arrieta & Valeria, 2021; Sartinah, 2022). It has been noted that guidance counselling in institutions is challenging due to the holistic approach of education, which requires addressing students' mental and emotional well-being. Counselors face challenges in providing online counseling due to doubts about being present. However, potential mental and emotional health issues have been identified, and preparations have been made to make counseling services more reliable and felt (Arrieta & Valeria, 2021).

Certainly, in India, school counseling is still at a difficult stage knowing that many did not pass their eligibility to work in a school. Non-registered guidance counselors especially face several concerns that are limited to academics (Erwin, 2022). Furthermore, in Singapore, Lack of client engagement is one of the hardest challenges being faced by non-registered guidance counselors in the educational setting. In addition, they have difficulty exploring the underlying cause of the resistance and going back to the basics, and providing psychoeducation about the benefits of counseling (Rice, 2021). In Thailand, Anwar (2021) stated that when guidance is not equipped to work with clients from diverse backgrounds, they will not be able to overcome common counselor challenges by understanding and respecting different cultures.

In the Philippines, non-registered guidance counselors did not recognize the appropriate and effective address to the struggles of being a counselor. They cannot even focus on being the best counselor as possible who offers the clients the best chance they have to receive. Additionally, some of the non-registered guidance counselors are overworked and burned, and they need support. This can be stressful with large caseloads, exacerbated by the current shortage of school counselors. Being a non-registered guidance counselor will likely include working with clients who distrust counselors (Forbes, 2021).

Moreover, in the Division of Davao del Norte, there are many non-registered guidance counselors who are assigned to different schools in the division and face challenges since some of them are worrying about their status of employment. Most of them are unsure if they can still renew to work in the following knowing the fact they are not licensed and their knowledge and skills will be put into question. Moreover, in accepting and facing this kind of problem, non-registered guidance counselors assigned in a school are also facing difficulties not only in understanding the unique behavior of the students but also in lack of resources and appropriate approaches despite the massive implementation from the Department of Education.

Furthermore, as a guidance and counseling practitioner designated in our school, I have experience handling students. I have noticed that it is very difficult to facilitate students, particularly in delivering the instruction aside from the fact that I lack also training. I also observed that one of the challenges to being a non-registered guidance counselor is giving appropriate activities that suit the learning needs of the students and I believe that this should be considered as a factor to be prioritized by the department although they are not yet a registered guidance counselor.

In relation, there is a need to conduct the study and outlaw the difficulty of non-registered guidance counselors assigned in a school. Moreover, this study is one of greater significance in society since this will be a basis for understanding the learning capacity and support that they need during the entire process. It is very important and it plays a vital role for non-registered guidance counselors to develop and enhance their skills and serve as the key to society and community, which is a great help to the next young researchers. Further, this will become a reference for the Department of Education in terms of the difficulties and need of non-registered guidance counselors in receiving adequate support from the educational community and being ready and equipped with the necessary skills in an educational setting and the future reference.

Furthermore, this research aims to maximize the impact of the findings by disseminating them through a variety of channels. Specifically. academic publication will be done through peer-reviewed journals in education, psychology, and counseling, while conference presentations will be held at national and international conferences. The findings will be used to develop policy recommendations for improving support for guidance counselors. The researcher will conduct workshops and training programs for guidance counselors, teachers, and administrators to enhance counseling skills and promote best practices. Public lectures and seminars will be organized to raise awareness about the importance of guidance and counseling services. Collaboration with local organizations like the Department of Education and the Philippine Guidance Counselors Association will also be employed to advocate for policy changes.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This phenomenological inquiry aims to explore and understand the experiences of non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the selected public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte.

At this stage in the research, navigating the experiences of non-registered guidance counselors is generally defined as a learning goal for them to develop their skills in managing students who serve as their clients; this also involves non-registered guidance counselors' analysis, understanding, and evaluation of ideas about their difficulties.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What challenges do non-registered guidance counselors encounter while performing their roles in educational institutions?

2. How do these challenges impact the effectiveness of non-registered guidance counselors in addressing students' academic and personal development needs?

3. Why are certain coping strategies and practices employed by non-registered guidance counselors more effective than others in addressing the challenges they face?

THEORETICAL LENS

This study is mainly gleaned from William Powers Perpetual Control Theory (1973). This theory states that non-registered guidance counselors must adopt modern strategies and approaches in their everyday approaches to clients, facilitation, and counseling to students. counselors must see to it that this strategy would enable them to achieve a higher-level objective more efficiently than previous methods. The counselor must assume that implementing new methods and practices will not hinder other higher-level goals that he or she considers more important than the one being pursued and that he or she has or will have sufficient capacity and resources to do so. In this study, this theory is used to gather data based on their experiences in facing and counseling students in the educational institution. Also, this study explored how their situation is affected by the variety of skills being engaged by learning to engage students and how they process and translate their ideas sensibly.

This study is also supported by the concept of Hamilton (2006), that counselors must have high integrity and capability and popular strategy for supporting the development of learning resources for the advancement of students. It is easy to understand and intuitively appealing. The prospect of becoming a counselor offers a way for people who care about inequality in our society to make a difference. In the context of this study, this concept is used to square the idea that counselors must have the right potential and skills to engage clients to make counseling meaningful. Further, it allows students to develop their knowledge and inquiry of understanding, as well as about the counseling process in which they might be engaged to improve their meaningful understanding based on what they learned.

In relation, Seifert (2015) in his self-determination theory, stated that the current educational system must investigate the explanatory role of students' perceived need satisfaction and need frustration in the relationship between student performance and motivation. In this study, this theory is used to gather data based on their experiences in counseling. Also, this study explores how their situation is affected by the variety of skills being engaged in counseling given by guidance counselors and how they process and expound their ideas sensibly.

Furthermore, it is therefore conceptualized that this phenomenological study focused on describing the journey of the non-registered guidance counselor in the educational institution. This study also described how the non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institution faced difficulties with engaging clients.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study examines the experiences of designated guidance counselors in public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. It explores their perceptions, challenges, and strategies in providing guidance and counseling services. The research focuses on their roles, responsibilities, challenges they face, strategies they use, perceptions of support from school administrators and colleagues, and their recommendations for improving guidance and counseling services in public secondary schools.

LIMITATIONS

This study investigates the experiences of designated guidance counselors in public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. It explores their perceptions, challenges, and strategies in providing guidance and counseling services. The research focuses on the roles, responsibilities, challenges, strategies, support, and recommendations for improving these services. However, the study has limitations, including its geographic scope, sample size, self-report bias, time constraints, and focus on designated counselors. The findings may not be generalizable to other regions or educational contexts, and the study may not fully capture the perspectives of other school personnel, such as teachers and administrators. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by designated guidance counselors in the Philippines. Further research is needed to develop evidence-based strategies for improving guidance and counseling services in public schools. Moreover, the findings of this study can provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing designated guidance counselors in the Philippines. Further research is needed to explore these issues in greater depth and to develop evidence-based strategies to improve guidance and counseling services in public schools.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study, which explores the experiences of designated non-registered guidance counselors in local colleges, may provide significant insights for various stakeholders in the educational sector during the academic year 2024–2025.

The results may offer practical strategies and insights to enhance their counseling practices despite their **non-registered**status. It could provide them with relevant tools and approaches tailored to meet the diverse needs of college students, fostering their personal and professional growth as they navigate their unique roles within the educational system.

By equipping guidance counselors with effective strategies, this study indirectly benefits **students**by improving the support systems available to them. The interventions and techniques identified may lead to more meaningful and effective counseling services, thereby promoting students' academic, emotional, and social well-being.

This study may assist **college administrators**in understanding the challenges faced by non-registered guidance counselors, enabling them to design and implement professional development programs, workshops, or mentorship initiatives. Administrators could also utilize the findings to strengthen policies and practices that support the delivery of quality guidance services.

The study could provide valuable insights to **policymakers** in higher education. By highlighting the roles and contributions of non-registered guidance counselors, it may inspire policy reforms that address credentialing requirements, capacity-building programs, and resource allocation to enhance the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in local colleges.

For Other Researchers

This study may serve as a reference for **future research**endeavors in the field of guidance and counseling. It may help researchers identify variables and areas requiring further exploration, such as the effectiveness of specific counseling strategies or the impact of non-registered counselors on student outcomes.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For a clearer and better understanding of the study, the following terms are theoretically and operationally defined.

Educational Setting. This refers to a place where people of different ages gain an education including preschools, children's primary-elementary schools, and secondary and tertiary levels. Also, this refers to the organization or establishment dedicated to providing formal instruction and learning experiences to students of

various age groups (George, 2021). In this study. It refers to the place where the participants are assigned and working with. Additionally, it is a place where it adheres the specific educational standards and regulations to ensure quality and accountability.

Non-Registered Guidance Counselor. This refers to the guidance counselors who are not certified or licensed that provide academic, career, and college readiness, and so with emotional support for all students. Also, this refers to guidance counselors who are not qualified to provide school counseling to students of all ages (Betty, 2020). In this study, this refers to participants who are assigned to the educational institution but are non-registered guidance counselors.

Educational Institution. This refers to the school or other educational institution, including elementary, high school, and post-graduation schools where interpretive services are provided to a student. In this study, it refers to the schools where the non-guidance counselors are connected as of the present and offer their counseling knowledge and skills.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter will present the review of related literature following a thorough search for studies that will bear significance to the study. It will be organized based on the following subheadings: Non-Registered Guidance Counselors, Challenges of non-registered guidance counselors, and Insights that can be shared by the non-registered guidance counselors.

Non-Registered Guidance Counselors

The characteristics and qualifications of non-registered guidance counselors play a pivotal role in shaping the effectiveness of counseling services within educational environments. Research highlights the variability in the training and skills required for guidance counselors across different countries and sectors. While formal qualifications are typically demanded in the education sector, particularly within schools, the private sector often adopts more flexible standards (Suleiman, 2019). This disparity often results in non-registered counselors working with limited standardized qualifications, which can affect their ability to deliver psycho-educational interventions effectively. The professional profile of guidance counselors underscores the importance of competencies such as interpersonal skills, active listening, and self-awareness in promoting student development (Grant, 2023). In educational settings, these competencies enable counselors to connect with students and understand their needs, thus fostering more positive developmental outcomes. However, the lack of a structured and standardized training framework in non-formal education settings, where many non-registered counselors practice, contributes to inconsistent service delivery (Sandar, 2019).

In addition to formal academic qualifications, non-registered guidance counselors must possess essential non-academic traits, such as empathy, self-awareness, and strong interpersonal communication skills. These characteristics are critical in establishing trust and rapport with students, a vital component of successful counseling (Kirk-Jenkins & Evans, 2022). However, the literature also suggests that without a formalized system for evaluating these personal attributes, inconsistencies in the quality of guidance services may arise, particularly in non-formal educational contexts. In these settings, counselors often lack access to rigorous training, which can hinder their ability to provide effective interventions. Bennett-Levy (2019) argue that the absence of formal training programs focused on developing personal traits and skills that enhance counseling effectiveness contributes to the variability in the quality of service provided by non-registered counselors. This gap emphasizes the need for more comprehensive training programs that not only address academic knowledge but also enhance the personal qualities essential for effective counseling.

Furthermore, the integration of interest and aptitude assessments is a crucial aspect of the guidance process. These tools assist students in making informed decisions about their educational and career paths by aligning their interests with suitable academic or professional fields. The effective use of these assessments, however, relies on the counselors' ability to interpret the results accurately and apply them meaningfully to the guidance

process. Studies have shown that non-registered counselors, often lacking formal qualifications or experience, may struggle with the accurate interpretation of such tools (Asri et al., 2024). This highlights the need for ongoing professional development and training programs that equip non-registered counselors with the skills necessary to use these tools effectively and to offer appropriate advice that aligns with students' interests and strengths (Moss & Brookhart, 2019). Without continuous training, there is a risk that non-registered counselors may not adequately support students in making the best educational and career choices.

Non-registered guidance counselors play a significant role in the mental health support system, especially within the context of non-professionally affiliated (NPA) workers. According to Mullen et al. (2023), these counselors often take on various supportive roles, including providing emotional support, helping clients access resources, and assisting them in navigating mental health services. Their contributions are particularly crucial in settings where there is a shortage of registered professionals or where the existing professionals are overburdened. The flexibility of the NPA workforce allows non-registered counselors to meet the diverse and evolving needs of clients, which is essential in communities where mental health resources are limited. In these settings, their ability to offer immediate and accessible support significantly enhances the mental health landscape, demonstrating the increasing importance of non-registered counselors in both urban and rural areas.

The tasks performed by non-registered counselors often extend beyond traditional counseling roles. They frequently act as intermediaries between clients and formal mental health services, conducting initial assessments, offering psychoeducation, and implementing community-based interventions. Beremenyi (2020) note that non-registered counselors play an integral part in bridging gaps in care, particularly within underserved populations. Their ability to identify and address immediate mental health concerns ensures that clients receive necessary support, even in the absence of licensed professionals. By fostering relationships with community members and building trust, non-registered counselors create an environment that is conducive to mental well-being and recovery. This approach aligns with holistic care strategies that prioritize the integration of mental health support into everyday community settings, thus improving overall outcomes for those they serve.

However, despite their valuable contributions, non-registered counselors face challenges due to a lack of formal recognition and standardized qualifications. Bimrose et al. (2019) argue that there is a pressing need for structured development pathways that would enhance the professional status and competencies of these counselors. Without clear qualifications and ongoing professional development, non-registered counselors may struggle to gain the recognition they deserve within the mental health system. By establishing training programs and accreditation processes, mental health services can better integrate non-registered counselors into the workforce, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to address the complex needs of diverse populations. Investing in the development of non-registered counselors will not only improve the quality of care but also contribute to a more effective and sustainable mental health service infrastructure.

The distinction between registered and non-registered guidance counselors plays a crucial role in understanding the effectiveness of counseling services within educational contexts. Registered counselors are typically equipped with formal qualifications, such as specialized degrees and certifications, which enable them to meet the diverse needs of students, including those in special education. Research by Frank et al. (2023) highlights that formal training allows registered counselors to provide more tailored and comprehensive support for students with unique challenges. On the other hand, non-registered counselors often lack the structured training required to address specific needs, leading to a generalized approach that may fall short in addressing the complexities faced by students, especially in special education settings (Jamison-Void, 2021). Wheeler and Bertram (2023) further emphasize that registered counselors are better equipped to implement preventive and curative measures for sensitive issues, such as sexual harassment, which underscores the importance of professional training in ensuring effective intervention and support in educational environments.

Another key difference between registered and non-registered guidance counselors lies in their ability to collaborate effectively with other educational staff, particularly classroom teachers. Geesa et al. (2022) notes that registered counselors, due to their formal training and professional recognition, are more likely to engage in

cooperative practices that enhance the overall delivery of guidance services. This collaboration is essential for creating a supportive environment that meets the holistic needs of students. Non-registered counselors, lacking formal recognition and training, may struggle to establish such partnerships, which can limit the integration of counseling services into the broader educational framework (Bryan et al., 2020). Additionally, Almeida et al. (2023) argue that the quality of career guidance services is directly influenced by the qualifications of the counselors, with registered professionals adhering to established ethical codes and standards that significantly enhance service delivery and student outcomes.

In the domain of career guidance, the growing integration of expert systems and technology further highlights the importance of qualified counselors. Gunwant (2023) discusses how technological advancements have revolutionized career guidance, yet these systems' effectiveness largely depends on the expertise of the counselors who utilize them. Registered counselors, with their formal training and professional development, are better positioned to leverage these systems effectively, ensuring that students receive personalized and actionable advice that aligns with their career aspirations. In contrast, non-registered counselors may lack the necessary skills to integrate such technology into their practice, ultimately limiting the support they can offer to students (Zainudin, 2022). This disparity in technological competency underscores the critical need for professional registration and training in guidance counseling to maximize the impact of counseling services and improve educational outcomes for all students.

Challenges of non-registered guidance counselors

The challenges faced by non-registered guidance counselors, particularly regarding the lack of standardized training and professional development, are a recurring theme in recent scholarly literature. One of the primary barriers identified is the absence of a cohesive training framework, which results in significant variability in the competencies of guidance counselors across educational settings. Without uniform standards, counselors may struggle to address the diverse and complex needs of students effectively, leading to inconsistencies in the quality of services provided (Sue et al., 2022). Additionally, many non-registered counselors rely on informal training methods, which, while practical in some cases, often fail to align with evidence-based best practices, further limiting their professional growth and the overall effectiveness of their interventions (Cullen et al., 2022).

Professional development opportunities for non-registered counselors are frequently insufficient and poorly structured, exacerbating the challenges they face. Access to ongoing, high-quality training is critical for staying updated on advancements in counseling techniques, educational policies, and student psychology. However, the literature highlights that non-registered counselors often lack access to such resources, leaving them ill-equipped to adapt to evolving educational and psychological demands (Irwin, 2023). This gap not only affects their ability to perform their roles effectively but also undermines the broader educational environment, as students may not receive the comprehensive support they require (Howard, 2019). Standardized professional development initiatives could address these deficiencies, enhancing the skill sets of non-registered counselors and enabling them to contribute more effectively to student success (White, 2023).

Addressing these challenges requires a systemic approach to developing standardized training and professional development programs for non-registered counselors. Scholars emphasize the need for structured frameworks that equip counselors with the requisite knowledge and skills to navigate the demands of contemporary educational settings effectively (Al Hamad, 2024). By prioritizing investments in the professional development of non-registered counselors, educational institutions can create a more supportive and effective counseling ecosystem, ultimately fostering better academic and emotional outcomes for students (Savitz-Romer & Nicola, 2022). This holistic approach would ensure that all students, regardless of their needs, have access to competent and empathetic guidance services.

The challenges faced by non-registered guidance counselors are deeply intertwined with their limited recognition and professional status within the educational system. The absence of formal registration often diminishes their credibility and authority in the eyes of students, parents, and educational institutions, restricting their ability to deliver effective counseling services (Jacob et al., 2022) This lack of recognition frequently excludes non-registered counselors from professional development opportunities essential for maintaining

updated skills and knowledge in a fast-changing educational landscape (Wood, 2022). Moreover, the perception that only registered professionals can adequately address complex issues such as mental health and academic guidance further marginalizes non-registered counselors, reinforcing a professional hierarchy that undervalues their contributions (Hall et al., 2024).

The systemic undervaluation of non-registered counselors can foster feelings of professional disempowerment and isolation. These counselors often report a lack of institutional support, which contributes to low job satisfaction and higher turnover rates (Brown et al., 2019). Without formal recognition, they may feel less motivated to engage proactively, adversely affecting the quality of counseling services provided to students (Collier et al., 2019). This undervaluation perpetuates a cycle of perceived incompetence, where limited recognition reduces service quality, further entrenching negative stereotypes about non-registered counselors' capabilities. Addressing these issues requires not only acknowledgment of their role but also structured mechanisms to enhance their professional identity and engagement.

The consequences of limited recognition for non-registered counselors extend beyond individual experiences to the broader educational system. Effective counseling services are vital for addressing students' academic, social, and emotional needs, particularly in underserved areas where registered professionals may be scarce (Crumb et al., 2019). When non-registered counselors are restricted by professional limitations, students miss out on crucial support that could enhance their educational outcomes (Jamison-Void, 2021). Therefore, establishing frameworks that validate and elevate the professional status of non-registered counselors is essential for creating a more equitable and effective educational environment, benefiting counselors, students, and institutions alike.

Managing sensitive issues and complex cases poses significant challenges for non-registered guidance counselors, especially in the context of diverse student needs and socio-economic disparities. Literature highlights the systemic barriers faced by students from marginalized backgrounds, such as children of daily wage workers, whose educational opportunities are often hindered by financial instability and limited resources (Ciuffetelli Parker, & Conversano, 2021). These barriers underscore the need for targeted interventions to address inequities in educational access. Moreover, the increasing globalization of education adds another layer of complexity, as educators must navigate tensions between local needs and standardized curriculum mandates, creating further challenges in policy implementation (Goodwin, 2020). Comprehensive literature reviews play a crucial role in identifying these gaps and informing evidence-based strategies to manage sensitive educational issues effectively (Chigbu et al., 2023).

The integration of technology in educational research provides an essential tool for addressing these challenges. Digital platforms, such as Relatedly, enable the synthesis of vast and complex datasets, allowing educators and researchers to uncover patterns, connections, and actionable insights across diverse studies (Fischer et al., 2020). This technological support is invaluable in tackling overlapping themes and divergent research focuses, which often complicate the understanding of sensitive educational issues. By leveraging such tools, educators and non-registered guidance counselors can construct more coherent and effective frameworks to support marginalized student populations. This process of distilling actionable insights from extensive literature underscores the necessity of equipping practitioners with technological skills for evidence-based decision-making in educational settings (Bhatarasakoon & Chiaranai, 2024).

Additionally, the advocacy role of educators and counselors is critical in navigating sensitive issues, including mental health, socio-economic challenges, and cultural diversity. Non-registered guidance counselors, in particular, must cultivate a nuanced understanding of these factors to foster inclusivity and equity within educational environments. Recent studies emphasize the importance of continuous professional development and collaborative learning among educators to enhance their ability to manage complex cases (Hauge, 2019). Engaging with scholarly research and leveraging peer networks to share effective practices can significantly improve their capacity to address these challenges, thereby contributing to a more equitable and supportive educational framework for all students (Leithwood, 2021).

Insights that can be shared by the non-registered guidance counselors

The literature on professional competency and training deficiencies among non-registered guidance counselors underscores critical gaps that compromise the quality of counseling services. Studies suggest that existing counselor education programs often fall short of equipping trainees with essential skills, ethical understanding, and practical competencies necessary for effective practice. This gap leads to issues of professional competence (PPC) and affects the overall efficacy of guidance services, particularly for underserved populations such as non-college-bound students or those with special educational needs (Razi & Zhou, 2022). Furthermore, a "one-size-fits-all" training approach often overlooks the diverse career guidance needs of women, minorities, and low-income families, exacerbating inequities in career counseling (Juntunen et al., 2020).

Addressing cultural and demographic diversity is critical for effective counseling, as the integration of multicultural perspectives is fundamental to career development. Research highlights the need for culturally relevant interventions that reflect the unique social contexts of students' lives (Liem & McInerney, 2020). The lack of such interventions limits counselors' ability to provide adequate occupational guidance, particularly for students from marginalized groups who may face barriers to accessing career opportunities. By focusing on the social and cultural dimensions of career development, guidance counselors can offer more personalized support that aligns with students' abilities and aspirations (Dari et al., 2021).

Furthemore, the literature emphasizes the need for comprehensive reforms in counselor training programs. Incorporating practical, culturally sensitive strategies into the curriculum is essential to prepare counselors for the challenges of addressing diverse student needs. These reforms would enable non-registered guidance counselors to deliver equitable, effective, and ethical career guidance, ultimately fostering improved outcomes for students, especially those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds (Stevenson et al., 2019; Fallon et al., 2022). Educational institutions must prioritize such training enhancements to elevate the overall impact of their counseling services.

The role of non-registered guidance counselors in education plays a pivotal part in enhancing student support, particularly in addressing academic, personal, and character development needs. Studies underscore that counseling services are critical not only for academic success but also for instilling values and ethics that contribute to students' holistic development (Roberts, 2023). However, a recurring challenge is the reliance on generalized counseling models that fail to meet the distinct needs of special education students and non-college-bound individuals (Crenshw, 2019). This gap highlights the necessity of tailoring career guidance to equip these students with relevant occupational information and life skills, fostering greater inclusivity in educational settings (Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024).

Effective counseling involves a dynamic role for counselors within the educational curriculum, extending beyond administrative tasks to active engagement in addressing both academic and emotional challenges faced by students (Crothers et al., 2020). Research suggests that when counselors adopt a proactive approach, they foster a more supportive learning environment. However, non-registered guidance counselors often face limitations due to inadequate training and insufficient resources, which can undermine their impact. Addressing these barriers through targeted professional development and better resource allocation can significantly enhance the effectiveness of counseling services (Moroz et al., 2020; Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020).

Integrating non-registered guidance counselors more fully into the educational framework offers the potential for significant benefits in student development and support. Tailored approaches to counseling that prioritize the unique needs of diverse student populations can enhance counselors' perceived credibility and overall effectiveness. The literature emphasizes the importance of a collaborative and forward-thinking approach to counseling practices, which can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students (Papadakis & Kalogiannakis, 2024).

The literature on career guidance underscores significant barriers to recognition and career advancement for non-registered guidance counselors, especially within educational systems. These counselors often face challenges stemming from insufficient credentialing opportunities, limiting their professional growth and the quality of services provided to students (Bell et al., 2020). This is particularly concerning for marginalized

student groups who lack access to tailored occupational information and practical career guidance. The short-term nature of many career guidance interventions, combined with their reliance on self-reported data, raises questions about their sustainability and long-term impact, further exacerbating the challenges faced by non-registered counselors (Hogan et al., 2019). Additionally, the demand for flexible and inclusive career counseling practices highlights the need for approaches that address systemic inequities and promote social justice for underrepresented students (Al Hamad et al., 2024).

Research demonstrates that career education significantly influences student outcomes, yet gaps remain in understanding the long-term efficacy of various interventions. Existing evidence highlights a disconnect between the needs of diverse student populations and the structural limitations within educational institutions, which impede effective career development (Milner, 2021). Non-registered guidance counselors often struggle to advocate for students due to inadequate training and limited institutional support. Addressing these barriers requires the development of comprehensive guidance programs that go beyond academic counseling to include personalized career support, particularly for non-college-bound students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Crenshw, 2019). This approach would ensure that guidance services are more accessible and responsive to students' evolving needs.

Moreover, overcoming barriers to recognition and career advancement for non-registered guidance counselors necessitates systemic changes within educational frameworks. The literature emphasizes the importance of investing in professional development, fostering inclusive counseling practices, and implementing evidence-based career guidance strategies. By addressing these challenges, educational institutions can enhance the credibility and effectiveness of non-registered counselors, ultimately improving career outcomes for students and advancing equity in education (Duke-Benfield et al., 2019).

The literature on non-registered guidance counselors highlights a complex interplay of roles, challenges, and opportunities within the educational landscape. These counselors often lack standardized qualifications and training, which affects their ability to address the diverse and evolving needs of students effectively (Dixon-Saxon & Buckley 2020; Sperry, 2022). Unlike their registered counterparts, non-registered counselors frequently engage in various roles such as career guidance, personal development support, and administrative tasks, often without the professional recognition and institutional support necessary to enhance their effectiveness (Bandura, 2023; Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). The gap in professional development and standardized training poses significant challenges in managing sensitive cases and complex issues, especially when addressing the needs of marginalized or non-college-bound students (Navia, 2024). This underscores the necessity for robust frameworks and tailored training programs that align with the unique demands of non-registered counselors' roles (Yazzie, 2024).

Despite these challenges, non-registered guidance counselors offer valuable insights, particularly in fostering student support and bridging gaps in educational resources. Their experiences emphasize the importance of competency-building and developing culturally relevant counseling practices that cater to diverse student populations (Jones & Thomsen, 2021). However, barriers to recognition and career advancement persist, limiting their impact and professional growth. Addressing these barriers requires systemic efforts to prioritize inclusivity in career guidance, improve access to training, and integrate evidence-based practices into counseling frameworks. By investing in the development of non-registered counselors, educational institutions can enhance their perceived credibility and contribute to equitable and effective student support systems (Duke-Benfield et al., 2019; Loewe, 2020).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the method of investigation, such as research design, research participants, data sources, data collection procedure, the study's trustworthiness, roles of the researcher, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will utilize a qualitative study employing a phenomenological approach to explore and understand the experiences of non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the selected public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. A qualitative study is an in-depth examination of one person, group, or event (Cresswell, 2014).

Phenomenology is a philosophical and methodological approach that investigates subjective experiences of individuals. It is a qualitative research method that uses in-depth interviews and observations to gather descriptive data. Researchers aim to understand participants' lived experiences, perceptions, emotions, and meanings, aiming to understand the essence of a phenomenon (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022).

Moreover, through the purposive sampling technique, the researcher will select ten (10) non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the selected public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. An in-depth interview will be used to gather the data. After gathering the data, the thematic analysis will be employed in analyzing the transcribed and translated data to develop themes while incorporating trustworthiness measures to ensure the study's consistency and reliability.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this qualitative inquiry will be non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the Division of Davao del Norte. In this study, the researcher followed Creswell's guidelines and will interview ten (10) informants to collect and provide rich information about their experiences and stories. These individuals are responsible for providing guidance and counseling services to students, despite not having formal qualifications in the field. All ten (10) participants will undergo an In-depth Interview (IDI), and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The participants of this study will have pseudonyms to provide a high level of secrecy during the research process. These participants will be selected through a purposive sampling technique, where the researcher will set specific objectives. According to Guetterman (2015), it is also known as judgment sampling since it is a deliberate choice of participants due to their qualities.

This study will select participants based on their employment status as designated guidance counselors in a public secondary school in the Division of Davao del Norte, at least two years of experience, willingness to share their experiences openly and honestly, and their availability for in-depth interviews. By focusing on non-registered guidance counselors with significant experience, the study aims to capture the unique challenges and strategies employed by these individuals in navigating the complexities of their roles. This will provide valuable insights into the current state of guidance and counseling services in public secondary schools in the region.

ROLES OF THE RESEARCHER

In qualitative research, the researcher is the initial data-gathering instrument, and it is crucial to uncover preconceptions, biases, and personal views. The roles of the researchers in qualitative research are vital stuff to be considered in the successful quest of inquiry into any social phenomena for they are the ones committed to having extensive time to collect data, engage in data analysis, and write long passages (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher will be playing many roles such as *ethical observer, interviewer, moderator, recorder, transcriber, translator,* and *primary data analyst.*

As someone who ensures the ethical conduct of the research, the researcher will ensure that all participants will be properly informed about the study and its purpose. Additionally, the researcher will strictly follow and adhere to basic ethical considerations for human and health-related research such as the principle of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. This will be addressed by seeking permission and consent to conduct the study, general orientation, administration of interviews, and after data collection.

*As an interviewer,*the researcher will collect the information through the research questions using an interview-based data collection process. The researcher should build a good rapport with the informants during the interview. The researcher must put himself in their situations to understand them better when they share their lived experiences and stories.

*As a moderator*during Interviews, the researcher will ensure that participants have clear understanding of the study and they will not be coerced to answer all of the research questions during the interview. This will be done by informing them about the study, its purpose, and the process of analyzing their responses. Additionally, the researcher will be transparent to them that their entire participation will be completely voluntary and they have the right to revoke by any means.

As a recorder, someone who ensures that the entire interview is properly recorded, the researcher must obtain permission from the participants to record the information they will disclose throughout the interview. The researcher also must ensure the security and confidentiality of the data given.

As a transcriber, the researcher needs to have attentive, repeated, careful listening, on the audio recorder just to ensure the accuracy of the content and to avoid misinterpretation of data during the transcribing process. The researcher will listen carefully to what the participants say and write it down, word for word. Additionally, the researcher will carefully write down any visible reactions or movements that may contribute to the conversation. This will be achieved through the participants' signing consent to guarantee they will be respected. It is also the responsibility of the researcher to narrate their story into written text, as well as to ensure that the participant's name is kept as confidentially as possible, as well as to handle the responses of the participants with care, and ensure that the researcher does not add, delete from, or otherwise alter the content of the discussion at any point.

*As a translator***,** since participants are permitted to use their dialect or English as the Language of communication during the interview, the researcher anticipates that participants will utilize the language they are most comfortable with. Consequently, it is the researcher's responsibility to translate their language use into English.

*As a primary data analyst,*after the interview, the researcher is the one who extracts the themes of discussion from the participants' comments, analyzes the text to understand the context, and creates themes from their responses. The researcher must select suitable analysis methods and procedures for qualitative research such as thematic analysis. Hence, it is the researcher's main duty to interpret and analyze the meanings hidden in the data because the researcher is the major instrument for data collection and analysis.

DATA SOURCES

In qualitative research, there are four primary types of qualitative data collection: conducting interviews, observations, and documentation of audio and visual resources (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher utilized in-depth interviews. An in-depth interview is a strategy to generate a vivid image of the participant's perspective on the research issue (Millena et al., 2008). During in-depth interviews, the interviewee is seen as the expert, while the interviewer is regarded as the learner. Respondents must answer pre-set open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). Likewise, in-depth interviews will be used in this study to determine the situation and develop fresh thoughts on the phenomenon (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). The research participants will be asked to answer pre-determined open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). This is an unstructured interview that is commonly utilized in qualitative research. It deals with the participants' accounts and is supposed to increase the power of words to illuminate meaning (Richie & Lewis, 2003).

In the context of this study, ten (10) non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the Division of Davao del Norte will be the key informants. The interview will explore their experiences and stories in providing guidance support and services to students. The interview will also focus on their coping strategies for their challenges. Lastly, the participants will also be asked to give their insights as guidance counselors.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

The following steps will be employed in gathering the data for the study:

Seeking authorization to undertake the research. The researcher will seek authorization to perform the study. Before carrying out the study, the researcher will submit the research proposal to the Saint Marys' College Research Ethics Committee (SMC-REC) for assessment and approval. After obtaining the SMC-REC certificate, the researcher will acquire a letter of recommendation from the Dean of Graduate Schools. The

researcher will submit a copy of the proposal to the school Presidents of the four (4) public and private collegiate schools in Davao del Norte, where the research will be conducted, upon approval of the proposal.

Selection of Participants. Every research has a proven data collection and analysis strategy. Selecting a sample procedure for each analysis involves various factors. A research project needs the right sampling method. Before deciding, examine example practices. In this case, various research designs employ purposeful sampling. Before choosing a sample technique, the researcher must weigh its pros and cons. Purposeful sampling enables research findings to be accurate and dependable since the sample is more relevant to the study. Its components are consistency, extension, dependency, and reasonable dependability (Thomas, 2022). Therefore, as this study utilizes the interview method that requires a group of individuals who have first-hand knowledge of the event, situation, or experience, through purposive sampling, the researcher will select participants and identify them as non-registered guidance counselors in the educational institutions in the Division of Davao del Norte.

General orientation and seeking of consent from study informants. The research will be conducted following the ethical values of respect for individuals, beneficence, and justice, particularly concerning data privacy and its standards. Before beginning the data collection, participants will be given a form requesting their informed permission or agreement. A virtual orientation to the researcher's work will be also conducted. As proof that participation is voluntary, all forms will be signed, either electronically, by scanning, or in another way. For virtual interviews, the participants will also be advised that they must take the interview at a place where only they have access to the online portal in order to protect the confidentiality of their responses. On the other hand, for face-to-face interview, participants will be asked to participate in the interview in a secure and private place where they and the researcher can have the whole interview.

The researcher will give participants a consent form stipulating the study's conditions, benefits, and risks. This will be done by having a short conference with the participants through google meet and by sending the e-copy of the consent form to them through email. The researcher will provide an orientation to the informants, informing them about the study, its aim, and their critical involvement in completing this research. Permission from the participants to allow the researcher to record the conversation they will be having during the interview will be asked during the orientation, and have them sign the consent form. This will illustrate the research's transparency to the informants, allowing them to participate freely in the interview. This is important to ensure that no coercion or forced involvement occurs during the data collection.

In a face-to-face interview with the informants, the researcher will ensure that proper distancing and wearing of masks will be observed during the interview. The interview will be recorded with the use of a cellular phone. This type of data collection is valuable for gathering information. In an online interview, the researcher will also consider the availability of the participants and the online platform they are most comfortable using. The materials and tools are prepared during the interview, such as the audio recording, laptop, stable internet connection, and other functional gadgets. This is to ensure that the discussion is well recorded and that there shall be no missing information during the interview.

Preparation and Administration of Interviews. In order to gather the participants' responses ethically, the researcher will conduct a virtual orientation before conducting the interviews. Before the interview, the researcher will prepare recording equipment such as cellphones, cameras, and laptops to seamlessly document the responses of each participant. In conducting the interview, this will be handled solely by the researcher for a maximum of 1 hour and 30 minutes for each interview session. In conducting and recording the interview, using discrete recording, the data or information of the participants will be handled with perfect anonymity and greatest confidentiality. The researcher will also explain that the interview will be about their personal views and experiences; therefore, there is no right or wrong answer. Also, the interview will be done in English or through vernacular (Bisaya) so that the participants can better express their ideas and responses.

For virtual interview, the responses of the participants will be properly recorded by using OBS recording software. No specific names will appear in any of the research study's reports, presentations, or publications. Moreover, the interviews will strictly adhere to IATF Guidelines to ensure safety for both the researcher and

participants amidst pandemic. This will be done through strictly observing social distancing and by wearing protective mask over the entire duration of the interviews (virtual or Face-to-face). Furthermore, after the interview, the researcher will forward the recorded videos and audios based on the responses of both IDI and FGD participants to SMCTI-REC.

DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis must be undertaken in a precise, consistent, thorough, and systematic manner for the study to be credible. It must also provide concrete and highly comprehensive details to achieve its goal (Nowell et al., 2017). According to Akinyode and Khan (2018), the five processes in assessing qualitative data include data logging, anecdotes, vignettes, data coding, and thematic analysis. However, in this research, the researcher will be utilizing data coding and thematic analysis only.

Data coding in qualitative research consists of procedures that allow acquired data to be collated, classified, and thematically arranged, therefore giving a platform for the systematic production of meaning. While qualitative research orientations range in their theoretical and practical approaches to data management, each uses coding to organize acquired information. Coding approaches use procedures that uncover themes contained in the data, providing thematic directionality toward classifying data so that meaning may be negotiated, documented, and presented. Coding is a crucial structural function in qualitative research since it enables data processing and subsequent study procedures (Williams & Moser, 2019). In this study, this will be used by the researcher to encode, classify, and organize all the responses of the participants in the study. Specifically, this will be utilized for the responses from the In-Depth Interview (IDI).

Thematic analysis is an appropriate method for this study since the researcher attempts to determine something about people's perspectives, opinions, knowledge, experience, or values using qualitative data. Furthermore, it is a reliable method for evaluating a collection of texts, such as interview transcripts (Caulfield, 2020). Additionally, this method imparts fundamental skills that can be used in numerous other types of analysis. In contrast to other qualitative approaches, thematic analysis is not connected to a particular epistemological or theoretical perspective (Clarke & Braun, 2013). A rigorous thematic analysis can yield reliable and insightful results (Nowell et al., 2017). Thus, this makes it a very flexible method.

In this study, this will be used by the researcher to analyze, interpret, and provide descriptive discussions to come up with substantial findings of the study. This will be done by analyzing thematic statements and formulating their corresponding themes. Moreover, this will be presented using tables. Using the inductive approach of thematic analysis, the researcher will closely examine the data to identify the common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly in the lived experiences of the guidance counselors. The researcher will read several times to be familiar with the data. This will increase familiarity with the associated facts and make it easier to identify the recurring themes of the discussion. The dominant themes or emerging themes from the coded texts will be grouped to have concise and understandable major or overarching themes that reflect the various aspects of the phenomenon based on main themes, frequency, and core ideas.

Moreover, the researcher will encode the data. The researcher will highlight sections of the text, phrases, or sentences and make shorthand labels or "codes" to describe the content. Essentially, it requires making sense of enormous amounts of data by lowering the quantity of raw data. The researcher will then examine the developed codes, detect patterns, and formulate themes. After coming up with the themes, the researcher will ensure that the themes are valuable and accurate data representations. Hence, the researcher returned to the data set and compared the themes against it.

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

This qualitative research put an account on the responses of our informants. The researcher will also take meticulous examination considering all the details of the data. The researcher will check and recheck all the transcription and the significance of the data related to the themes. A study is only deemed credible if the reader

of the research report considers it to be so (Gunawan, 2015). To substantiate the trustworthiness of the study, the following characteristics must be met: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba as cited by Cope, 2014). In this study, the researcher ensured that all data gathering procedures are identified and observed properly. Additionally, the researcher will use systematic approach to reach to the conclusion of the research while debriefing will also be done to the study participants. Furthermore, corroboration will also be utilize by the researcher as a way to minimize faulty observations and conclusions and to ascertain that the information received is true. Hence, in conducting this study, the researcher will use several tools to corroborate the information from the participants.

Credibility. Credibility in research is the evaluation of whether or not the study results reflect a credible conceptual interpretation of the data derived from the original data provided by the participants (Rubin, 2020). In establishing credibility in this study, the researcher will employ bracketing throughout the conduct of the study, in which the researcher will not take any position about anything, setting aside the researcher's own experiences during the research process to truly see and understand the phenomenon with a natural attitude or an attitude of taking no stand concerning the phenomenon at hand (Moustakas, 1994).

The researcher will also employ probes and iterative questioning, in which the researcher returns to issues previously highlighted by an informant and obtains relevant data through rephrased questions. When discrepancies appear, deception is identified, and the researcher may opt to delete the dubious data (Wadembere, 2012). To furtherly established credibility of the study, member checking will also be observed. Member checking is a strategy for assessing the reliability of results by returning them to the participants for verification (Birth et al., 2016). The researcher will ensure that the participants will receive a copy of the collected results so they can evaluate what they stated during the interview. In order to avoid bias, this allowed participants to confirm the accuracy of the transcribed data. The researcher then will request that they sign the certification as evidence that they had reviewed and approved the offered results.

Transferability. To meet the terms of transferability, the researchers made use of thick description as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) that it is a way of achieving a type of external validity. The researcher must persuade the reader that the research applies to their context by describing the participants and research procedure in detail (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study, as the researcher the researcher will describe the phenomenon with sufficient detail where the researcher generalizes the research findings and ensure that the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people. In addition, with the conduct of the study, the researcher will ensure that all transcripts and data analyses will be included in the appendix for future reference and to prevent bias. A digital and physical copy of the materials collected before, during, and after the interview will be stored in a secure location.

Dependability. Dependability relates to the consistency and dependability of the research results and the extent to which research techniques are recorded, enabling an outsider to observe, audit, and evaluate the research process (Sandelowski, 1986). One way of addressing dependability in research is through peer assessment, which involves engaging the assistance of expert analysts and using their input to gain consensus on the consistency and trustworthiness of the findings or to produce fresh thoughts (Given, 2008).

In this study, the researcher will seek help from an expert analyst and adviser to have a more profound synthesis of the data gathered. Additionally, the result of this research will be subjected to scrutiny and in-depth checking by the panel of experts during the outline and final defenses. To further address consistency and dependability in study findings, the researcher will ensure that the conclusions are consistent with the raw data obtained. If external auditing is performed on the research findings, the data will validate the interpretations and conclusions.

Conformability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described conformability as a degree to which the findings of the study are formed by the participants and not by the researchers' conscious and unconscious biases. Thus, to address the need for conformability in the study, the researchers make certain that the findings and conclusions of the study are the product of an independent research method. In the framework of this research, audit trailing will be employed. All raw data, interviews, observation notes, documents, and field records obtained during the

study will be preserved for the investigation process and a comprehensive audit trail.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations in research are a collection of guiding principles for designing and conducting research. Researchers must always adhere to a set code of behavior when gathering data from people to ensure pleasant scientific practice research (Bhandari, 2021).

To establish ethical consideration, the researcher will ensure that the proper conduct of this research and the safety of the concerned individuals and institutions will be safeguarded, as well as comply with the ethical standards established and mandated by the SMCTI Research Ethics Committee (REC). In this study, the researcher will adhere to the Belmont Report of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979) on Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research, which identifies respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as core principles to be considered.

Furthermore, this research protocol will be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee (REC) for full board review. The researcher will observe the 10 dimensions of research ethics, such as social value, informed consent, vulnerability of research participants, risk-benefits and safety, privacy and confidentiality of information, justice, transparency, qualification of the researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement.

Social Value. In this study, the researcher will ensure that the research contributes to the broader field of education and psychology. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the experiences and challenges faced by non-registered guidance counselors in local colleges. By understanding their experiences, the study can inform the development of policies, programs, and support systems to enhance the quality of guidance and counseling services in these institutions.

Informed Consent. Before participating in the study, all participants will be provided with a detailed information sheet outlining the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the research. They will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. The informed consent process will be conducted clearly and understandably, ensuring that participants fully comprehend the implications of their involvement. To safeguard the rights and well-being of vulnerable populations, additional measures will be taken to ensure that they fully understand the information and are able to provide informed consent.

Vulnerability of Research Participants. While the participants in this study may not be considered highly vulnerable, the researcher will remain mindful of any potential ethical concerns related to participant well-being. To mitigate potential risks, the researcher will take steps to ensure that the data collection process is conducted sensitively and respectfully. Additionally, the researcher will be prepared to provide support and resources to participants if needed, particularly if the study involves any sensitive topics or procedures.

Risk-Benefits, and Safety. The potential risks associated with participating in this study are minimal and primarily relate to the time and effort required to participate in the interviews. The benefits of participating, however, are significant. By contributing to the research, participants will have the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of education and psychology. Additionally, the findings of the study may lead to improvements in the support and resources available to designated guidance counselors, ultimately benefiting students and the broader educational community.

Privacy and Confidentiality of Information. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants, the researcher will assign unique identification codes to all data collected. All personal information will be securely stored and accessed only by authorized individuals. The researcher will adhere to strict confidentiality protocols, ensuring that participant data is not disclosed to unauthorized parties. Additionally, the researcher will take steps to protect the anonymity of participants in any publications or presentations arising from the

study.

Justice. The researcher will strive to ensure that the benefits and burdens of the research are fairly distributed among participants. The selection of participants will be based on clear and objective criteria, avoiding any form of bias or discrimination. The researcher will also be mindful of any potential power imbalances between the researcher and participants, ensuring that the research process is equitable and respectful.

Transparency. The researcher will be transparent about the research process, including the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures. Any potential conflicts of interest will be disclosed upfront. Additionally, the researcher will be honest and forthright in reporting the findings of the study, acknowledging any limitations or biases that may have influenced the results.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher will possess the necessary qualifications and expertise to conduct this research. This includes a strong understanding of research methodology, qualitative data analysis, and ethical principles. The researcher will also have the necessary training and experience to work with human participants and ensure their well-being.

Adequacy of Facilities. The researcher will have access to adequate facilities and resources to conduct the study. This includes secure storage for data, appropriate software for data analysis, and sufficient space for conducting interviews. The facilities will be maintained in a safe and secure manner to protect the confidentiality of participant data.

Community Involvement. While this study may not involve direct community involvement, the researcher can still consider the broader impact of the research on the educational community. The findings of the study will be disseminated through academic publications, conferences, and other relevant channels. By sharing the results with the wider community, the researcher aims to contribute to the ongoing dialogue and improvement of guidance and counseling services in educational institutions.

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