

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

<https://llrjournal.com/index.php/11>

**ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN TEACHER – LED COUNSELLING
AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL**



Insiyah Mustafa¹, Munira Mustafa², Sabah Surani^{*3}

^{1,2}B.Ed. (Hons) Student, Ziauddin University, College of Education

*^{*3}Lecturer, Ziauddin University, College of Education*

*¹insukok51@gmail.com, ²muniramalekulashter@gmail.com,
^{*3}sabahsurani@gmail.com*

Abstract

Teachers' roles at the elementary level have broadened tremendously from giving academics to also catering the emotional, behavioral and psychological needs of the students. Teachers are being expected to undertake counselling-related responsibilities at an increasing number of schools, mainly in developing countries, where professional counselling services are non-existent. But, the relative reporting of teachers into counselling practice, by a lack of formal counselling training and professional supervision, has brought about a host of ethical issues and in this paper we study about them. This research examined key ethical issues within teachers' counselling practices including confidentiality, boundaries and power, emotional and personal involvement, issues of communication, personal bias, and decision making. In addition, it examined the nature of interactions between the teachers and their clients and the support available for teachers delivering counselling in school contexts. The research was mostly a qualitative one and used secondary data from a range of journal articles, codes of ethics in counselling, education reports, books and scholarly journals on counselling and school psychology. It was analyzed by thematic analysis to highlight common themes and ethical considerations. The results of this study indicated that teachers generally face many ethical issues on their balancing academic expectations and parental roles which include maintaining confidentiality and the safety of students. It was observed that preschoolers are emotionally fragile and are not aware of the ramifications of revealing certain information. This study concluded that insecure counselling knowledge, emotional strain, inadequate training and policies make an unethical act or poor decision likely. The study concludes that the presence of teacher-led counselling as an integral part of elementary education is inevitable; the practice of counselling should be safe ethical supportive, and professional. The study argues the importance of ethical understanding, professional training, and institutional backing for the development of effective and professional counselling practices.

Keywords: *Teacher-Led Counselling, Ethical Challenges, Confidentiality, Professional Boundaries, Ethical Decision-Making*

Introduction:

Background of the Study

Over the last few years, teachers' role in elementary education has significantly evolved. In the past, their main duty was teaching school subjects; however, presently they are also meant to help students with their emotional, social, and behavioral growth. As per Robert Pianta (1999), the positive teacher student bonds significantly affect children's development in a broad sense, particularly in those first years of schooling. This means teachers are not simply confined to academic teaching but are also major characters in students' development on a personal level.

Children going to elementary schools are in a very delicate phase as they try to figure out how to comprehend and communicate their feelings, make friends, and face difficulties. One of Vygotsky's (1978) theories supports that children through their social interaction not only learn but also develop which is why teachers become a support human figure. Due to this close relationship, students generally get to a stage where they feel free to discuss their personal issues with teachers. Ideally, schools should have trained counsellors to deal with students' emotional and psychological needs, but in many developing countries, there is a scarcity of professional counsellors. According to UNESCO (2019), many schools do not have adequate counselling services, particularly at the elementary level. This practice is commonly referred as teacher – led

counselling.

Teacher-led counselling has its merits as teachers know their students well and are in frequent contact with them. Like Carl Rogers (1951) pointed out, having a supportive and understanding relationship is key to enabling a person to articulate his/her thoughts and feelings. Teachers can be a source of such support however counselling is a skill that they do not always possess.

One major issue in counselling is ethics. Ethics refer to the act of making decisions that are just, responsible, and in the best interests of a student. The American School Counselor Association (2016) states that ethical issues like confidentiality, trust, and professional boundaries are at the core of counselling practices. Teachers who assume the role of counsellors without proper training may experience these ethical dilemmas.

At the primary school level, these issues become even more difficult as children may not be capable of fully understanding the implications of their actions. They may even request teachers to keep a secret that could reveal a major problem. It is in these scenarios that teachers need to decide whether to keep the student's confidence or to break it to avert the risk. Plus, they must still maintain good professional boundaries. Relating to the student to build trust is significant; however, if one gets too emotionally involved, it can compromise the decisions that are taken. Additionally, teachers' culturally and socially conditioned ways of thinking might change the way they deal with students' problems. Biases can be introduced when teachers unconsciously allow their personal beliefs to influence their decisions.

This paper investigates the ethical dilemmas experienced by teachers who also function as counsellors in elementary schools. It seeks to find out how these dilemmas are being dealt with by the teachers and what kind of assistance they would require to be able to cope with them successfully.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher-led counselling is increasingly making its way in educational institutions; however, many teachers are unaware of the ethical responsibilities that come with the counselling role. Jeannine R. Studer (2005) points out that teachers sometimes have to act as counsellors without having had any relevant training, which can cause misunderstanding and anxiety among them.

First of all, a major issue is the struggle to harmonize the roles of teacher and counsellor. Teachers need to be disciplinarians while at the same time they should be friendly and supportive. This contrast may give rise to tension and uncertainty. As emphasized by Nel Nodding's (2005), nurturing relationships are a vital part of education, but they should not be at the expense of one's professional obligations.

Besides that, emotional involvement is yet another problem. Teachers' emotional attachment to students might hamper their impartiality. Studies show that over-identification with students may result in a teacher's subjective decisions and uneven treatment of students.

One more great concern is the unawareness of the ethical principles. Teachers may not be clear about when they should keep confidentiality and when they should report the problems. As per the American Counseling Association (2014), confidentiality is very essential but one should disclose it if the student is in danger. So, without being equipped with the necessary knowledge, teachers might find it difficult in these situations. On top of that, keeping the professional boundaries intact is not a piece of cake either. While establishing a bond with the students, teachers also need to ensure that such a bond is appropriate. Incurring misconducts in these respects may lead to ethical issues and even misunderstandings (Naper et al., 2025).

Furthermore, a good number of schools fail to outline necessary rules for counselling conducted by teachers. In the absence of well-established procedures, educators have to depend on their instincts which may not always be suitable. Such a deficiency of assistance creates opportunities for errors.

In short, the main issue here is that teachers are assumed to undertake counseling work but they have been given neither training nor direction and this results in ethical dilemmas that may harm the students' well-being.

Research Question:

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the major ethical challenges faced by teachers in providing counselling at the elementary school level?
2. What ethical concerns arise regarding confidentiality and student safety in teacher-led counselling at the elementary school level?

3. What difficulties do teachers face in maintaining professional boundaries while counselling students?
4. How do personal beliefs and cultural factors influence teachers' ethical decision-making?
5. What training, institutional support, and professional guidelines are important for addressing ethical challenges in teacher-led counselling at the elementary school level?

Research Objectives:

The main objectives of this study are:

- To identify the ethical challenges faced by teachers during counselling at the elementary level.
- To understand how teachers manage confidentiality and reporting responsibilities.
- To examine the role of personal beliefs and biases in counselling situations.
- To explore the difficulties teachers face in maintaining professional boundaries.
- To suggest ways to improve teachers' ability to handle ethical issues in counselling.

Justification of the Study:

This research is significant as it spotlights a dimension that is usually overlooked in primary education, the ethical side of teacher-led counselling. Even though schools dedicate a lot of time and effort to enhancing students' academic performance, the emotional and psychological wellbeing of learners are sometimes pushed aside. Herein lies the paradox as a research reveals that a child's emotional health is a key factor not only in his/her academic success but also in his/her whole growth and development.

The World Health Organization (2020) points out that mental health is one of the main determinants that affect a child's behavior, capacity for learning, and social interactions. When students' emotional needs are met and supported, they exhibit greater self-confidence, show more willingness, and become more deeply interested in acquiring knowledge. In this respect, teachers are instrumental because, given the amount of time they spend interactively with students, they tend to be the first ones who notice the slightest behavioral changes.

In numerous educational institutions, particularly in developing countries, cases of inadequacy of professional counselors arise quite often. According to "UNESCO (2019) reports that a significant proportion of schools in developing countries lack access to trained professional counsellors, particularly at the elementary level". Therefore, the local education staffs are the ones who are always on the front line taking care of counseling issues although they haven't necessarily undergone any counseling-related training. The above-mentioned circumstances justify in a way an inquiry into the kind of problems, both general and ethical, that teachers encounter in the course of teacher-led counseling.

Another factor that makes this study relevant is that ethical dilemmas in counseling by teachers if ignored or mishandled can lead to major repercussions. For instance, it is a breach of trust that could be very damaging to a pupil if the confidentiality of a shared problem or secret were to be disclosed. On the other hand, the failure to report circumstances that pose danger to a child/accountability can be strongly argued to be an abandonment of a duty of care. Making correct decisions in these cases requires greatness of the spirit, and only with the right knowledge teachers can be expected to make accurate decisions.

The present research paper can be considered as a necessity as it reveals a shortage in the preparation of teachers to face real-life challenges in their work. It is a known fact that teacher training programs mainly focus on teaching skills and techniques of managing classes however they seem to lack enough emphasis on counselling skills or ethical decision-making. Through this study, the list of shortcomings can be identified which will lead to the development of teacher training programs hence making teachers ready for their evolving roles.

Also, the study helps schools and policy makers as well. It can bring to light the urgency for rules and policies concerning the lay counsellor role of teachers. Child-friendly organizations like UNICEF highly recommend the formation of safe and supportive environments for children at school. This study can underpin that aim by demonstrating the significance of the implementation of ethical standards.

Besides, this research paper adds to the knowledge existent by narrowing down on the level of elementary education that is quite neglected in this context. In most cases, research concentrates on secondary schools or professional counselling, but young children who need their emotional needs addressed are overlooked.

So, in conclusion, this study is significant since it sheds light on the difficulties that teachers encounter and also outlines major points in the development of good educational practices. The main goal is to

make sure that students are sufficiently supported emotionally while the support is safe, ethical, and professional.

Scope of the Study:

This research discusses the ethical issues that teachers offering counseling services in primary schools may encounter. One of the main delimitations of this paper is that it deals only with primary school teachers since this level of education is crucial for a child's emotional and social development.

Confidentiality, professional boundaries, fairness, and ethical decision-making are the main components of the research. Besides identifying the ethical issues, the study also investigates how teachers cope with these challenges and what difficulties they experience. The paper also studies the personal beliefs, cultural values, and social factors that influence teachers' decision-making. Due to the fact that teachers come from different backgrounds, their views and opinions differ. This diversity is a critical component of understanding the ethical challenges.

This research only considers teachers who have had experience handling students' personal or emotional issues. Their experience and viewpoints reveal the major challenges of teacher-led counseling. Nevertheless, the paper has some limitations. This research is limited to teachers as counselors because it is evident that they do not have the same training and accountability as professional school counselors.

This study is also focused solely on elementary schools and therefore excludes secondary or higher education levels. Besides, this research focuses on generic counselling contexts only and does not cover intense psychological or clinical conditions that need professional treatments. Besides, the research primarily concentrates on typical student problems and the ways teachers interact with them.

The researchers, by specifying their areas that will be dealt with in the paper, on one hand, intend to offer an in-depth and concentrated grasp of the ethical matters, on the other hand, they are making their shortcomings known.

Significance of the study:

Education stakeholders such as teacher's student's schools, and policymakers will look at this research as a useful one. It mainly highlights some of the continuing ethical issues that teachers do counselling students face. Most teachers have only a partial picture of these dilemmas or sometimes don't even realize how their decisions affect students. Therefore, teachers getting to know these matters will be more careful, more responsible, and more confident in dealing with students' issues. Another side of the coin is that students greatly benefit from teachers who can handle counseling situations properly. Through this, students have access to a wide range of support services that not only improve their emotional health and mental well-being but also enhance their academic success and lead to the development of strong social relationships. Moreover, only when students perceive the environment as friendly and supportive, they tend to disclose their problems. In addition, teacher support institutions could use the research as a reference for detailed information on the teacher training gaps that lead to ethical decision-making, communication, and professional boundaries among teacher issues. It helps them grasp the idea that these topics should be incorporated in training programs to prepare teachers adequately for the changes in their roles. At the same time, it is quite significant for schools and educational institutions. It gives them an opportunity to generate their own distinct policies and regulations that specifically focused on counselling conducted by teachers.

Clear-cut guidelines cannot only lessen the vagueness but also make sure that teachers handle situations in a synchronized and proper way. Besides, the work is important in that it brings out a few educational policy elements that policymakers could use to design policies and even decide on resource allocation for the development of counselling services in schools. Simultaneously, the study highlighted the need for either hiring professional counsellors or giving comprehensive teacher training.

Besides that, the research points at education ethics as a key discourse. It is with ethical measures that we can protect students' rights, privacy, and welfare. Establishing a situation of security and respect for learning is non-negotiable. Besides discussing the topic of teacher-led counselling, the study, on the other hand, also highlights other topics such as teacher professional development, student emotional health, and school counselling services.

On the whole, these findings argue why teacher-led counselling deserves more recognition for its potential benefits to the entire school community. Besides, the paper also outlines why it is crucial that the counselling is ethical and effective.

Definition of Key Terms:

Teacher-Led Counselling: Teacher-led counselling refers to the process in which teachers provide emotional, behavioral, social, or psychological support to students within the school environment despite not being professionally trained counsellors.

Ethical Challenges: Ethical challenges are situations involving moral conflicts or difficult decisions related to fairness, responsibility, confidentiality, professional conduct, and student welfare during counselling practices.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality refers to the ethical responsibility of keeping students' personal information private unless disclosure is necessary to protect the student or others from harm.

Professional Boundaries: Professional boundaries are the limits and standards that maintain appropriate and ethical relationships between teachers and students during counselling interactions.

Ethical Decision-Making: Ethical decision-making is the process of making responsible and morally appropriate choices by considering ethical principles, student welfare, professional responsibilities, and possible consequences.

Review of Literature:

Today, the teachers' responsibilities are not limited only to instructional duties but also encompass extending students' emotional and psychological support. These changes are mostly due to the wider acknowledgment of children's overall development where emotional well-being is given the same importance as academic performance. Thus, teacher counselling has become a viable option for situations where professional counselling is either unavailable or insufficient in most schools, especially in developing regions.

Lai-Yeung (2014) highlights that teachers are now required to "offer guidance and counselling to students" besides their teaching. However, teachers caught up in the middle junction of being educators and counsellors, who also have to initiate therapeutic interactions. This combination of functions can undoubtedly strengthen teacher-student relationships, but at the same time, it also raises ethical concerns because teachers have no therapy training.

According to the studies, teacher counselling should not be viewed just as a continuation of teaching but as a separate function necessitating a different set of skills. However, teachers are not only confused but also scared and unsure mainly because a properly structured syllabus in ethics and their exposure to this kind of topic lack.

Theoretical Foundations of Counselling in Education:

One way to get a handle on teacher-led counselling is to first get to grips with the main psychological and educational theories that form its basis. Humanistic theory, in particular, the concept of Carl Rogers, stress that empathy, unconditional positive regard and authenticity are the key elements for successful counselling. As teachers meet students almost every day, they have a very good means of creating such nurturing environments.

However, if these principles are implemented unguided, it may lead to misunderstanding or incorrect usage.

On the other hand, socio-cultural theory points out that social interactions are crucial for both learning and development. From this standpoint, it is reasonable to say that teachers significantly contribute to the shaping of students' emotional and social skills. Nonetheless, such close involvement is most likely to raise the number of ethical issues especially at those times when the temptation to mix the personal and professional spheres is strongest.

As the ethical decision-making framework presented in Health Psychology Consultancy (2015) points out, making ethical choices is a complex task and one that most commonly involves the weighing of competing principles and responsibilities (p. 5). This is even more the case in schools where teachers are constantly faced with the dilemma of whether to keep information confidential or to act for the student's safety.

Importantly, although these theories support teacher participation in counselling, they fall short in sufficiently explaining the ethical challenges that arise when people who are not professionals decide to undertake counselling activities. This discrepancy points towards the necessity of having well-developed ethical guidelines that are specifically designed for teachers.

Ethical Decision-Making in Counselling:

Making ethical decisions is a core aspect of counselling, significantly so when teachers are the counsellors. The ethical decision-making model from the Health Psychology Consultancy document (2015) illustrates that therapists should follow a step-by-step method that includes problem identification, ethical principles consideration, alternatives assessment, and planning of the outcomes reflection.

According to the paper, a main point is the following:

"Ethical decision-making entails a thorough examination of the professional codes, possible repercussions, and the client's best interests" (Health Psychology Consultancy, 2015, p. 6).

Actually, teacher-led counselling turns out to be a more complicated case here because teachers act in two roles at once. Firstly teachers unlike professional counsellors, come under institutional regulation, have teaching obligations, and are also responsible for students' discipline; these are elements that counselling ethics may be at odds with. A major point in the literature is the teachers' ignorance of ethical frameworks. Being loses the teachers with knowledge, to the point that it is likely that they trust their gut or their personal values which, in turn, may result in an unpredictable or inappropriate judgment. An example is where a teacher decides a student's secret can be kept, missing out the fact that this student could be in danger.

Besides, making ethical decisions is a big challenge requiring critical thinking and intuitive wisdom - core skills which are normally acquired during formal training. So, the lack of systematic instruction in teacher education programs is a cause of worry when it comes to the viability and the risk of teacher-led counselling.

Teacher's Emotional and Behavioral Responses:

In a study conducted by Plexousakis et al. (2019), teachers' emotional and educational responses to children with behavioral problems are thoroughly discussed. Indeed the results reveal that teachers' emotions change quite a bit from frustration empathy to stress when they deal with students who have been emotionally or behaviorally disturbed.

The way teachers respond emotionally to such situations can have a great impact on their decision-making. Teachers who become emotionally overrun or deeply involved in a situation may find it hard to exert self-control, thus they will likely act emotionally, which is a non-preferred method. Besides, the study by Plexousakis et al. highlights that emotional reactions of teachers are not merely personal experiences but also shape the way they behave professionally.

One of the important findings from the research is that teachers' lack of training in managing their emotional responses can lead to a worsening of ethical dilemmas. Unregulated emotional responses can result in the teachers unknowingly committing ethical violations such as unfairness or prejudice.

The authors of the paper also imply that teachers' attitudes toward a student's behavior could be, in fact, a reflection of the teachers' own beliefs and stereotypes. Teacher's responses to students may be shaped by biases related to race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, or socioeconomic background (Plexousakis et al., 2019). In class, for example, students from certain backgrounds may be labeled or stereotyped harshly, which would affect the help offered to them. This is consistent with Lai-Yeung's (2014) Findings, where the "prejudgment or bias against students" was identified as one of the biggest contributing factors to the impediment of the issue.

Viewed from a critical viewpoint, this point throws a bright light on a significant drawback of teacher-led counseling: the risk of bias and subjective interpretation. Unlike trained counselors teachers who may be unaware of their own biases, may be ill-equipped to deal with such situations, thereby raising concern about their ethical behavior.

Training Needs and Professional Competence:

The literature is consistently pointing out one major issue: teachers badly need training in guidance and counselling. In fact, Lai-Yeung (2014) discovered that every participant in her research study felt that training was essential, especially in the areas like communication skills, facilitating counselling and dealing with students' cases.

The study provides a vivid example that supports this necessity:

"Participants expressed a clear desire for professional development, stating they wanted to learn how to behave professionally in dealing with students problems" (Lai-Yeung, 2014, p. 38)."

It shows that not only teachers understand that they have some weaknesses but also they have a strong

intention of improving themselves professionally. On the other hand, the literature also points out that the current training programs are not fulfilling the needs and are mainly concerned with imparting theoretical knowledge rather than focusing on the practical aspects.

More importantly, the absence of a thorough training will not only affect teachers' proficiency but also make them more vulnerable to ethical conflicts. The scarcity of an appropriate guide may even result in their difficulty to solve delicate matters related to confidentiality, mandatory reporting, and maintaining boundaries.

Another essential discovery is that different personal attributes of teachers like good communication and empathy not only enable them to counselling work but can also be a source of facing challenges in the role. Besides, who they are as a person and their talents can contribute significantly to their success in the classroom.

Also, many sources agree that learning by doing and practice through live experiences are among the best ways for teachers to learn how to be counsellors. In other words, the inclusion of role-playing, case studies, and reflective exercises in training curricula are found to be very useful and developed the competency of the teachers greatly.

Unfortunately, these methods of teaching are rarely used, especially in the less privileged parts of the world.

Ethical Issues in Confidentiality and Trust:

Confidentiality ranks among the most crucial ethical principles for a counselor. However, it is also the principle which teachers find most difficult to handle. Hospital and private practitioners, for example, are told what is confidential and what is not, who to disclose to, and when. But in schools teachers have to consider confidentiality along with their responsibility to the student.

The ethical decision-making paper points out that a person's confidentiality can be disclosed if there is a threat of harm to the person or to others. This leaves teachers in a difficult position, because they may either want to keep a student's confidence or they may want to ensure the student's safety.

According to one research, a major problem is that teachers are unclear about when and how to disclose confidential information. As a result of such doubt, teachers may both reveal too much and thereby lose the student's confidence or they may not disclose at all and the student might then be at risk.

Besides, it is very difficult to keep a secret in a school where so many people are involved other than the teachers and students, e.g. parents head teachers other teachers, etc. This makes it even more likely that somebody's ethics might be compromised.

One of the findings in the literature is that kids don't really get what confidentiality is, especially not at the younger age. They could be sharing personal stuff that they actually don't want to share or have shared unknowingly. This is why teachers have to be extremely careful when making a decision on the basis of what is the most ethical thing to do.

Thinking critically, this is a call for placing clear policies and guidelines at the teachers' disposal to help them the best way to uphold confidentiality. Without such a policy, teachers only get to ethical kaleidoscopes and make mistakes.

Professional Boundaries and Role Conflict:

Another major ethical dilemma in teacher-led counselling is the issue of professional boundaries. Teachers are not only expected to form a nurturing relationship with their students but also to keep a certain professional distance.

According to the literature, wearing these two hats can sometimes send mixed signals and create inner conflict. Teachers, for instance, may have a hard time figuring out how to play the role of an authority figure and, at the same time, be a supportive friend which can lead to blurred boundaries. To illustrate, getting emotionally close to a student to a great extent can make teachers lose the ability to be objective and proper in making decisions.

Lai-Yeung (2014) points out that teachers' personal attributes and emotional engagement are factors that hinder their counselling work to a great extent. This means that boundary-setting is not only a professional matter but also a personal one.

Most importantly, not having clear and well-defined guidelines on professional boundaries makes the problem even worse. Teachers, in such a situation, may be forced to base their actions on their personal sense of right and wrong, which can differ greatly and may not always be in line with ethical standards.

Cultural Influences and Personal Biases in Ethical Decision-Making:

Teacher's ethical decision-making in counselling is significantly shaped by their personal beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and value systems (Plexousakis et al., 2019). In fact, especially in culturally diverse or developing parts of the world, teachers' perceptions of student behavior and their ideas about the most appropriate way for students to be disciplined are to a large extent a reflection of their own life experiences. According to Plexousakis et al. (2019), teachers' attitudes toward students identified as having behavioral issues may not be totally objective but rather they are influenced by how the teachers emotionally and cognitively interpret the situation. These kinds of interpretations can be based on what is culturally expected in terms of discipline, respect, and proper conduct. As a result, a teacher could potentially provide contrasting responses in similar circumstances according to their own beliefs.

Furthermore, research results from Lai-Yeung (2014) reveal that "prejudgment or bias against students" is a main obstacle causing issues in guidance and counselling. So, it could be said that teachers might unknowingly label their students by the factors like economic level, family situation, or even the students' academic performance.

From a critical point of view, that indicates we really should be concerned about equal justice and fairness in teacher counselling's. Doing ethical counselling means being impartial and appreciating each individual; however, the one's own biases might cause a different treatment of students. For instance, the teacher could feel more compassion toward the pupil whom he/she believes puts in a lot of effort, whereas the same teacher may be less understanding toward the one who is considered as the troublemaker.

The ethical decision-making framework (Healthcare Psychology Consultancy, 2015) indirectly resolves this issue through its focus on reflection and self-awareness.

Psychologists are asked to think about their own values and the underlying assumptions which might influence their decisions. Nonetheless, teachers without training might not even know how to carry out such introspective practices effectively.

Besides, cultural rules may also bring about changes in the decisions regarding confidentiality and disclosure. In certain cultures, there is an overwhelming focus on the family members, as a result of which, teachers might feel obliged to reveal student details to the parents. Although this may be in conformity with the cultural norms, it is in conflict with the ethical standards of confidentiality.

Of course, the review of the literature shows that cultural competence is not adequately targeted in teacher training programs. There is widespread recognition of the need for cultural sensitivity, but only a small amount of practical advice is provided for teachers to be able to maintain ethical standards whilst at the same time being influenced by cultural factors.

Communication Skills and Relationship Building:

Successful communication is one of the most essential elements of counselling. Its significance is so great that it is upheld in almost all relevant publications. In order to assist students effectively, teachers should not only listen attentively and empathize with them, but also make the latter feel comfortable enough to share their problems.

Lai-Yeung (2014) regards communication skills as the primary area where teachers require further training. This points to the key function of communication in teacher-administered counselling.

On the other hand, scholars point out that the way communication works in counselling is quite different from regular classroom conversations. To be a good counsellor a person needs to have certain abilities, e.g. active listening, asking questions that require more than a yes/no answer, and replying without judging the other person. Such abilities are rarely the focus of teacher training programs.

One of the very first things that come up when reading through this issue is that teachers could, without being aware, switch to communication that is too directive or authoritative which by the way, may push students to keep their worries to themselves. As an illustration, after a student has spoken, a teacher may refrain from trying to see things from his/her point of view and concentrate only on giving advice.

Ethics is yet another side of communication. Communicating inappropriately can cause misunderstandings and even betrayal of trust as well as failure to render the correct kind of assistance. On the other hand, when we communicate well, we build up trust, become more open, and all of this contributes to positive changes.

Looking at the matter critically, the literature seems to indicate that communication training is a must-

have feature of any teacher preparation plan. On the other hand, what is on offer now is still only a scratch-the-surface treatment of these skills and therefore leaves a lot to be desired in terms of results.

Comparison and Synthesis of Literature:

Some comparative analysis of the studies that have been reviewed shows that the studies have got common themes as well as points of divergence. It is generally accepted across all the sources that the role of teacher in counselling and the related ethical challenges are very important.

The absence of teacher education and readiness, in fact, is among a few of the most stable discoveries. The Procedia study and Lai-Yeung (2014) both point out how it is essential that teachers have really intense training programs, while the ethical decision-making framework strike a chord about how complex the ethical decisions are.

Also the teachers' inclination to decision-making is also a hit on the personal things like feelings, beliefs, and biases. Plexousakis et al. (2019) study reveals how teachers' reactions can be influenced by the emotional states empirically, whereas the rest of the studies indicate the presence of cultural and societal factors.

Nevertheless, the main emphasis of the studies varies. For instance, the ethical decision-making paper imports a theoretical framework whereas Lai-Yeung (2014) and similar studies are centered upon the difficulties and dilemmas of the teachers in practice. The blending of the theoretical and empirical viewpoints gives a well-rounded picture of the matter.

Arguably, the reviewed literature points to several deficiencies. Firstly, elementary-level counselling has hardly been the subject of research despite the fact that it is the group of children facing the greatest difficulties. Secondly, teachers are not provided with proper tools/guidelines, especially when it comes to the implementation of ethical decision-making. In addition, the bulk of the studies underscore the difficulty but at the same time, lack a proper solution. Besides, the demand for proper training and making policies is something that has been almost universally admitted, but there is hardly any proof of the existence of the effective modes of operation.

Implications for Practices:

Implications of this literature review include numerous issues at hand for teachers, schools, teacher education institution, and educational policymakers. Teachers are being required to fulfill more of the social and emotional needs of their students and must be adequately equipped to do so. The literature here illustrates the misconceptions teachers have about counselling and the diverse ethical dilemmas they encounter without appropriate training and support.

There are significant consequences for teacher training. The training of teachers generally concentrates on the academic content they will teach and delivers very little instruction on counselling skill or ethical training. Teachers require training in communication skills ethics Confidentiality, emotional support and child management skills so that they are well prepared to deal with the differing needs of children quickly and professionally.

The other implications are the need for clear school policies and institutional supports. Most schools put the burden of dealing with emotional and behavioral issues of their students on teachers without giving any clear guidance on how to do that. Teachers must know the limits of confidentiality and the circumstances under which they have a duty to report, as well as where and when to referral. Clear guidelines should be in place to facilitate communication and help maintain ethically sound practices (e.g. systematic collaboration of teachers, school administrators, parents and professional counsellors).

The literature also emphasizes the role of ongoing professional development. It is vital for teachers to experience workshops and reflective training programs which would support them in emotional management, identification of personal biases and enhancement of their decision-making skills. Parallel with this, schools should also offer teachers emotional and professional support to lower their level of stress and burn-out.

The review also highlights the importance of giving greater attention to ethical counselling practices in the early years. Children are incredibly sensitive emotionally, and are completely reliant on adults for support and guidance. Ethical counselling practice is that means essential in fostering a safe and supportive "child-centered" learning environment.

Conclusion:

The ethics issues tied to teachers involvements in counselling at the elementary school level is discussed in

this literature review. It is discussed in the reviewed articles that teachers are now being required to support students not only academically, but also emotionally and socially. Many teachers carry out counselling duties with little or no training or professional feedback.

The literature focus on some major ethical issues, which are confidentiality boundaries emotional involvement, personal bias and ethical decision-making. Teachers have not have sufficient skills to handle all the counselling issues so that they often make personal-bias or break down the boundaries. Besides these constraints, heavy workload and less support may contribute to the lack of counselling skills.

The research points to elements of training, knowledge and school policies that are key as well. Teachers must be equipped with skills in listening and communication, understanding and supporting pupil emotion and sound ethical reasoning to manage a counselling incident in the classroom. Schools and policy makers must be there to support teachers with understanding structures.

Research Methodology

Research Method:

This research project mostly adopts a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is the study of information about ideas experiences opinions and human behavior in the depth. As the subject of this study is about ethical issues in teacher-led counselling in primary schools, in-depth interviewing, one form of qualitative technique for example, was thought to be the most appropriate approach. Because ethical issues of confidentiality boundaries feelings and personal perceptions by definition are related to human interaction, feelings and thinking in nature, they cannot be understand fully by numbers. The qualitative approach gave the researcher an opportunity to look at the topic in some depth, using interpretation and critical understanding.

The research is not about producing statistics or even measuring the statistical relationship. It is about understanding what kind of ethical dilemmas teachers encounter and what factors influence the counselling practices. Through using the qualitative approach the researcher was able to examine the emotional, professional and ethical perspectives of teachers carrying out counseling in primary schools.

This study is First and foremost document based (secondary) research and relies on the use of journal articles, educational reports books ethical examples, counselling guidelines and completed research projects on counselling and education. This enabled the researcher to look for diverse academic viewpoints and gain insight into the key ethical issues faced by the practice.

The qualitative method was chosen for this study because the explanation and interpretation and commentaries are expected rather than the scientific experimentation. Ethical issues in counselling are frequently nuanced and situation-specific. Teachers are encountered with various ethical issues based on students' age, emotional state, school environment, culture, and institutional expectation. So, the flexibility of a qualitative method is necessary. And, synthesis work enables the recognition of common threads and recurrent patterns in the literature.

As I was conducting the literature review, I noted common themes emerging in the various articles I found: confidentiality, emotional involvement, communication skills, counselling effectiveness and teacher bias. These common themes became the foundation of my analysis and discussion.

The reason why qualitative method has also been used for this study is because it seeks to make a conceptual contribution to educational ethics. The study looks at the nature of ethical issues teachers face while practicing teacher-led counselling and the support systems they need while doing it ethically and professionally.

Research Design:

This study adopts a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is chosen when researcher intends to explain and analyze a specific problem in detail without controlling variables and performing experimental tasks. So the basic aim of this research is to describe the ethical issues related to teacher led counselling in elementary school level and analyze its impact on teachers behaviors and decision making.

The descriptive design enables the researcher to examine the problem in the natural setting of learning. Today's teachers are no longer just to deliver academic content to their students but are in fact expected to do a lot more.

Teachers are gradually taking on the role of a counselor, a psycho-therapist. For this reason, the descriptive design would help the researcher shed light on many ethical issues in details. Another key reason is that the research is book-based, literal, and interpretative. Data is not collected through scales,

questionnaires, and interviews but the findings of existing, available, and relevant research books are utilized. By employing ways of descriptive analysis, the researcher was able to carry out comparison, to find out the results that were common and to interpret them in a critical manner.

The design also permitted an exploration of the relevant theoretical perspectives underlying the world of teacher counselling. Theories from education and psychology, like Rogers' humanistic psychology and Vygotsky's socio-cultural psychology, provide insight into the reasons for teachers' roles as emotional support for students. Same here, the ethical perspectives shed light on the boundaries of who can do what in counselling. The descriptive approach made this linking of theory and school practice possible.

In addition, Descriptive design provided us flexibility to investigate the more complicated problem. Because ethical dilemma is implemented based on case. It usually can be more than one real solution.

Teachers sometimes face the dilemma which to be obedient with confidentiality or let the student solve the problem for safety consideration. This kind of problems need explanation and interpretation. So, descriptive design was appropriate. The descriptive design assisted the researcher to organize and plan the study based on... main themes: confidentiality, emotional competence, professional involvement, language proficiency, and cultural and teacher's competence. These themes were linked to the research aims and questions to construct a concise discussion.

Target Population:

The target population of this study consists mainly of elementary school teachers who are involved in providing emotional support, guidance, and counselling-related assistance to students. The reason behind choosing elementary school teachers is that children who study at this stage are emotionally fragile and need support and guidance from adults. So, teachers play an important role in both the academic and the emotional development of the children.

The study is mostly interested in teachers working in school settings, where there are little or no access to, professional counselling. When these students have personal, emotional or behavioral problems, teachers are often the first to approach and this way are then often called upon to undertake counselling duties even if they are not qualified in this field.

In addition, the study can be viewed as indirectly related to educational institutions, to teacher training programs, and to policy makers, as they establish a setup for counselling, ethical standards and teacher training in the school. Even so, the primary focus of the research is on elementary school teachers, as they regularly interact with children and are the most probable audience for ethical counselling reasons. Range of sample was for elementary education because early childhood is regarded as vital stage of emotional, social, and psychological development.

Ethical failures at this stage may influence students' confidence faith emotion, and educational experience. So it is extremely vital to realize the ethical problems met by elementary school teachers.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size:

The study uses purposive sampling for the selection of literature and academic sources. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting materials in a strategic way to meet the needs of the research. The selection of sources in this study is So driven by the needs of the study; namely to include sources that feature reference to teacher-led counselling, the ethics of education, the specific needs of the school, emotional support and ethical decision-making in schools.

The selected sample included:

- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Educational research papers
- Counselling ethics documents
- Academic books
- International organizational reports
- Psychological and educational theories

The literature chosen publications from different writers/organizations, namely Rogers, Vygotsky, Pianta, Nodding's, Studer, Lai-Yeung, and Plexousakis. UNESCO, WHO, ACA and ASCA. These were chosen due to their relevance to my research about the ethical considerations in teacher counselling and educational aspects.

Selection criteria for the literature sample was decided by the appropriateness of the content and robustness of the data, not by the number of materials available. The search was kept relevant to focus on any issues related to counselling ethics, teacher obligations, emotional support to students and primary schooling.. Items which were largely insignificant or irrelevant were screened out.

The choice of purposive sampling was justified in this research. The reason is the research was aimed to gather significant and detailed information about the various sources of reference material to the researcher instead of randomly selecting the sources to study.

With defined literature, the quality, relevance and academic standard of the study are preserved.

Research Hypothesis:

Despite the current study being qualitative research, largely explorative, it is still based on a few assumptions about teacher-counselling and ethical dilemmas in elementary schools.

This research presumes that teachers who have counselling duties at the elementary level face many ethical dilemmas because they lack or have limited formal counselling training, teach with little or no institutional support, and use ambiguous professional ethics.

Experts say Confidentiality, emotional attachment, professionalism and personal bias shape teachers' counselling practices and impact on their ability to solve dilemmas. A second assumption that this research is based on is that the demand on teachers to offer emotional support to students is continually increasing because of the apparent lack of professional counseling provided in many schools.

Teachers are so, positioned into an ethical dilemma without being given the training in counseling. These additional assumption rests on the presumption that training, ethical considerations and institutional support can enhance teachers' capacity to manage counselling issues in a more competent and ethical manner. These assumptions drove the focus of the research and next informed the literature review.

Research Instruments:

Document analysis is the primary research tool of this study. Document analysis is a qualitative research method which involves examining and making sense of the content of written documents.

The researcher analyzed different forms of academic and professional documents including:

- Journal articles
- Educational reports
- Counselling ethics frameworks
- Books
- Research studies
- Institutional publications

These documents provided lot of information about such things as ethical counselling, caring-system, tutor's duties and the difficulty in learning.

Document analysis was used as the study is based on secondary data rather than being in direct contact with the clients. Document analysis enabled the researcher to identify common themes, compare academic perspectives and critically analyze issues of ethics for the literature.

The two documents were extensively re-read to facilitate their correct interpretation. Notable concepts arguments quotations and results were marked and categorized based on research questions and objectives. The use of document analysis gave the researcher the opportunity to draw a link between the classroom issues faced by teachers and theory. Ethical systems and counselling theories were discussed related to authentic classroom concerns.

Pilot Study:

Pretests, pilots and rehearsals are usually conducted before the main research process by researchers to pilot or test the research instruments and procedures to be employed. As qualitative document analysis together with secondary data, this study did not require a pilot test or pretest. Though the researcher also conducted a starter review of some selected Journal articles and counselling setups of the topic: Teacher led counselling.

This was a preliminary review to establish if the literature available was useful with the topic and whether it covered the ethical issues embedded in the research questions. The early reading also provided the researcher with the overview of the core areas and direction of the study.

By having an initial read the researcher was able to determine the confidentiality, emotional

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

involvement, professional boundaries and communication skills and teacher competence were the issues commonly raised.

On top of that, the first reading stage clarified the overall outlook of the research by narrowing and streamlining the scope of the scope of reviewing literatures to be studied and reading without going to non-related literatures.

It helped the researcher comprehend the depth of the topic and structure the literature review and analysis. Although there was no requirement to conduct a formal pilot study for this research, the initial investigation into the literature proved useful in establishing the structure and direction of the study.

Validity of Instruments:

Validity scale points to the level in which the instruments used sought to address the research topic and questions. The validity is upheld as each academic source used was constructively selected by the author to cross examine the research.

In choosing research literature, the researcher relied on peer-reviewed journal articles, well-known educational theories, professional counselling ethics guidelines, and reports from international agencies to establish academic integrity and relevance.

Only those items directly related to teacher-administered counselling, educational ethics and emotional support were incorporated. Content validity was achieved in that the literature used supported the broad areas of the research problem, which were illustrated through the reviewed literature.

These areas were confidentiality, ethical decisions, professional boundaries emotion communication skills, counselling skills and institutional support. The researcher cross-referenced information from various sources as to reconfirm the validity of ideas. Is was also triangulated with different angles and perspectives in order that the research would not be one sided and biased. In addition, validity was assured by ongoing link between research question, the literature review and method. All aspects of the study tied in directly with the more general subject of teachers conducting counseling with children in the primary school.

Reliability of Instrument:

The concern of reliability relates the extent to which the research process and its findings can be trusted. All the sources I use in conducting this research are genuine, reliable and academically acknowledged.

The researcher chose literature from well renowned researchers, academics and published journals from educational studies and from professional societies for counselling.

These sources are used in educational and psychological studies and Because of this add to the validity of the research. Reliability was preserved by reading over and analyzing the chosen papers several times. Common ethics issues and themes were often returned to and discussed in many papers which gave confidence that the findings were reliable.

And, the researcher used an organized method of gathering and processing data. Documents were adopted based on a set of precision factors linking to the subject being studied including pertinence reliability association. Those unnecessary documents were automatically abandoned to keep the research coherent. In addition, citation and referencing were ensured throughout research process. It is important for transparency, academic honesty, and correctness of information.

To try to reduce any personal bias in the interpretation of the literature, the researcher also made sure that any interpretation or conclusions made using the literature were based solely on what was found in the specific sources chosen.

Method of Data Collection:

The research consisted of found secondary data collection. Secondary data is information that had been gathered and published by other researcher's organizations schools and academics.

The data for this research was collected from:

- Academic journal articles
- Educational reports
- Counselling ethics documents
- Books
- Scholarly publications
- International organizational reports

- **Online academic databases**

The researcher made a search for literature on teacher counselling, educational ethics, emotion aid, professional boundaries, ethics of confidentiality, interpersonal communication skills and counselling competence. Following the selection of sources, the researcher scrutinized the documents paying close attention to content. Key points findings arguments and quotations were highlighted and organized into categories data says questions and general research purpose.

Data collection was involved in comparing different theoretical positions also. For example, the researcher looked for the emphasis of a few writers to the emotional parts of counselling, the lack of responsibilities to the institutional ethics. It helped the researcher gather comparative and balanced data on the topic. The information was then critically interpreted and arranged systematically to form the literature review and discussion of the study.

Ethical Consideration:

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were highly regarded. While it was not an interview-based study and there were no participants to ethically deal with, ethical academic practices were observed.

Firstly, all data extracted from books, journal papers, reports and electronic resources was referenced and sourced correctly. Correct credit was given to the author and resolution was reached to avoid plagiarism and infringement issues.

Secondly, because of the importance of the literature study, the researcher recognized the fairness and accuracy of writing about the literature. Author's argument and research were presented sincerely and accurately.

Thirdly, the researcher did not draw any biased or unsupported conclusions. There was no interpretation or discussion which could not be supported or verified through the literature.

Confidentiality and privacy was assumed to be maintained indirectly through the responsible use of academic materials, as the study did not have any interviews or collection of personal data, and so no participant information was used. And of course, the researcher always knew that the topic being discussed was the ethical issues of counselling children are the child's emotional health, trust and the child's safety.

Finally, the conversations were taken cautiously during the study. Lastly, the researcher upheld justice and responsibility throughout all phases of the research. Given that the topic of the study is ethics in education, it was deemed crucial to adhere to ethic research dimensions.

Data Analysis

Objectives of the present study were to investigate the ethical issues of teacher-initiated counselling in the elementary schools. The basic data for the present study was gathered from various second-hand sources. That was, journal articles, counselling ethics systems, educational reports, researchers' findings etc. The data gathered from all these secondary sources was content analyzed qualitatively.

The analysis demonstrated that the teaching profession has experienced a gradual but unmistakable transformation recently. Traditionally, teachers' role was solely to conduct classroom lessons with various academic subjects, whereas nowadays, teachers are trying to provide care not only for the emotional and social needs of the young students but for their behavior problems as well (Roy et al, 2004). Yet, elementary school pupils are a very emotionally unstable and that's why needy group and, from this, the teachers often become the first choice in extremis for the young pupils. However, the literature has demonstrated that a huge number of teachers lack professional and more Mainly counselling skills and usual ethical preparation, which appears to be the most interesting element to have been unraveled from every researcher.

A further common theme, identified by the analysis, was that of professional boundaries and role conflict. The literature reviewed suggested that teachers encountered difficulty in juggling their role as an authority figure alongside their supportive role as a counsellor.

Teachers have to manage the conflicting demands of upholding discipline and classroom control, but also developing emotionally trusting relationships. The analysis identified that these different duties could cause emotional and professional strain. Some studies suggested that teachers could become emotionally over involved with students whereas others identified that teachers found it difficult to distance themselves during emotionally challenging moments. Literature tended to repeatedly suggest that irregular professional boundaries could bring ethical issues and detrimental counselling techniques.

These three studies also suggested that affective factors (More exactly, emotional involvement) can

profoundly impact on teachers' decision-making. Several of the texts described how emotional involvement in teaching children with emotional or behavioral difficulty (EBD) can evoke stress sympathy resentment and emotional depletion.

Researchers suggested that strong emotional involvement may influence the fairness with which teachers judge situations. In some cases, teachers may be unaware of their inclination toward subtly unfair distinctions between students because of their emotional bonds or personal sympathies. Emotional control was seen as a critical feature of ethical counselling.

Personal bias and cultural influences in schools was another prominent theme from the analysis. The literature review found that teacher's personal biases based on culture and personal experiences could shape their perceptions of student behavior and emotional problems. It was also theorized that teachers may form assumptions about students which could be influenced by parental background or status or GCSE grades. These types of bias could impact on the fairness of the counselling support given to students. The results also identified communication skills as an integral element of the counselling process.

Teachers' communication skills are seen as a key part of creating a trusting relationship, and the counselling process calls for "active listening, empathic responsiveness, and restraint of patience, non-judgmental attitudes and statements". The analysis revealed that teachers are often not trained in the communication skills involved in counselling. For example, some teachers used directive (authoritative) communication techniques that did not foster the development of trust.

The greatest common denominator arising from this analysis was that teachers had very limited formal skills and knowledge in the area of counselling. Hardly any of the studies reviewed pointed out that teachers need good training for counselling work. The evidence in the literature established that course content in teacher education programs highlight most teacher skills on learning from textbooks and delivering lesson methods.

Only in a few cases that teachers themselves identified the need for professional training in this area. The findings also underscored the crucial role of professional setting and educational policies. Most of the studies suggested that teachers are often faced with emotional and behavioral problems in schools without adequate counselling models or ethical standards.

Sometimes teachers have to make tough ethical choices on their own. The literature reiterated the importance of developing adequate counselling policies, ethical guidelines, referral procedures and support systems. Lack of institutional regulation was one of the key reasons leading to teachers' ethical un-certainty. A further significant conclusion from the analysis is that most of the existing literature examines either only general counselling ethics or mainly secondary schools, with only a few studies focusing on elementary school level and the ethical issues involved. This apparent void in the literature adds weight to the significance of this study. Elementary school students are more vulnerable emotionally and need more guidance and protection from adults than students in other levels.

Overall, the data analysis demonstrated that the ethical issues that teachers face in providing counselling to students are all connected to lack of training, emotional involvement confidentiality role confusion, communication issues, personal biases and lack of institutional support. The literature illustrates the importance of teachers' contribution to students' emotional well-being, though there is a need for teachers to be ethically guided, competently trained and professionally supported to carry out such duties safely and effectively.

Discussion

This current study investigated the ethical issues linked to teacher- led counselling at the primary school level. The evidence gathered from the literature suggests that teachers nowadays are being asked to take on the role of therapists (i.e. offer emotional, behavioral and psychological assistance) besides their traditional teaching mandate. This emerging development is mostly stark at schools with little or no access to professional counselling services. This leaves many teachers administering counselling tasks without the requisite counselling's skills and ethical foundation.

This literature review shows that teacher counselling can give rise to numerous ethical issues for professional boundaries confidentiality sensitivity, communication skills, personal bias and moral decision-making. Though these issues are all very much related with the study's research questions and aims. A key finding from these studies is that confidentiality is a continuing, paramount ethical concern for teachers.

Elementary students tend to confide in teachers because they are considered caring and trustworthy adults, but teachers struggle with knowing when to uphold confidentiality and when to break confidentiality for the safety of the student. Several literature sources reiterated that younger students may not understand disclosure and the ramifications of disclosure, further complicating ethical decisions.

These findings also suggest that teachers are conflicted in their roles as teachers and counsellors. Teachers have to discipline, assess and punish students and also at the same time are supposed to maintain a safe and comforting relationship with the students. This imbalance or incongruence of roles possibly causes tension and conflict in teachers' roles as they are asked to show empathy and emotional support one minute and to command authority the next.

The literature also points out how blurred boundaries of professionalism could cause the teachers' lack of objectivity and judgment. Another significant result from the literature search is the importance of emotional involvement on teacher's management and decision making. Teachers, who teach emotionally disturbed or behaviorally disturbed students, live with high level of emotional anguish frustration desperation, sympathy, and bankruptcy.

They become overly attached emotionally and over emotional attachment contributes to subjective decision making rather than professional judgment. It was also found that emotional drain and lack of internal support may influence on the teachers' effectiveness of counselling. The research conclusion also suggested that teachers' decision-making tended to be affected by their personal conviction, ethnicity and social values. Teachers would unconsciously make up ideas about students using their behaviour, family circumstances, school achievements and social class. This would possibly lead to inequality and inequality in the counselling. The finding highlighted the significance of sensitivity of teachers on personal and cultural issues.

Communication skills were also identified as a key thing in the findings. Counselling takes holding active listening skills, displaying empathy and trust, practicing patience and showing support through communication. Yet, teachers often are ill-prepared in their communication skills of counselling, and at times use a somewhat-judgemental authoritative mode of communication which may act as a barrier for a student to communicate their concerns freely.

A further finding is the teachers' lack of counselling preparation and therapeutic competence. It was the conclusion of most literature reviewed that educators need to be equipped with counselling knowledge, and hold principles of professionalism and emotional empathy to administer effective self-disclosed interventions.

The articles demonstrated again and again that pre-service training programs predominantly offer information related to technology of instruction not counselling ethics or emotional support. The findings produced also demonstrated the significance of institutional issues and educational policies. Numerous reports from teachers revealed that teachers are often given the task of caring for their students' emotions/behavioral problems without research-based counselling guidelines or support. Teachers are so required to make difficult ethical decisions on their own. The literature was emphatic about the importance of such policies in schools.

Overall, the discussion reveals that while there are advantages to teacher-led counselling they are not without drawbacks; children's day-to-day experience with the school system and their familiar relationships with teachers can result in a more trusting and emotionally supportive environment through teacher-led counselling; it can also open up other issues of confidentiality, ethics and emotional decision-making in the absence of adequate standards and training.

Summary of the Study:

The current study examined the ethical issues of teacher-led counselling in elementary schools. Over the past decade, teachers have taken on more than an instructional role but have begun providing emotional, social and behavioral counselling to their students. Since elementary school children are so emotionally vulnerable and dependent on adults, teachers are often the first source of human understanding and comfort.

Even so, most teachers are asked to undertake counselling tasks without prepared skills or appropriate training to properly address the issues. This research examined the most common ethical dilemmas faced by teachers when working in counseling situations in schools. Using a qualitative approach to certain secondary literature, including journal articles, educational reports, counselor ethics literature and academic journal articles, the research found some of the recurring ethical issues in teacher counseling.

The results of this research show that confidentiality is one of the areas that teachers find to be one of

the most difficult challenges in the Ethical Dimensions of their job. Teachers often find it difficult to balance the trust and keeping information private with the obligation to secure the safety and wellbeing of the student. Equally important is the issue of professional boundaries, which teachers often find difficult to balance their authorizing and counselling roles.

This research revealed that other issues like teacher's emotional capital, personal preconceptions, cultural implications and lack of counselling skills contributed importantly toward teachers' ethical practices. Teachers' emotional disposition and personal beliefs could make them impose their own expectations and values on the way they treat students. In addition, the result showed that communication skills empathy active listening skills and one's ethic of professional practice are also crucial elements for good counselling. Another important discovery of the research was the absence of professional counselling training and institutional support for the teachers. Teachers are often left to deal with emotionally troubled students on their own without CEC, professional counselling models, ethical training, or institutional support. This study drew attention to the need of Counselling education, ethical training, Professional development, and Institutional support in schools.

Overall, the study showed that teacher-led counselling had become an integral part of primary school education. Teachers may be very important in the provision of emotional support, but professional standards and institutional support are needed to provide safe, responsible and ethically acceptable care.

Conclusion:

The current study found that the school based counselling provided by teachers has become an integral element of elementary school education due to the rising emotional, social, and behavioral needs of students. Due to the changing role of teachers they are now required to address children's emotional concerns and support students in the school context without professional training or related ethics education in counselling. The results of the study reveal that teachers encounter multiple ethical concerns when working with counselling processes.

Concerns about privacy boundaries feelings communication personal judgment, and choosing to act ethically were echoed in the literature. When working at an elementary level, this concern becomes more intensified because of the emotional nature of the working with young children, who may not always be aware of the potential impact of sharing personal information.

The study further argues that without appropriate training and institutional support to guide the process, the teachers overall are more prone to compromise on ethics and get involved in unethical decisions. Teachers are left alone in dealing with emotionally charged situations without any guiding counselling policy and professional support and this can cause the experiences of unawareness, emotional disturbance and difficulty on the part of teachers to adhere to counselling ethics. Meanwhile, the research reveals the promising role of teacher counsellors.

Being in daily contact with students, teachers often have advantages of early detection of emotional problems, behavioral changes and identity crises. When provided with adequate ethics awareness, counselling skills and institutional support, teachers can work as helpful agent in promoting students' psychological health.

Therefore, the findings highlight the importance of equipping teachers with better teacher education programs, providing teachers with further professional counselling training, the creation of ethical codes, and strengthening support from within schools. Schools and educational authorities should realize that teachers' roles now include responsibilities of counselling and Because of this offer the necessary backup.

In Conclusion, ethical counselling programme are crucial for establishing secure, supportive and child-focused learning environments. Teacher induced counselling is able to impact the emotional and educational development of learners positively, only under the guidance of professional ethics, adequate training and responsible institutional infrastructure.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Teacher education programs should include counselling ethics, emotional support skills, and ethical decision-making within their curriculum.
2. Schools should develop clear counselling policies and ethical guidelines for teachers handling students' emotional and behavioral concerns.

3. Professional development workshops should be organized regularly to improve teachers' communication skills, emotional management, and counselling competence.
4. Schools should provide proper referral systems and access to professional counsellors whenever serious emotional or psychological cases arise.
5. Teachers should be encouraged to practice self-reflection and cultural sensitivity in order to reduce personal bias during counselling situations.
6. Educational policymakers should recognize the increasing counselling responsibilities of teachers and provide institutional support accordingly.
7. Future research should focus more specifically on elementary-level counselling because existing literature in this area remains limited.

REFERENCES:

- American Counseling Association. (2014). ACA code of ethics. American Counseling Association. <https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>
- American School Counselor Association. (2016). Ethical standards for school counselors. American School Counselor Association. <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/standards/ethical-standards>
- Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callanan, P. (2011). Issues and ethics in the helping professions (8th Ed.). Brooks/Cole.
- [ers-Emotional-and-Educational-Reactions-toward-Children-with-Behavioral-Problems-Implication-for-School-Based-Counseling-Work-with-Teachers.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330223933_Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers)
- Health Psychology Consultancy. (2015). Ethical decision making framework in counselling and psychology practice. https://healthpsychologyconsultancy.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/944_033_ethical_decision_making.pdf
- <https://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/bk/article/view/8>Kourkoutas, E., & Xavier, M. R. (2010). Counseling children at risk in a multicultural world: An ecosystemic approach. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 32(4), 245–257. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-010-9108-8>
- Lai-Yeung, S. W. C. (2014). The need for guidance and counselling training for teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 113, 36–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.008>
- Naper, M. A., Younus, M., & Zaman, M. (2025). Examining the beliefs and practices of Pakistani secondary school ESL teachers about reading instruction. *Review Journal of Social Psychology & Social Works*, 3(2), 873–882. <https://socialworksreview.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/245>
- Noddings, N. (2005). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Pianta, R. C. (1999). Enhancing relationships between children and teachers. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10314-000>
- Plexousakis, S., Kourkoutas, E., Giovazolias, T., Chatira, K., & Nikolopoulos, D. (2019). Teachers' emotional and educational reactions toward children with behavioral problems: Implication for school-based counseling work with teachers. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stefanos-Plexousakis-3/publication/330223933_Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers/links/5c41a4da299bf12be3d0a2be/Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers/links/5c41a4da299bf12be3d0a2be/Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stefanos-Plexousakis-3/publication/330223933_Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers/links/5c41a4da299bf12be3d0a2be/Teachers'_Emotional_and_Educational_Reactions_toward_Children_with_Behavioral_Problems_Implication_for_School-Based_Counseling_Work_with_Teachers.pdf)
- Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Shertzer, B., & Stone, S. C. (1980). *Fundamentals of guidance* (4th ed.). Houghton Mifflin.
- Studer, J. R. (2005). *The professional school counselor: An advocate for students*. Thomson Brooks/Cole.
- Teacher counselling competence and ethical awareness in elementary education. (2023). Jurnal BK UPY.
- UNESCO. (2019). *Guidance and counselling in schools: Educational support services report*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- UNICEF. (2021). *Child-friendly schools manual*. United Nations Children's Fund. <https://www.unicef.org>
- University of Connecticut. (2010). *Ethical considerations in educational counselling and student welfare*. https://digitalcommons.lib.uconn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=nera_2010
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

- World Health Organization. (2020). Mental health and psychosocial considerations for children during educational development. <https://www.who.int>
- Yusuf, M., & Nurihsan, J. (2021). Ethical issues in school counselling practices and teacher responsibilities. *European Journal of Counseling Psychology*. <https://ejcop.scholasticahq.com/article/17019.pdf>