

Counseling communication competencies of counselors in Jordanian schools and their impact on gender and type of educational institutions

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the nature of counseling communication competencies among educational counselors in Jordanian schools and the extent to which these competencies are affected by gender and work organization variables. The study sample consisted of 115 male and female counselors in Jordanian schools. This study relied on the descriptive analytical approach. The counseling communication competencies scale which was prepared by the researcher himself was also applied to the study sample. The results of the study indicated the absence of a statistically significant relationship between the components of counseling communication competencies, especially between knowledge of counseling competency and training in counseling competency. There was also a statistically significant relationship between knowledge of counseling competency and the ability to practice counseling competency as well as between training in counseling competency and the actual practice of counseling competency and the ability to practice counseling competency. In addition, the results indicated the absence of statistically significant differences between the components of counseling communication competencies among educational counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to gender and work organization variables. The researcher recommends the necessity of qualifying and developing counseling communication competencies among educational counselors in Jordanian schools based on the results of the study.

Keywords: Competencies, Counseling communication, Counselors, Jordanian schools, Gender, Type of educational Institutions.

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Contribution of this paper to the literature

This research is considered a serious applied procedural attempt to provide data that helps the responsible authorities in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the study community about counseling communication competencies.

1. Introduction

Communication is a fundamental process through which information is exchanged and collected to facilitate effective decision-making. Communication is intrinsically and profoundly interconnected to all sciences, especially counseling psychology. Its aim is to achieve the goals of the counseling interview to study the reciprocal influence between individuals and groups in the methodology of social psychology and to change the attitudes and convictions of individuals and groups in the method of political psychology. Furthermore, it emphasizes the profound relationship between the psychotherapist and the patient in the methodology of clinical psychology (Al-Najjar, 2001).

Al-Milbi (2009) posits that counseling communication facilitates the advancement and success of the counseling process based on unconditional acceptance and constructive reciprocal respect between the counselee and the consultant. This process requires a human communicative relationship devoid of any threat or error. The educational consultancy's mission is to support the counseling process and achieve the necessary objectives while guaranteeing the delivery of the best possible quality services. This qualifies the consultant to fully develop his skills and abilities and attain psychological compatibility with himself, his family, and his community. It also qualifies him for personal, social and professional progress.

Accordingly, communication among school counselors represents a pivotal role in the educational system's procedures and components of the counseling process. These competencies determine the sufficiency or insufficiency of academic counseling services in Jordanian schools. Thus, the current study aims to identify the level of communication competencies school counselors possess in Jordan and determine to what extent they are affected by demographic variables.

2. Study Problem and Significance

Counseling communication competencies of school counselors in Jordan have not received considerable attention in research, whether in the field of psychology or educational counseling, despite their significant role in identifying communication competencies of school counselors which promote positive behavior and modify improper ones.

Based on the research experience in the field, some school counselors exhibit behaviors that suggest a lack of clarity regarding their duties and responsibilities within the educational and pedagogical system, adversely affecting the provision of quality educational counseling services. Additionally, some counselors prioritized roles unrelated to their primary function, failing to accomplish the basic advising tasks for which they were hired. As a result, their guidance related communication with students was noticeably limited, further jeopardizing the caliber and efficacy of the offered educational counseling services.

The current study is important because it raises the topic of the counseling communication skills of educational counselors in Jordanian schools and their impact on gender and the type of educational institution. These competencies are crucial in determining the value of providing educational guidance services.

The significance of the current study stems from the subject. It deals with the communication competencies of a sample of counselors in Jordanian schools. These competencies are crucial in determining the quality and effectiveness of counseling services. The study is critical as it aims to assess and reveal the counseling communication competencies of a sample of counselors in Jordanian schools. The data presented in this study are earnest and helpful endeavors to help those in charge determine the strengths and weaknesses of school counselors, particularly their ability to communicate effectively. Additionally, the study guides how to use its results to improve counselors' communication skills through focused training and rehabilitation programs by addressing identified strengths and areas for improvement.

Additionally, the study's findings can inform the development and revision of university curricula about psychological and educational counseling and mental health. This study is among the first to address the communication competencies of school counselors in Jordanian schools based on the researcher's knowledge. It is hoped that the study's findings could significantly contribute to the psychological and educational counseling field, enriching the local and global literature and advancing the psychological guidance profession.

3. Study Hypotheses

This study identifies the counseling communication competencies of school counselors in Jordanian schools and the extent to which these competencies are affected by gender and type of educational institution variables. This study attempted to address the following hypotheses:

1. Is there a statistically significant correlation between the components of counseling communication competencies (knowledge of counseling competencies, training on counseling competencies, ability to practice counseling competencies and actual practice of counseling competencies) among educational counselors in Jordanian schools?
2. Are there statistically significant differences affecting counseling communication competencies among counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the gender variable (male and female counselors)?
3. Are there statistically significant differences influencing counseling communication competencies among counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the type of educational institution variable (general education schools, private education schools, international organizations and bodies category)?

4. Study Objectives

The current study aims to identify the relationships between communication competencies (knowledge of counseling competencies and training in counseling competencies, ability to practice counseling competencies, the actual practice of counseling competencies) among school counselors in Jordanian schools as well as to reveal whether there are differences in the level of communication competencies among educational counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to gender and type of educational institution variable. Furthermore, the study attempts to predict the communication competencies of school counselors through demographic study variables.

5. Theoretical and Operational Definitions

Competencies: It is a form of performance that an individual performs with ease, efficiency, and high accuracy while saving effort and time. This performance is mental, physical, or social (Al-Fatlawi, 2006).

Counseling communication competencies: They are a set of techniques, competencies, and methods that the educational counselor applies during counseling interviews. These services aim to provide educational and psychological counseling services to help the counselee achieve general psychological compatibility, self-realization, problem-solving, and ability development with the highest possible efficiency (Shoman, 2008). It is the score obtained by the participants' responses to the study tool.

Educational counselors: They are qualified individuals who hold a university degree in one of the branches of humanities and education (psychological and educational counseling and applied psychology) and are assigned by the Ministry of Education, the International Relief Agency or a non-governmental organization, and provide a range of educational, psychological, social, and research services (Abu Hammad, 2010). They are defined as educational counselors in Jordanian schools from the original study population who responded to the study tool by analyzing the results and coming up with an interpretation of those results and the proposed recommendations in light of the subject and field of interest of the study.

Jordanian schools: They are all primary, preparatory, and secondary schools that operate under the supervision of the Jordanian Ministry of Education. The ministry oversees its administration by appointing personnel, supplying educational materials, equipment, and resources, and ensuring necessary services in ministry-owned or rented facilities (Rabie, 2008).

6. Study Limits

The current study's results are limited to a sample of educational counselors in Jordanian schools during the first semester of the academic year (2024/2025) and to the applied study tool and its psychometric properties.

7. Literature Review

Communication is as ancient as humanity since God Almighty created Adam and taught him the names. Since descending from the Earth, Adam communicated with his progeny imparting the knowledge bestowed upon him by God. Communication occupies a central role in human life serving as a dynamic system of connections, relationships, and bonds between people. It is considered a life phenomenon that accompanies humans in all stages of development. Communication is described as an exchange process between two or more parties to exchange ideas and information while producing tangible effects on behavior. Communication is not limited to merely transmitting messages, decoding them and understanding them by the recipient but also creating effects on the behavior of others. It demands competencies, mastery, comfort, and self-confidence. Communication serves as a crucial medium for conveying information, expressing emotions, and shaping the perceptions and behaviors of others, especially since humans are social creatures by nature who prefer to build relationships and friendships. Communication is an innate need imposed by the tendency to know each other and the necessities of life (Hammoud, 2013).

Counseling communication aims to ensure the success of the counseling process founded on acceptance, unconditional positive respect and sympathy between the educational counselor and the counselee. The role of the educational counsellors is to advance the guidance process towards achieving the required goal and purpose professionally considering the highest standards of quality and mastery. This typically supports the counselee's personal, social, academic and professional growth in making-decisions independently and acquiring the competencies of problem-solving, planning and optimizing potential and capabilities to their fullest extent (Saafan, 2009).

Hamdi and Abu Talib (2007) define counseling communication as a reciprocal process between two or more people through which communication messages are transmitted verbally or non-verbally centering on the challenges and issues the counselee suffers, encompassing feelings, information, beliefs, emotions and convictions. Al-Milbi (2009) refers to the components and elements of the communication process which consists of the sender who transmits a specific message intended for others. The message constitutes the core of the communication process. It is conveyed from the sender to the recipient, including the other party's ideas, suggestions, and opinions communicated verbally or non-verbally.

Additionally, communication serves as a medium through which the educational counselor's message is transmitted to the counselee, the recipient, who is the individual or entity receiving the communication message, with the intent to comprehend, act upon, reject, or disregard it. However, the other element in the communication process is the psychological and educational goal intended to be satisfied and represented by communication between the educational counselor and the counselee. Finally, the element of feedback is represented by the individual's acknowledgement of receiving the message and giving a reaction to its content either by accepting, rejecting or planning.

Hamdan (2000) introduced the steps of the communication process that should be carried out sequentially and interconnected in implementation. These steps include deciding on the communication's content and purpose based on the needs of the people being guided, choosing the best communication method, figuring out when it is appropriate to communicate, choosing feedback techniques, and finally putting the communication process into practice.

Abu Asaad (2013) emphasized that the counseling process's primary practical goal is facilitating communication and interaction between the educational counselor and the counselee. The greater the effectiveness of this process, the more successfully it fulfills its objectives. The educational counselor must possess a set of communication competencies that help him perform his guidance and educational duty with high accuracy and mastery which Al-Sameeh (2004) refers to in more detail. He identified five types of communication competencies related to counseling: the opening competency, designed to stimulate the guided individual motives towards positive and effective participation. The educational counselor utilizes this competency to establish rapport with the guided individual, foster a positive perception of the counselor's roles and functions, and express empathy. Questioning competency is regarded as one of the most vital communication competencies in counseling interviews through which the educational counselor gets insight into the counselee and develops communication through a strategically designed question addressing the pivotal aspects of the counselee's life revealing the most important points of weakness and psychological pain that he suffers.

Listening competencies are represented by the educational counselor's attentive focus on the counselee's verbal and non-verbal expressions. Demonstrating sufficient listening signifies the counselor's genuine interest in the counselee's expressions, which builds mutual trust and familiarity, promoting comfort ability and positive acceptance. It also helps the counselee open up in the counseling session and provide information without reservation.

Silence or tolerable silence is considered a competence that motivates good communication between the educational counselor and the counselee. Despite its paradoxical nature, silence represents a form of engagement that allows both parties to pause, gather thoughts, and either introduce new ideas or continue previous ones.

Sufficient empathy, which is a deliberate and conscious reflection of the educational counselor's accurate understanding of the emotions that govern the counselee and an attempt to experience them from the counselor's perspective, significantly strengthens the educational counseling process and relationship.

Mahasneh (2006) introduced additional communication competencies for educational counselors including rephrasing competencies. It involves restating some of the counselee's phrases and considering their meaning. This helps to ease the counselee's confusion and anxiety by letting him know that the educational counselor is attentively following his conversation and demonstrating good interest in what he is saying.

The educational counselor applies the clarification skills which involves inquiry about vague and ambiguous feelings, phrases or words the counselee may either suppress or obscure. Since the counseling conversation cannot go without one party comprehending the other, this step is usually seen as direct feedback from the counselor to clarify some topics that may be ambiguous and incomprehensible during the therapy interview.

The educational counselor evaluates and scrutinizes the conflicting messages in the counselee's emotions through confrontation competencies. This assists in revealing the counselee's true feelings, grounding them in reality, or exposing contradictions between what he says and does. This competency raises the counselee's awareness by providing him with information that he does not recognize or fails to comprehend.

The interpretation competencies procedure facilitates the progression of the counseling therapy session and enables the counselee to identify symptoms of maladaptive behavior. This competency involves presenting phrases, symbols, and terms for the counselee to understand, interpret, and use in making decisions that correctly solve his problem. This competency is mainly used in dream analysis, free association, and resistance.

The summarization skills play a crucial role in methodically facilitating the conclusion of the counseling interview. It involves identifying the main points in an organized form so the counselee can identify their situation and be prepared for another appointment or end the counseling sessions. Thus, it is the last procedure that include a summary of the interview from introduction to end. Finally, the termination competencies are considered one of the most important counseling communication competencies that the educational counselor should master owing to its sensitive and challenging nature, often posing frustration for the counselee. In this phase, the educational counselor must use general preliminaries to facilitate the conclusion of the counseling interview and mitigate challenges associated with the termination ensuring that the termination is neither disturbing nor frustrating.

The date of the final counseling session must be mutually determined by both the educational counselor and the counselee. Until the educational counselor is certain that he has successfully cultivated a significant amount of psychological compatibility, reassurance, and mental wellness in the person receiving counseling, it is best to avoid using this competency.

Accordingly, the communication competencies of school counselors in Jordan represent a pivotal and fundamental role in the efficacy of their practices related to the components and procedures of the counseling process within the educational learning system as they determine the extent to which these communication competencies are possessed.

The counseling communication competencies of school counselors in Jordan and their relationship to gender and type of educational institution will be assessed based on their responses to the scale items. The communication competencies of school counselors in Jordanian schools are reflected in their total scores on this scale, which are determined by their responses to all the scale items. A higher total score indicates a high level of proficiency in communication competencies while a lower total score reflects a below-average level of these competencies.

8. Previous Related Studies

Numerous previous studies have addressed the subject of counseling communication competencies among educational counselors and counseling skills, more broadly, the reality of guidance practices and training programs designed to enhance counselors' competencies sets. However, these studies have also examined various variables across different timeframes.

Al-Najjar (2001) examined the main variations in communication skills and efficacy among educational counselors from the viewpoint of secondary school students who received counseling. Following a sample of 500 male and female students, the study found that educational counselors frequently used the following communication skills: listening, attention, questioning, contemplation, and reinforcement of alternative behavior. Additionally, the study found statistically significant differences in communication skills according to factors including gender, years of experience, specialization and academic background.

Similarly, Al-Ajez (2001) investigated the reality and responsibilities of educational counselors and the challenges they face in secondary schools. They also looked at how these challenges relate to factors including gender, educational stage, and location. The survey involved 88 male and female counselors, discovered that the most significant obstacles were related to training, qualifications, and preparedness. Workplace circumstances and interactions with teaching and administrative personnel came in second and third, respectively. The findings also demonstrated the need for educational counseling to receive more attention in secondary schools, highlighting that although educational counselors play a beneficial role and higher-level interactive communication activities still need to be developed.

Awad (2003) conducted a study investigating the opinions of Gaza's government school principals regarding educational counseling practices and how they relate to educational counselors' effectiveness. The study found a very low correlation between principals' attitudes towards guidance procedures and counselors' performance using a self-prepared questionnaire and a performance scale developed by the Ministry of Education. Similarly, Al-Sameeh (2004) examined the tasks of student counselors from the viewpoints of principals and counselors, ranking their importance as major and minor. A total of 165 principals and counselors participated in the study. The results showed that although there was agreement on work classification, the two groups differed in their perceptions of the major and minor challenges faced by counselors. Similarly, principals differed from educational counselors in identifying the most important obstacles to the work of the educational counselor, and educational counselors differed from principals in identifying the most important obstacles to the work of the educational counselor.

Abu Yousef (2008) conducted a study to identify the effectiveness of a proposed training program aimed at developing the skills of psychological counselors in United Nations schools as well as to identify the level of counseling skills among psychological counselors in those schools and the differences in possession of counseling skills between psychological counselors according to the variables of gender, specialization, graduation university, and professional experience. The researcher used the clinical experimental method and selected a purposeful sample of psychological counselors, counting 11 male and female counselors using the observation method during the training program. Differences between the levels of counseling skills among the counselors were observed at a hypothetical level of 70%, indicating that they did not master the five counseling skills. Furthermore, statistically significant differences between the pre-and post-measurement of the level of counseling skills among psychological counselors were found and attributable to the gender variable. However, no statistically significant differences in the pre-measurement of the level of skills among psychological counselors were attributed to the variable of graduation from university while there were statistically significant differences in the post-measurement of the level of skills. Guidance among psychological counselors were observed due to the variable of university of graduation.

Shoman (2008) conducted a study to assess psychological counselors' job performance. The study examined variables such as years of experience, job satisfaction, and the workplace, utilizing a descriptive-analytical approach and a sample of 207 counselors. The results revealed no statistically significant differences in overall performance due to these variables, except in the administrative aspects of job performance.

Examining these studies, we conclude that none directly addressed advice communication competencies among educational counselors even if they all examined different demographic characteristics, as the current study does. This sets the current study apart regarding its goals and analysis area. The study used a methodology similar to previous comparable research to fill this gap as well as a population and sample specific to the topic of study. Nonetheless, disparities between the results of past research on guide communication competencies as independent and dependent variables highlight the need for more investigation and in-depth analysis in this field.

This study builds upon this reality to advance understanding given the scarcity of studies directly related to the subject of the current research. It differs from past studies in that it introduces variables that have not been independently studied before, specifically the influence of guiding communication competencies of educational counselors on gender and work organization. Additionally, the sample used in the study has distinct features that set it apart from previous studies in terms of time and place. The study's participants also reflect the population under investigation when the research tool was first used.

The current study provides a comprehensive framework containing a wealth of information to enrich the theoretical literature, offering specialists and readers a detailed and holistic understanding of the topic. This approach not only fills existing gaps in the literature but also contributes significantly to advancing the theoretical and practical knowledge base in this field.

9. Methodology

9.1. Procedures

The study procedures section describes its methodology, population, sample, instrument, variables, and statistical processing methods. The researcher designed the study instrument. It was applied to primary samples from the study's original population to validate its psychometric properties (validity and reliability). Then, the study population and sample were determined. The study instrument was applied during the first semester of the academic year (2024/2025). Its data was coded and computerized. The findings were extracted and recommendations were presented.

9.2. Approach

The descriptive analytical approach was employed since it was appropriate for the current study's topic and goals and the characteristics of the variables and data used. Beyond simply gathering descriptive data about the study's subject, it also evaluates, analyses, links, and interprets the data to ascertain the degree of influence between these variables, calculates the degree of that relationship, and expresses it numerically before drawing generalizations about the research phenomenon under investigation.

9.3. Study Population and Sample

The study population comprises all educational counselors in Jordanian schools during the first semester of the academic year (2024/2025). A total of one hundred and fifteen counselors were recruited from Jordanian schools, including fifty-seven male and fifty- eight female counselors. According to the Labor Organization, the sample encompasses fifty participants from public education schools, thirty from private education schools and thirty- five counselors from schools affiliated with international organizations. Participants were selected using a simple random method. Demographic variables (gender and type of educational institution) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the study sample by variables (Gender and type of educational institution).

Demographic variables	Number	Percentage
Gender:		
Category of male educational counselors in Jordanian schools:	57	49.6
Category of female educational counselors in Jordanian schools:	58	50.4
Total	115	100
Type of educational institution:	Number	Percentage
Counselors from general education Jordanian schools:	50	43.5
Counselors from private education Jordanian schools:	30	26
Counselors from the international organization Jordanian schools:	35	30.5
Total	115	100

9.4. Instrument

The instrument of the current study (counseling communication competencies scale) was meticulously designed by the researcher following an extensive review of the theoretical literature on counseling communication competencies.

The scale is structured to assess four areas (knowledge of counseling competencies, training in counseling competencies, ability to practice counseling competencies and actual practice of counseling competencies). Subsequently, the researcher developed the items of the scale to measure the frequency of these competencies employing the three-tiered gradation (high, medium and low).

The psychometric properties were calculated through several procedures to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument. The first procedure was the inter-rater validity by presenting the scale 60 items in its initial and preliminary form to a panel of seven psychology and educational counseling professors from educational and humanities colleges. Their feedback was instrumental in evaluating the scale items' clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness, thereby contributing to their refinement and ensuring their alignment with the study's objectives.

The items on the scale were approved with a high agreement rate (93%). The pilot sample represented the second procedure to ensure the validity and reliability of the scale using statistical methods. The scale was applied to a pilot sample of 20 educational counselors.

The researcher evaluated the scale's internal consistency validity through the computation of the correlation coefficient between each item and the overall scale score. The research showed that all of the items had statistically significant correlations at the 0.001 significance level, suggesting that the scale's items had high levels of internal consistency.

The scale's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient which was 0.945 indicating an acceptable reliability. These findings indicate that the scale has a reasonable degree of validity and reliability, demonstrating that it is a suitable tool to use with the study sample. This validation demonstrates the scale's suitability and efficacy in scientific investigations and its capacity to produce accurate and dependable results.

9.5. Study Variables

The current study included the following independent variables: First: Gender encompassing two categories (male and female) educational counselors in Jordanian schools. Second, educational institution including the following categories: public education schools, private education schools, schools of international organizations and bodies of educational counselors working in Jordanian schools. The dependent variable is the competencies of counseling communication among educational counselors in Jordanian schools, represented by the study sample's responses to the study scale.

The scale aims to measure these competencies based on the indications of their validity and reliability.

10. Results and Discussion

10.1. Results of the First Hypothesis

Is there a statistically significant correlation between the components of counseling communication competencies (knowledge of counseling competencies, training on counseling competencies, ability to practice counseling competencies actual practice of counseling competencies) among educational counselors in Jordanian schools?

To address this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the statistically significant relationship between the components of counseling communication competencies (knowledge of counseling competence, training in counseling competence, ability to practice counseling competence, and the actual practice of counseling competence) among school counselors in Jordanian schools, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Pearson's correlation coefficient were calculated to determine the statistically significant relationship between the components of counseling communication competencies.

Counseling competencies	Pearson correlation coefficient	Knowledge	Training	Counseling practice	Actual counseling practice
Knowledge	Correlation coefficient	1	0.08	0.24	0.22
	Probability value	-	0.46	0.03	0.03
Training	Correlation coefficient	0.08	1	0.9	0.8
	Probability value	0.46	-	0	0
Counseling practice	Correlation coefficient	0.24	0.9	1	0.8
	Probability value	0.03	0	-	0
Actual counseling practice	Correlation coefficient	0.22	0.8	0.9	1
	Probability value	0.03	0.03	0	-

Table 2 reveals no statistically significant correlation between knowledge of counseling competence and training in counseling. At the same time, there is a statistically significant relationship between knowledge of counseling and the ability to practice counseling and between training in counseling and the actual practice of counseling and the ability to practice counseling competence. Additionally, the findings showed no statistically significant correlation between knowledge of counseling competence and training in counseling. The correlation is statistically significant since training in counseling communication competencies is part of the process of knowledge of counseling communication competence in its comprehensive concept which was confirmed by Abu Asaad (2013). Educational counselors in Jordanian schools could only learn about counseling competencies within the informational and conceptual axes and frameworks. Additionally, field and practical applied training on guidance communication competencies was not included in the university's field applied training, which concentrated primarily on the theoretical foundation. However, although there is a statistically significant correlation between knowledge of counseling and both the ability to practice and the actual practice of these competencies, this correlation is not as strong as that between training in counseling competencies and both the actual practice and the ability to practice. This research emphasises that while theoretical knowledge is fundamental and essential to learning outcomes, it is not enough to convert into the capacity or real-world implementation of counseling competencies. Effective implementation necessitates developing competencies and hands-on training to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This allows educational counselors and students to move from conceptual knowledge to actionable proficiency in counseling communication competencies. According to the responses of educational counselors who indicated pleasure and optimism towards these theoretical components, the results of this hypothesis point to a relative deficiency in counseling competency training programs and an excessive emphasis on theoretical features. This emphasizes how urgently universities, colleges, and departments that provide educational counseling programs need to review their curricula, paying special attention to their applied training techniques, mechanisms, and tactics.

The findings also demonstrated a strong relationship between the ability to practice guidance competencies and their actual practice, supporting Saafan's (2009) assertion that beliefs about one's abilities are closely tied to actual ability and practical application in guidance competencies.

Furthermore, despite differences in the sample, instruments, methods, and goals, these results somewhat concur with those of Al-Ajez (2001). According to Al-Ajez (2001) study, educational counselors experienced most obstacles related to training, preparation, and qualifications. Work circumstances came in second followed by management and teaching staff. Abu Yousef's (2008) findings, which showed variations in the study sample's guidance skill levels with a hypothetical mastery level of only 70% are also somewhat supported by the data. This result implies that the participants did not entirely master the five fundamental mentoring abilities.

However, the current study stands apart in its focus on guidance communication competencies among educational counselors, a topic not previously addressed in related research to the best of the researcher's knowledge. This distinction and differences in research variables, sample characteristics, tools, and objectives contribute to this study's originality, modernity and significance.

10.2. Results of the Second Hypothesis

Are there statistically significant differences affecting counseling communication competencies among counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the gender variable (male and female counselors)?

To determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship affecting the competencies of counseling communication (knowledge of counseling competence, training in counseling competence, ability to practice counseling competence, actual practice of counseling competence) among educational counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the gender variable (male category, female category), means and standard deviations and the calculated "t" coefficient value for the differences between the means of both independent groups were calculated. Details are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of means, standard deviations, and the calculated "t" value test for the difference between the male and female categories in the components of counseling communication.

Communication Competencies	Counselors	Means	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	Calculated T-value	Probability value	Statistical significance and conclusion
Knowledge	Male	42.21	6.65	113	0.9	0.7	Non-significant
	Female	41.35	5.85				
Training	Male	31.34	3.28	113	-1.5	0.19	Non-significant
	Female	32.25	3.65				
Ability to practice counseling	Male	31.86	3.69	113	-1.28	0.22	Non-significant
	Female	32.74	3.33				
The actual practice of counseling	Male	32.41	3.89	113	-1.15	0.23	Non-significant
	Female	33.19	3.58				

The results in [Table 3](#) demonstrate that there are no statistically significant differences between the components of counseling communication competencies (knowledge of counseling competence, training in counseling competence, ability to practice counseling competence and actual practice of counseling competence) among educational counselors in Jordanian schools attributed to the gender variable; this confirms the denial of the research hypothesis. The researcher explains this finding by pointing out how similar the two social categories of male and female counselors are, particularly regarding their education, training, work habits, and work nature. Furthermore, gender is no longer a barrier to an individual's success, accomplishment, exit, and education in a particular field, particularly given the high level of ambition among females and the fact that both of them possess the professional and mental capacity necessary to complete their tasks with high efficiency. They can also enhance their skills and competencies through training and reading, particularly in light of the current technological and electronic revolution.

The results of this hypothesis are somewhat different from those of [Al-Najjar \(2001\)](#) which found statistically significant differences in educational counselors' communication skills due to various factors, including gender. These differences also differ regarding the sample, research methodology, and tools. The results of [Abu Yousef \(2008\)](#) which showed no statistically significant differences between the pre-and post-measurement of the level of counseling skills attributed to the gender variable are also somewhat consistent with the hypothesis's findings in terms of the sample, research methodology, and tools.

10.3. Results of the Third Hypothesis

Are there statistically significant differences influencing counseling communication competencies among counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the type of educational institution variable (general education schools, private education schools, international organizations and bodies category)?

To address this hypothesis, the one-way analysis of variance was calculated to determine whether there is a statistically significant correlation affecting the counseling communication competencies (knowledge, training, ability to practice counseling, actual practice of counseling competence) among counselors in Jordanian schools attributable to the type of educational institutions variable (general education schools category, private education schools category, international organizations and bodies schools category) as shown in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Results of the one-way analysis of variance for the statistically significant effect on counseling communication competencies among counselors in Jordanian schools by type of educational institutions.

Communication competencies	Source of variance	SS	DF	MS	(F) value	Probability value
Knowledge	Between groups	96.8	2	47.87	1.27	0.3
	Within groups	4235.6	109	39.45		
	Total	4332.4	111			
Training	Between groups	42.52	2	20.52	1.79	0.2
	Within groups	1325.17	109	12.32		
	Total	1367.69	111			
Ability to practice counseling	Between groups	57.77	2	28.52	2.25	0.12
	Within groups	1345.33	109	12.27		
	Total	1403.1	111			
The actual practice of counseling	Between groups	53.89	2	27.08	1.95	0.16
	Within groups	1523.38	109	14.09		
	Total	1577.27	111			
Total	Between groups	885.78	2	357.97	2.722	0.615
	Within groups	16857.39	109	166.15		
	Total	17743.17	111			

The information shown in [Table 4](#) disproves the research hypothesis by showing no statistically significant differences among Jordanian school counselors in the aspects of counseling communication competencies (knowledge, training, practice counseling and actual practice of counseling) attributable to a type of educational institution variable. The researcher attributes this outcome to the counselors' comparable cultural backgrounds.

The absence of statistically significant differences in this research hypothesis was accounted for by the similarity of work conditions and the target group of Jordanian school students, whose level of difficulties is estimated at average or below, as well as the conditions of the educational environment data, training, and qualification, and the type of experiences the school counselor receives during university studies or after graduation, and the qualification competencies of the individuals responsible for training, teaching, and theoretical and practical preparation.

The conclusions of [Shoman's \(2008\)](#) study and the findings of this hypothesis diverge somewhat, primarily because of differences in the research approach, tools, and sample. (Shoman, 2008) study found statistically significant differences in psychological counselors' job performance levels depending on the employer variable (government versus agency), favoring counselors working for the International Relief Agency based only on the administrative domain.

Moreover, this hypothesis's results are inconsistent with those of the previously examined research. This disparity results from the fact that the specific research factors examined in this study namely, the counseling communication competencies of school counselors and their influence on gender and work organization differ substantially from those examined in previous studies. Because of its specific focus, this new work is positioned as a more unique, modern, and innovative contribution to the area.

11. Recommendations

Based on the literature review, the findings of this study and insights drawn from previous research, the researcher proposes the following practical recommendations:

1. Academic institutions should concentrate on providing educational counselors with extensive and sophisticated information through specialized study programs. Field training sessions, the most successful means of improving educational counselors' competency, should receive special attention.
2. Establishing theoretical and practical training programs for educational counselors throughout their careers should be a top priority for institutions. These programs should focus on developing critical skills, such as counseling interview techniques.
3. Given their crucial role in educational, psychological, and career advising, educational counseling initiatives should give more attention to the evaluation and diagnostic components of counseling.
4. All Jordanian schools, public, private, and foreign should have their educational counselors supervised by high-performing supervisors. These supervisors have the potential to significantly improve the precision, efficacy, and professionalism of counselors' work.
5. Universities should priorities the development of academic faculty members with expertise in educational and psychological counseling, with a special focus on procedural and applied abilities. These include the ability to perform case studies, counseling interviews, and psychological evaluations and the ability to give and interpret psychological tests with ease.
6. Additional studies and evaluative research should be conducted to assess the counseling communication competencies of educational counselors in Jordanian schools. Comparative studies with counterparts at regional and international levels should also be pursued to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for global collaboration.

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