

**ACTUATING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES IN  
SCHOOLS WITH IMBALANCED COUNSELOR-STUDENT RATIOS:  
INSIGHTS FROM A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION STUDY**

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**Abstract:** This study analyzes the implementation of management functions, particularly the actuating aspect, in the delivery of guidance and counseling services in schools with an unbalanced counselor-student ratio. Using a qualitative case study approach, participants were selected purposively from seven Guidance and Counseling teachers at junior, senior, and vocational high schools in West Java who directly manage disproportionate student ratios. Data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGD), which were audio- and video-recorded and transcribed to ensure data accuracy and validity. The data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which involves data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show a significant ratio gap (1:450-1:850) compared to the ideal 1:150 set by Permendikbud No. 111 of 2014, resulting in the dominance of responsive services and limited implementation of basic and individual planning services. Despite this, teachers adapted the actuating function through modified service methods, stakeholder collaboration, and the use of technology to improve efficiency. Partial effectiveness was found in responsive and career guidance services, contributing to improved student attendance and success. The study recommends strengthening policies by adding Guidance and Counseling teachers, allocating classical guidance hours, and developing a Guidance and Counseling Management Information System to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of management functions in supporting holistic student development.

**Keywords:** actuating; guidance and counseling management; guidance and counseling services; counselor-student ratio

**INTRODUCTION**

Management is a discipline concerned with the effective and efficient utilization of human resources to achieve desired objectives (Anisa Indriyani et al., 2023). Within the context of guidance and counseling, strong management is essential because effective

counseling services cannot be realized without an efficient managerial system (Alfaris et al., 2021). The application of management functions—commonly conceptualized through the POAC framework (Muyasa, E, 2009) (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling)—serves as a critical foundation to ensure that counseling services operate optimally, from planning to evaluation (Asni, 2025). Implementing management functions in school counseling must be carried out meticulously, including the development of service materials for students, to ensure the overall effectiveness of counseling programs (Muhtadi & Suherman, 2024).

The management of counseling services in Indonesia has undergone a significant transformation, shifting from a traditional approach to a comprehensive, preventive model that is oriented toward students' developmental tasks (Zulfikar et al., 2023). This framework is formally legitimized through the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 111 of 2014 on Guidance and Counseling at Primary and Secondary Education Levels (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). The regulation provides a new governance structure for school counseling, encompassing planning, organizing, and program control (Zamroni & Rahardjo, 2014). The comprehensive counseling program mandated by this regulation includes four major components: Basic Services, Interest and Individual Planning Services, Responsive Services, and System Support Services—all designed to promote optimal student development.

Despite the comprehensive regulatory framework established by Permendikbud No. 111 of 2014 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014), empirical studies on school counseling management in Indonesia have largely focused on normative standards, ideal program structures, and general management functions, such as planning and organizing (Zamroni & Rahardjo, 2014; Zulfikar et al., 2023). While these studies provide an important conceptual foundation, they tend to underrepresent how counseling management—particularly the actuating function implemented in schools operating under structurally non-ideal conditions. As a result, there remains a limited understanding of how counselors translate policy mandates into concrete practices when confronted with extreme constraints.

This gap becomes more pronounced in the context of disproportionate counselor-student ratios, which in some schools far exceed the ideal standard of 1:150 and may reach ratios as extreme as 1:850 (Delima et al., 2023). Such conditions do not merely indicate a shortage of human resources but constitute a structural disruption that fundamentally alters the philosophy of counseling services. Under these circumstances, the preventive and developmental orientation emphasized in comprehensive counseling models (Ramasepa et al., 2025) is often displaced by reactive and curative practices, as counselors are compelled to prioritize urgent cases over basic services (Muhtadi & Suherman, 2024). Moreover, limited facilities and restricted time allocations—where counselors lack fixed classroom hours or are only assigned incidental schedules—further constrain the actuating process and reinforce negative stigma that counselors are “not working,” despite their heavy crisis-oriented workload (Anisa Indriyani et al., 2023; Ayu Fitria & Reza Septian, 2024; Fitriani et al., 2022; Novianto et al., 2013; Nugroho et al., 2021).

Although several studies have acknowledged these structural challenges, existing research has not sufficiently explored how counselors actively adapt, survive, and strategize within such extreme conditions. Prior investigations generally rely on policy analysis or quantitative descriptions of workload and ratios, which are inadequate for capturing the contextual decision-making, professional judgment, and adaptive mechanisms counselors enact in daily practice (Alfaris et al., 2021; Asni, 2025). Consequently, there is a clear need for research that examines counseling management from practitioners' perspectives, focusing on how actuating functions are reinterpreted and operationalized in situ.

To address this gap, the present study adopts a qualitative approach to provide an in-depth description of counseling management implementation, with particular emphasis on the actuating function under conditions of disproportionate counselor–student ratios. By exploring the experiences of school counselors in West Java, this study seeks to uncover the survival mechanisms and adaptive strategies employed, including service modification, prioritization of program components, and cross-sector collaboration with teachers, school leaders, parents, and external institutions (Muhtadi & Suherman, 2024; Zulfikar et al., 2023). Through this qualitative lens, the study aims to generate context-sensitive insights that complement existing normative frameworks and contribute practical recommendations for improving counseling management systems in schools where ideal conditions remain unattainable.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method to obtain an in-depth understanding of actuating strategies in school guidance and counseling services under conditions of disproportionate counselor–student ratios. According to Barbour (2018), focus groups have become a well-established and widely recognized qualitative method, reducing the need for researchers to justify their methodological choice to colleagues.

The FGD was conducted with seven guidance and counseling teachers in West Java, selected purposively based on their direct experience in managing imbalanced counselor–student ratios. The participants consisted of one junior high school counselor, two senior high school counselors, and four vocational high school counselors.

The FGD was audio- and video-recorded and transcribed to ensure data accuracy. The discussion questions focused on counselor–student ratios, service priorities, implementation strategies, and forms of collaboration undertaken to manage these challenges. The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach to identify emerging patterns and categories. The analytical process followed three stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). The findings were then categorized into six major thematic aspects that reflect the overall dynamics of counseling service management in schools: (1) the condition of counselor–student ratios, (2) service priorities and strategic focus, (3) actuating strategies, (4) collaboration and system support, (5) service effectiveness, and (6) proposed solutions and innovations. The researcher served as the primary instrument throughout all stages of data collection and analysis.

To ensure the validity and accuracy of the data, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) process was fully documented using audio and video recordings. These recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim to prevent data loss and minimize researcher interpretation bias during the analysis process 1,2. Furthermore, the rigor of the data was maintained through the interactive analysis model by Miles and Huberman (1994), which involves continuous verification throughout the data reduction, display, and conclusion-drawing stages to ensure the findings accurately reflect the participants' perspectives."

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the analysis derived from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted with guidance and counseling teachers from different educational levels—junior high school, senior high school, and vocational high school. The discussion centered on how guidance and counseling teachers activate counseling services in schools with imbalanced counselor–student ratios, as well as the adaptive strategies they employ to maintain service effectiveness amid limited resources.

Table 1 summarizes the FGD analysis, providing an overview of the relationship between field findings, their interpretations, and the recurring patterns that emerged from GC teachers' practices in managing services under non-ideal staffing ratios.

Table 1. Data Analysis (Summary of Field Findings, Interpretations, and Emergent Patterns)

Research Focus / Aspect	Field Findings (Data Reduction)	Analysis / Interpretation (Data Display)	Conclusions & Emerging Patterns (Conclusion Drawing)
Counselor–Student Ratio	The ratio varies: 1:200 (SMA), 1:300 (SMK). In many schools, BK teachers also handle additional tasks (BOS operator, homeroom duties).	A highly disproportionate counselor–student ratio significantly increases workload and affects the effectiveness of all BK service components.	The counselor–student ratio is highly unbalanced and impacts service quality across all components.
Priorities and Service Strategies	Most schools prioritize Responsive Services. Basic services are delivered through limited opportunities such as group sessions, assemblies, or when teachers are	Schools tend to focus on urgent issues due to limited time, overshadowing comprehensive planning and developmental services.	Responsive services become the dominant focus under resource constraints.

Research Focus / Aspect	Field Findings (Data Reduction)	Analysis / Interpretation (Data Display)	Conclusions & Emerging Patterns (Conclusion Drawing)
	absent.		
Actuating Strategies (Service Implementation)	Modified services: combining large-group guidance, collaborating with subject teachers, adjusting session length, etc.	BK teachers adapt implementation strategies to ensure essential services reach students despite limitations.	Adaptive actuating strategies are crucial for maintaining BK service continuity under non-ideal ratios.
Collaboration and System Support	Collaboration with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, school leadership, BNN, health centers, police, and campus partners. Also supported by HRD from industry (for SMK).	Collaboration strengthens the BK position within the school system and expands service reach and effectiveness.	Cross-sector collaboration enhances service effectiveness despite ratio challenges.
Effectiveness and Success Indicators	Basic services remain suboptimal; priorities lean toward handling urgent cases. Positive indicators: decreased student violations, improved consultation access, increased SNBP achievement.	Effectiveness is partial – developmental services are limited, but responsive services show measurable outcomes.	Service effectiveness increases when adaptive strategies and collaboration are strengthened.
Solutions and Innovations	Proposals: increasing BK teacher allocation, improving facilities, strengthening SMK Career Centers, reducing non-GC administrative burdens, and	Solutions emphasize structural improvements and reduced administrative load to allow BK teachers to focus on student services.	Practical and realistic solutions center on increasing personnel, reducing administrative tasks, and improving GC program design.

Research Focus / Aspect	Field Findings (Data Reduction)	Analysis / Interpretation (Data Display)	Conclusions & Emerging Patterns (Conclusion Drawing)
	designing structured programs. BK		

## 1. Disparity Between the Ideal Ratio and Field Realities, and the Challenges Encountered

### a. Ratio Disparities

The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 111 of 2014 stipulates that the ideal ratio for providing Guidance and Counseling (GC) services at the junior high school, senior high school, and vocational high school levels is one counselor for every 150 students. This ratio is intended to ensure that counselors can deliver all service components proportionally and continuously. However, findings from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) reveal that actual conditions in schools deviate significantly from this standard. Nearly all participating schools experience an imbalanced counselor–student ratio, which directly affects workload, service effectiveness, and the professional image of GC teachers within the school environment. A comparison of counselor–student ratios across several FGD participant schools is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Counselor–Student Ratio Data of FGD Participant Schools

No.	School Name	Number of Counselors	Number of Students	Counselor–Student Ratio	Notes / Key Remarks
1	SMK Negeri 1 Kandang Haur (Indramayu)	2	±1,000	1 : 500	Services focus heavily on responsive interventions; public perception of BK performance remains low.
2	SMA Negeri 1 Purwakarta	3	1,300–1,400	±1 : 450	Basic services are less optimal; counselors struggle to demonstrate measurable outcomes.
3	SMK Negeri 1 Purwakarta	5	2,387	±1 : 480	Responsive services dominate; no fixed classroom guidance hours due to a dense curriculum.
4	SMK Negeri Kasom Malang (Subang)	1	±600	1 : 600	Only one counselor has a BK background; prioritizes responsive services.
5	SMK Negeri 1 Cipanas (Cianjur)	3	±2,100	1 : 630–850	Basic services are delivered through group guidance and homeroom periods.

No.	School Name	Number of Counselors	Number of Students	Counselor-Student Ratio	Notes / Key Remarks
6	SMP in Pangandaran District	3-4	±826	1 : 250-300	One counselor also serves as BOS operator; basic services remain suboptimal.
7	SMA Negeri 17 Bekasi	5	±1,020	±1 : 200	Approaches the ideal ratio; basic and responsive services can operate more proportionally.

The counselor-student ratio reported by FGD participants falls far short of the ideal standard mandated by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 111 of 2014, Article 10, which stipulates that one school counselor should serve a maximum of 150 students. Field conditions show extreme ratios ranging from 1:450 to 1:850. As Weno from SMK Negeri 1 Kandang Haur stated, "We only have two counselors for 1,000 students, meaning one counselor handles around 500 students." Similarly, Rithma Yustika from SMKN 1 Cipanas explained, "We have only three counselors for 2,100 students. One counselor can handle between 630 and 850 students." This disparity results in limited time allocation, case overload, and reduced implementation of core guidance curriculum services. Siti Fathonah (SMAN 1 Purwakarta) further noted, "We cannot optimize all services, especially classroom guidance. In the end, we only focus on services that are visible, such as responsive interventions."

These findings highlight a significant gap between regulatory standards and practical realities. According to Article 10 of Regulation 111/2014, such imbalanced ratios potentially hinder the effectiveness of comprehensive guidance and counseling services, which require adequate personal reach between counselors and students. The literature supports this claim, showing that counselor-student ratios in many Indonesian schools remain far from ideal (Mawarny & Yunus, 2023) and that one of the most urgent improvements needed is the recruitment of additional counseling personnel (Zulfikar et al., 2023). The mismatch between the number of counselors available and the scope of services required substantially undermines the optimal functioning of guidance and counseling management—planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising— which should form the foundation of high-quality service delivery (Rahmad et al., 2025).

This imbalance, which contradicts the mandate of Article 10 of Regulation 111/2014, directly threatens the effectiveness of comprehensive school counseling services. Such services aim to promote students' optimal development and autonomy across personal, academic, social, and career domains (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). The success of these services depends heavily on counselors' capacity to personally reach and engage with students (Input), particularly through individual counseling, which is therapeutic in nature and requires focused attention (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014; Rahmad et al., 2025). When counselors are responsible for far more students than the prescribed standard, their ability to adequately attend to each student's unique issues is compromised,

disrupting problem identification, scheduling, and individualized intervention (Rahmad et al., 2025). Consequently, poor guidance and counseling management—stemming from insufficient human resources—can hinder schools from achieving inclusive education goals and from providing holistic student support (Mubarok, 2020; Rahmad et al., 2025).

#### **b. Challenges in Service Implementation (English Version – Journal Ready)**

The disparity between the actual counselor–student ratio and the ideal standard (1:150) mandated by Regulation No. 111 of 2014 of the Ministry of Education and Culture creates substantial challenges in implementing school guidance and counseling services. Findings from the FGD indicate that the current ratio ranges from 1:450 to 1:850, limiting counselors' ability to deliver the four mandated service components proportionally.

The most significant constraint emerges in the Basic Services component, which is preventive and classroom-based. As stated by Siti Fathonah (SMA Negeri 1 Purwakarta), "We cannot optimize all services, especially classroom guidance. In the end, we only work on services that are visible, such as responsive interventions." Consequently, counselors are compelled to prioritize reactive services over developmental ones, despite Article 6 of Regulation 111 emphasizing the need for a balanced implementation of basic services, individual planning, responsive services, and system support.

The disproportionate ratio also affects school counselors' professional image. Weno (SMK Negeri 1 Kandang Haur) noted, "The biggest challenge is the perception that school counselors are not working. In reality, responsive services like home visits require tremendous effort." This illustrates a gap between actual workload and public appreciation, contributing to limited institutional support (Nasution et al., 2023).

Overall, the non-ideal ratio shifts the orientation of school counseling services from preventive, developmental efforts toward problem-centered interventions. Although this reflects counselors' ability to provide services despite resource limitations, the reality remains misaligned with the intent of Regulation 111/2014, which mandates comprehensive services to support students' optimal development.

The extreme disparity between the ideal ratio (1:150 for secondary schools; Zamroni & Rahardjo, 2015) and real conditions (1:450 to 1:850) poses serious managerial challenges. Such an imbalance directly affects counselors' capacity to deliver the four major components of service—Basic Services, Individual Planning and Career Guidance, Responsive Services, and System Support—as mandated by Article 6 of the regulation. One of the most evident consequences is the inability to provide Basic Services, which ideally require 2 scheduled hours per class per week. As a result, counselors are forced to prioritize visible or reactive tasks, particularly individual problem handling, underscoring the urgent need for additional counseling personnel to ensure effective service management (Fitriani et al., 2022).

This imbalance also has broader implications, redirecting counseling practices from preventive development toward problem-centered service delivery. Such conditions contradict the principles of comprehensive guidance and counseling, which aim to support students' holistic and optimal development (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). The excessive workload resulting from the disproportionate ratio—including demands for home visits and high-intensity responsive services—ironically contributes to negative perceptions

that counselors “do not work,” a recurring stigma in school counseling practice (Saeful Anwar et al., 2025). Even though counselors continue to provide services under these constraints, the dominance of reactive tasks indicates that the fundamental goals of Regulation 111/2014 have not been fully realized.

Limited institutional support and insufficient human resources further hinder effective problem identification and individualized interventions, reducing the overall efficacy of school counseling services.

## **2. Imbalance Among Service Components and the Dominance of Responsive Services**

Regulation No. 111 of 2014 of the Ministry of Education and Culture stipulates that guidance and counseling services in schools must be implemented in proportion across four major components: Basic Services, Individual Planning and Career Guidance, Responsive Services, and System Support. At the senior secondary level (SMA/MA/SMK), the largest portion of service time is ideally allocated to Basic Services and Individual Planning, while Responsive Services and System Support are assigned smaller proportions. This structure is intended to ensure that school counseling services are not merely reactive but also preventive and developmental in enhancing students’ potential.

However, findings from the FGD indicate that, under an imbalanced counselor-student ratio, the composition of service delivery becomes disproportionate. Counselors devote the majority of their time to Responsive Services, while Basic Services and Individual Planning cannot be implemented optimally. As noted by Trya Achdisti Octaviana (SMKN 1 Purwakarta), “Each school counselor may handle up to five cases daily. So we prioritize responsive services because if they are not addressed immediately, they can escalate into bigger problems.” Similarly, Agus Kusmayadi (SMKN Kaso Malang) stated, “Responsive services always come first because the school’s paradigm still views counseling as a place for problematic students. We need to handle cases first to show that the counseling service exists.”

This situation reflects the actuating function through adaptive prioritization. School counselors mobilize their programs in response to urgent field needs to maintain the visibility and relevance of the counseling role within the school. Normatively, such action remains aligned with Article 2 of Regulation 111/2014, which emphasizes that counseling services help counselees overcome problems and achieve optimal development. Nonetheless, the imbalance among the four service components highlights a misalignment between the ideal ratio mandated by policy and the realities of school operations. This indicates the need for affirmative policy measures to restore the proportional distribution of counseling services in accordance with regulatory expectations.

## **3. Strategies for Modifying Basic Services and Individual Planning as a Form of Actuating**

Basic Services and Individual Planning—including specialization and career guidance—are intended to occupy a larger proportion of the overall counseling service structure. According to Regulation No. 111 of 2014, at the senior secondary level (SMA/SMK), these two components should comprise approximately 25–35% of total service time, while Responsive Services and System Support account for smaller portions. This

distribution underscores that the primary orientation of school counseling is not merely curative (problem-solving) but also preventive and developmental, aiming to enhance students' potential and support their future planning. Normatively, school counselors are expected to play a greater role in fostering self-awareness, autonomy, and career direction—rather than focusing predominantly on behavioral or disciplinary issues.

To maintain the implementation of Basic Services and Individual Planning amid severe ratios and time constraints, counselors adopt various contextual modifications within their schools. These strategies represent a practical manifestation of the actuating function—mobilizing resources creatively to achieve service objectives. As explained by Agus Kusmayadi, “We conduct large-group informative sessions in the hall, sometimes accommodating up to five classes at once.” Rithma Yustika added, “Every day, we run two to three small-group sessions outside regular class hours.” Meanwhile, Triadisti Octaviana stated, “We borrow instructional hours from productive subject teachers to enter the classroom, and we use WhatsApp groups to disseminate SNBP information.”

Such modifications—large-group sessions, small-group guidance, negotiated instructional hours, and the use of digital platforms—are consistent with Article 7(2) of Regulation 111, which permits flexibility in the methods used to deliver counseling services. These practices demonstrate that school counselors can apply the managerial principle of adaptive action, without abandoning the primary goal of supporting students' holistic development.

#### **4. Collaboration and System Support as Strategies for Strengthening Counseling Services**

Cross-sector collaboration has become a key strategy for ensuring the sustainability of school counseling services. School counselors establish partnerships with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, school leadership, and external institutions such as the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), the Department of Manpower (Disnaker), and higher education institutions. As noted by Agus Kusmayadi, “We conduct monthly evaluations with homeroom teachers to discuss student issues. We also hold meetings with subject teachers and even involve BNN and the Department of Manpower.” Rithma Yustika further explained, “We organize career day events in collaboration with the school's public relations unit and HR departments from various companies. Counselors are also members of the TPPK, enabling cross-disciplinary collaboration.”

These findings align with Article 9 of Regulation No. 111/2014, which emphasizes that counseling services must be implemented in an integrated manner through system support involving multiple stakeholders within and beyond the educational institution. In contexts where counselor–student ratios are severely imbalanced, cross-sector collaboration serves as a concrete form of the system support function, enabling counselors to work in teams rather than in isolation and build strategic networks to address students' diverse needs more comprehensively.

Collaboration with homeroom teachers and subject teachers strengthens early detection and monitoring functions, while partnerships with external agencies—such as BNN, Disnaker, and universities—enhance available resources and broaden access to career services, social development programs, and risk-behavior prevention initiatives. Thus, cross-

sector collaboration is not merely an adaptive strategy to compensate for disproportionate ratios; it also embodies the integrated guidance system principle that underpins the counseling framework mandated by Regulation No. 111/2014.

### **5. Partial Effectiveness and Policy Implications for Strengthening Counseling Services**

Although Although counseling services have not yet reached full effectiveness, the FGD findings reveal partial effectiveness in prioritized service areas such as responsive services and career guidance. As stated by Siti Fatonah, “When viewed as a whole, services are not yet effective. But for career guidance, the results are good—our students are among the highest admitted through SNBP in the Purwakarta region.” Weno added, “Home visits and responsive interventions make students more diligent in attending school. Attendance improved after we visited their homes.” Similarly, Elin Ernawati noted, “The services that we prioritize are effective, but basic services do not run because most of our time is spent handling cases.” These indicators align with Article 3 of Regulation No. 111/2014, which states that the purpose of counseling services is to support students in achieving optimal development.

At the institutional level, the FGD highlighted the need for additional counseling teacher positions and legal certainty regarding classical guidance hours, as proposed by Hendrayani from SMKN 2 Tasikmalaya: “We need clear regulations stating that counseling has classical guidance hours included in the curriculum, so that they are not dependent on permission from subject teachers.” In terms of innovation and technology use, FGD participants expressed a need for digital solutions to support counseling teachers in efficiently managing and administering services. Weno emphasized that such applications would significantly ease the administrative workload, especially in schools where the counselor-student ratio is far from ideal.

The FGD findings demonstrate that while the overall effectiveness of Counseling and Guidance Services has not been fully achieved, partial effectiveness is visible in prioritized services such as Responsive Services and Career Guidance. This indicates that, despite working under ratio constraints, counseling teachers continue to uphold their core functions as mandated by Article 3 of Regulation No. 111/2014: helping students achieve optimal development based on their potential, needs, and problems. This partial effectiveness is evident in concrete indicators, such as improved student attendance following home-visit interventions, reduced disciplinary reports, and increased numbers of students accepted through the SNBP admission route.

From an institutional perspective, the FGD underscores the importance of strengthening structural and policy support for counseling services. Increasing the number of counseling teachers is essential to meet the ideal ratio of 1:150 mandated by the Ministry of Education, while formalizing classical guidance hours in the curriculum is needed to ensure that basic services and individual planning can be systematically implemented. In addition, participants highlighted the need for digital innovations such as a Counseling Management Information System to support administrative processes, case documentation, and service evaluation efficiently. These recommendations align with the principles of POAC-based guidance management (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling), which

emphasize effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. Thus, although full effectiveness has not yet been achieved, the adaptive efforts of counseling teachers in navigating disproportionate ratios reflect their commitment to fulfilling regulatory and professional mandates as outlined in Regulation No. 111/2014.

## CONCLUSION

This study affirms that the imbalance in the counselor-student ratio is the primary factor influencing the effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling service management in schools. Although Regulation No. 111 of 2014 stipulates an ideal ratio of 1:150 to support the implementation of comprehensive counseling services, field realities indicate significantly higher ratios ranging from 1:450 to 1:850. This disproportion leads to uneven service implementation, with Responsive Services prioritized while Basic Services and Individual Planning remain suboptimal.

Despite these constraints, counseling teachers continue to demonstrate strong actuating capacity through various adaptive strategies, including modifications to service methods, the use of digital tools, and cross-sector collaboration. These strategies reflect the practical application of POAC managerial functions within a limited-resource environment. The partial effectiveness achieved—evident through improvements in student attendance, reduced disciplinary incidents, and enhanced career outcomes—indicates that counseling services still play a substantial role in supporting student development.

To deliver counseling services that align with regulatory mandates, affirmative policies are required, including adding counseling teacher positions, formally establishing classical guidance hours within the curriculum, and developing a Counseling Management Information System (CMIS) to enhance service efficiency and accountability. With these policy improvements, the management of GC services can operate more optimally to support students' personal, social, academic, and career development holistically, consistent with the intent of Regulation No. 111 of 2014.

Future research should consider increasing the sample size and expanding coverage to a broader geographical area to enhance the generalizability of the findings. In addition, further studies are encouraged to examine external factors such as school policies, principal support, and counselors' work experience, which were not comprehensively addressed in this study but may substantially influence the quality of counseling services. Finally, longitudinal research is needed to investigate the long-term impact of guidance and counseling management on students' academic and social development, to assess the holistic effectiveness of counseling programs.

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