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"KAUGOS" The Tele-Counseling Assistance for Bicol University Students: Status and Concerns

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Abstract

Aim: Amid the Corona Virus Disease 2019 pandemic, face-to-face delivery of Student Affairs and Services, particularly Counseling, is prohibited. The Bicol University (BU) Office of Student Affairs and Services-Student Welfare Services Division (OSAS-SWSD) has launched the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service to assist its students in addressing their concerns. This study probed the status of and concerns on "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service. This has specifically probed the status along the context, input, process, and product domains; the problems and challenges met by the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries; and how the tele-counselors and the program supervisors address the problems and challenges. Additionally, this has also sought for suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service.

Methods: This is a descriptive research. The data have been gathered primarily and directly from the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries. These are gathered through survey questionnaires and interviews.

Findings: "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service's implementation status is very good along the context domain and excellent along the input, process, and product domains. Problems and challenges are met by the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries, but they are properly addressed through different strategies used by the tele-counselors and program supervisors.

Conclusions: This tele-counseling service is appraised as satisfactory but is less effective than face-to-face, as the former is more challenging. However, it is recommended that it be continued and improved. The findings, including the suggestions on how to improve this service, are the foundation for formulating and proposing the Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program.

Keywords: CIPP Evaluation, Tele-counseling, Online Counseling, Guidance and Counseling, COVID19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Each citizen is the most important element of a nation. Thus, taking good care of it is of paramount concern of the government, and one way to emphasize this is through the government's efforts and initiatives through appropriate guidance and counseling. Guidance and Counseling has a significant role for nation-building as it aims to assist citizens obtain optimum development. Republic Act No. 9258, also known as Guidance Counseling Act of 2004, Section 3(a) states that Guidance and Counseling is a profession that involves the use of an integrated approach to the development of a well-functioning individual primarily by helping him/her to utilize his/her potentials to the fullest and plan his/her future in accordance with his/her abilities, interests, and needs. It includes functions such as counseling, psychological testing, (as to personality, career interest, study orientation, mental ability, and aptitude), research, placement, group process, teaching and practicing guidance and counseling subjects, particularly subjects given in the licensure examinations, and other human development services.

In line with this law, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2013), through CMO No. 09 s.2013, says that Guidance and Counseling is one of the basic services for student welfare to be provided through Student Affairs and Services (SAS). Guidance and Counseling services in Bicol University are offered through Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS), particularly the Student Welfare Services Division (SWSD). SWSD's

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mission is to be committed to assisting the students to become open to growth, have emotional and mental stability or readiness in addition to intellectual competence, socially conscious and meaningfully aware of a sense of commitment. SWSD is designated to provide basic guidance services to students such as information, student inventory, counseling, psychological testing, career guidance, placement, follow-up, and referral.

Among all its functions, counseling is affirmed to be the heart of the Guidance Service (Lunenburg, 2010). Counseling is an individual and/or group intervention designed to facilitate positive change in students' behavior, feelings, and attitudes (CHED, 2013, p. 4). However, amidst the Corona Virus Disease 2019 pandemic, face-to-face delivery of SAS programs, particularly counseling, is prohibited. This is the very time it is strongly needed. In just the year 2020, America has recorded 45, 979 deaths due to suicide and 1. 20 million suicide attempts (AFSP, 2022). The Philippines has recorded a 57% increase on suicide rate in 2020 with 4,420 deaths, compared to 2, 810 in 2019 (Person, 2021). The adjustments caused by the pandemic have triggered anxiety, depression, stress, and other mental health symptoms (Situmorang, 2020). In view of the prohibition, the best solution to this alarming concern is to bring counseling online.

In response, the CHED suggests, through CMO No.08 s.2021, to Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) options for offline and online delivery of Guidance and Counseling Services. The SWSD has adopted tele-counseling to continue attending to the students' concerns which can be more serious amidst the health crisis and due to the adjustment into new learning modalities. The SWSD has launched "KAUGOS", a tele-counseling assistance for students, wherein the learners can avail counseling with a Registered Guidance Counselor (RGC) from the University through phone call and/or any online modality the counselor and counselee agreed upon.

This study has sought to probe the status of and concerns on "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service. This has specifically probed the status along the context, input, process, and product domains; the problems and challenges met by the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries; and how the tele-counselors and the program supervisors address the problems and challenges. Additionally, this has also sought for suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service. The research-based findings have served as a framework for proposing enhanced tele-counseling programs. This program can be of great benefit to the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries as the problems and challenges they meet are being addressed. The students will primarily benefit from this enhanced tele-counseling program as they will be properly oriented towards the program and their concerns will be better attended. This can also serve as outline for OSAS-SWSD in improving "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service and the BU Administration, OSAS-SWSD, CHED, and DepEd in formulating interventions that will help in addressing the problems and challenges met in the implementation of tele-counseling service. The other researchers may use this as related study and/or the recommendation as subject for their future research.

Research Questions

This study has probed the status of and concerns, specifically the problems and challenges, on "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service and has answered the following questions:

1. What is the status of the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service along the following domains:
 - 1.1 Context;
 - 1.2 Input;
 - 1.3 Process; and
 - 1.4 Product?
2. What are the problems and challenges met by the following sectors:
 - 2.1 Program supervisors;
 - 2.2 Program implementers; and
 - 2.3 Program beneficiaries?
3. How did the tele-counselors and the program supervisors address the problems and challenges?
4. What enhanced tele-counseling program may be proposed to address the findings of the study?

METHODS

Research Design

This research is of a descriptive design employing a survey and interview. Descriptive studies look at the characteristics of individuals, events, or conditions as they naturally are (Siedlecki, 2020). Hence, this design is most appropriate to this study, as it is intended to probe and then describe the real status of and concerns on the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service without any manipulation.



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Sources of Data

The data have been gathered primarily and directly from the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries. These are gathered through survey questionnaires and interviews. The data presented are primarily sourced out from the survey results and the discussions are supplemented by the information from the interview.

Respondents

The respondents are the Dean of OSAS and Director of SWSD as the program supervisors; the RGCs involved in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service as the program implementers; and the students who have been counseled through the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service as the program beneficiaries.

Instrument

For gathering the data, the researchers have utilized researchers-made survey questionnaires and consequently conducted interviews. The questionnaire and interview guide questions are validated by Guidance and Counseling experts. The survey questionnaire is administered to all aforementioned respondents. It has three parts.

The first part is for the Profile of the respondents which has sought to determine whether the respondents are program supervisors, implementers, or beneficiaries. The second part is for the Context, Input, Process, and Product Evaluation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service through which the status of the service has been determined; the answer for the problem 1 of this research. The provided statements are based on the theoretical framework of this study. The part three has focused on the problems and challenges met by the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service; partially has met the problem 2. The provided options are grounded on the intensive review of related literature and studies, and some are just added by the researchers; respondents could also specify other problems and challenges they met.

The interview with a program supervisor is conducted informally and orally; written and/or formally and face-to-face to several implementers; and written to all program beneficiary-respondents. The interviews are outlined to the question list prepared by the researchers which has three parts. The first part is the discussion on the CIPP Evaluation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service which has supplemented the gathered data of the second part of the survey questionnaire and then fully answers the problem 1 of this study. The part two of the interview, in which questions are modifiable, is centered on the contexts of the problems and challenges which has focused to discuss the results of the third part of the survey questionnaire and then fully meet the problem 2 of this research. The part three of the interview, which question is modifiable, is focused on the discussion on how the tele-counselors and program supervisors address the problems and challenges and this has added on the discussion for the third problem.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering has two phases: the surveying and interview. The researchers have initially sent the Dean of the OSAS and Director of SWSD a letter encompassing the request for the approval that they and some of the members of SWSD would be the respondents of this study and would answer the attached survey questionnaire; request for assistance to communicate with counselees and encourage them to answer the same survey questionnaire and to participate on the interview; and request for a reply letter from their office addressing researchers and the requests. The researchers have also sent emails to BU students encouraging the qualified respondents to participate in this study through answering the survey and interview questions.

Ethical Considerations

Letters and emails sent to the respondents have stated that all data gathered would be treated with utmost confidentiality. Respondents' consent to participate in the survey and interview and to be audio-recorded, through signing or confirming by submission of the accomplished form, are primarily taken into account by the researchers. Their anonymity is also taken into consideration.



Statistical Treatment

The weighted mean is the primary statistical tool used in analyzing data on the status of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service in the context, input, process, product domains. It is employed in each indicator of each domain, in each category of respondents, and in general, pertaining to the totality of the respondents. The weighted mean for each indicator in each domain has a corresponding description, while the categorical and general weighted means have corresponding adjectival ratings to determine the status of the service in each domain. Frequency and percentage are also utilized in identifying the problems and challenges met in the implementation of the service. These are ranked accordingly to determine the top most-met concerns in each category and in the totality of the respondents.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS

Presented in this chapter are the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the gathered data. This presents respondents' categories; the status of the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service; the problems and challenges met by the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries in the implementation of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service; the strategies used by the tele-counselors and the program supervisors to address the problems and challenges met, the respondents' suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service, and the output of this research which is the proposed Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program. Table 1 shows the numbers of respondents in each category. There are a total of 22 respondents to this research.

Table 1. Respondents' Categories

Categories	Frequency
Program Supervisors	2
Program Implementers	4
Program Beneficiaries	16

Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service

Table 2.A shows Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Context Domain. As to the general result of evaluation, the majority of the contexts are only present and appropriate, and both the Program Supervisors and Implementers only remarked the context domain as very good. This is because they are aware of context limitations as they are the key founders of this service.

The researchers have found out through Program Supervisor (PS)-2 that this service has no clearly established vision, mission, rationale, goal, and objectives as this is immediately implemented in response to the Bicol University (BU) students' concerns amid the pandemic and online learning. PS-2 has shared that this "KAUGOS" tele-counseling is the alternative to face-to-face counseling which is one of the basic services of the Student Welfare Services Division (SWSD). SWSD has very appropriate and exceptionally stated vision, mission, rationale, goal, and objectives to which the Program Beneficiaries could have possibly linked and evaluated to this service as excellent. Despite having no clearly established context, "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is still generally appraised as very good along the context domain. This implies, by relating to the concept of context of Aziz, et al. (2018) and Sugiyono and Muslikah (2018), that the contexts of this service are responsive to environmental requirements and relevant to the OSAS-SWSD and BU; but should be clearly established. It would then be the contribution of this study to establish the service' contexts, as mentioned by the PS-2.


Table 2.A. Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Context Domain

Context	Program Supervisors	Program Implementers	Program Beneficiaries	GENERAL	
	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. A vision statement for the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service has been developed.	2.50	2.00	3.81	2.77	Context is present and appropriate.
2. A mission statement for the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is aligned with its vision.	2.50	2.00	3.81	2.77	Context is present and appropriate.
3. The rationale for the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is clearly stated.	3.50	2.50	3.75	3.25	Context is present and appropriate.
4. The goal of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is responsive to its vision and mission statement.	2.50	2.75	3.81	3.02	Context is present and appropriate.
5. The objectives of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is responsive to its goal.	3.50	2.50	3.81	3.27	Context is present and appropriate.
6. The "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is clearly stipulated.	3.50	3.00	3.75	3.42	Context is present and appropriate.
7. The "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is aligned to the vision, mission, goal, and objectives of Office of Students Affairs and Services-Student Welfare Services Division.	3.50	3.25	3.81	3.52	Context is present, very appropriate and exceptionally stated.



8. The "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is aligned to the vision, mission, goal, and objectives of Bicol University.	3.50	3.25	3.81	3.52	Context is present, very appropriate and exceptionally stated.
CATEGORICAL	3.13	2.66	3.80	3.19	Very Good
	Very Good	Very Good	Excellent		

Legend:

3.50-4.00

Description

Context is present, very appropriate and exceptionally stated.

Adjectival Rating

Excellent

2:50-3.49

Context is present and appropriate.

Very Good

1:50-2.49

Context is present but limited.

Good

1.00-1:49

Context is not present.

Poor

Referred from Ahorro, M. E. (nd). *An Evaluation of the Bicol University Graduate School (BUGS) Guidance Program using the CIPP Model.*

Table 2.B shows the Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Input Domain. In general, the majority of inputs are evaluated as fully functional. However, the conduct of training for tele-counseling, the appropriation of funds to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the service, and conduct of evaluation after each tele-counseling session to improve the service are remarked as fairly functional by the Program Supervisors and Implementers. They, as founders of this service, are primarily concerned with the limited tele-counseling training, funding, and service evaluation. The Program Beneficiaries are unaware of these input limitations as they see most inputs as fully functional.

All respondents agree that the status of implementation of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is excellent along the input domain. This implies, by linking to the concept of input of Aziz, et al. (2018), that the aforementioned inputs are usable to meet the program aims of this service but the identified scarce inputs should still be upgraded.

Table 2.B. Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Input Domain

Input	Program Supervisors	Program Implementers	Program Beneficiaries	GENERAL	
	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Dissemination of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service to Bicol University students.	4.00	3.50	3.69	3.73	Input is existing and fully functional.
2. Online filling of Intake form.	4.00	4.00	3.63	3.88	Input is existing and fully functional.
3. Posting of tele-counselors contact information.	4.00	3.75	3.81	3.85	Input is existing and fully functional.
4. Conduct of training for tele-counseling.	2.50	3.25	3.56	3.10	Input is existing but fairly functional.



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5. Appropriation of funds to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the service.	3.50	3.25	3.63	3.46	Input is existing but fairly functional.
6. Utilization of phones, laptops, and/or other technologies.	4.00	3.75	3.69	3.81	Input is existing and fully functional.
7. Utilization of phone calls, messenger video call, meet, zoom and/or other communication and/or conference tools.	3.50	3.75	3.75	3.67	Input is existing and fully functional.
8. Conduct of individual tele-counseling sessions.	4.00	4.00	3.63	3.88	Input is existing and fully functional.
9. Conduct of monitoring of counselee and follow-up sessions.	3.50	3.75	3.38	3.54	Input is existing and fully functional.
10. Conduct of evaluation after each tele-counseling session to improve the service.	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.25	Input is existing but fairly functional.
CATEGORICAL	3.60	3.63	3.63	3.62	Excellent
	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent		

Legend:	Description	Adjectival Rating
3.50-4.00	Input is existing and fully functional.	Excellent
2:50-3.49	Input is existing but fairly functional.	Very Good
1:50-2.49	Input is existing but barely functional.	Good
1.00-1.49	Input is existing but not functional.	Poor

Referred from Ahorro, M. E. (nd). *An Evaluation of the Bicol University Graduate School (BUGS) Guidance Program using the CIPP Model.*

Table 2.C shows the Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Process Domain. In general, the majority in the process domain are experienced by and exceeded the expectations of the respondents. The dissemination, intake form, and responsive contact information of tele-counselors have been posted in the SWSD's Official Facebook page and emailed to Bicol University (BU) students by several Student Organizations. The BU students can have access to this service by making an appointment through filling out the Online Intake form or by directly messaging and/or calling a tele-counselor through the posted contact information for an immediate counseling session.

Further, the conduct of training for tele-counseling is generally rated least and only met the expectations particularly of the Program Supervisors and Implementers as there is no training conducted by



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SWSD. The tele-counselors have been attending training and workshops organized by professional organizations of Guidance Counselors and Psychologists to capacitate themselves in the conduct of tele-counseling, according to Program Implementer (PI)-1. Aside from being trained, the tele-counselors are all counseling experts as they are Registered Guidance Counselors and have at least Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling and/or Psychology.

Furthermore, it is attested that the problems and challenges during tele-counseling sessions are properly addressed. The succeeding data include the identified problems and challenges met in the implementation of this service and how the tele-counselors and program supervisors address these. In relation to securing the confidentiality, the tele-counselors stay at their respective offices or seldom at their homes, particularly private rooms; while the counselees stay at a relative's house and at the premises of their houses such as at personal rooms. Personal laptops and phones are mostly used by the tele-counselors and counselee. Phone calls or messages are initially done to remind the student of the schedule and give the link of the platform to be used for the session. Zoom is the primary conference platform used but transferring into Google Meet is taken into consideration upon the request of the counselee for data saving, as mentioned by PI-1. All sessions are for individual counselee, there are cases good for one-time sessions, and other cases require follow up sessions and even with parents. Lastly, an accomplishment report is regularly presented but prepared collectively by a tele-counselor, yet it still generally meets the expectations.

All respondents consider the status of implementation of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service as excellent along the process domain, though there are problems and challenges met; as evaluated, are properly addressed. This also implies, by relating to the concept of process of Aziz, et al. (2018) and Sugiyo and Muslikah (2018), that the implementation is effective as the inputs are appropriately utilized and the problems and challenges are addressed and used for the improvement of this service.

Table 2.C. Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Process Domain

Process	Program Supervisors	Program Implementers	Program Beneficiaries	GENERAL	
	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The provision of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is disseminated to Bicol University students through different online platforms.	3.50	3.50	3.88	3.63	Experienced and exceeded expectations
2. Intake form is accessible online.	4.00	4.00	3.94	3.98	Experienced and exceeded expectations
3. Posted contact information of the tele-counselors are responsive.	3.50	3.50	3.75	3.58	Experienced and exceeded expectations
4. Conducted trainings for tele-counseling.	2.50	3.00	3.81	3.10	Experienced and met expectations
5. Tele-counseling service is provided by experts in counseling.	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.92	Experienced and exceeded expectations
6. Problems and challenges during tele-counseling session are properly	3.00	4.00	3.81	3.60	Experienced and exceeded expectations

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addressed.					
7. Confidentiality is secured during tele-counseling sessions.	4.00	4.00	3.81	3.94	Experienced and exceeded expectations
8. Phones, laptops and/or other technologies used are convenient.	3.50	4.00	3.75	3.75	Experienced and exceeded expectations
9. Phone calls, messenger video call, meet, zoom and/or other communication and/or conference tools used are convenient and secured.	3.50	4.00	3.81	3.77	Experienced and exceeded expectations
10. Individual tele-counseling session is appropriate, secured, and properly managed.	3.50	4.00	3.75	3.75	Experienced and exceeded expectations
11. Monitoring of counselee and/or follow-up session are conducted.	3.50	4.00	3.56	3.69	Experienced and exceeded expectations
12. Accomplishment report is regularly presented.	3.50	3.00	3.69	3.40	Experienced and met expectations
CATEGORICAL	3.50	3.75	3.78	3.68	Excellent
	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent		

Legend:

3.50-4.00

2:50-3.49

1:50-2.49

1.00-1.49

Description

Experienced and exceeded expectations

Experienced and met expectations

Experienced but limited

No opportunity to experience

Adjectival Rating

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Poor

Referred from Ahorro, M. E. (nd). *An Evaluation of the Bicol University Graduate School (BUGS) Guidance Program using the CIPP Model.*

Table 2.D shows the Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Product Domain. The service's outputs particularly to the clients, implementing agency, and tele-counselors are regarded as very adequate.

According to the interviewed Program Beneficiaries, the service has helped them address their mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress; cope with their online studies; resolve their social problems such as family, friend, and teacher-related issues; and improve themselves and address other personal issues.

Further, the Counselors have gained knowledge about the struggles of the students particularly amid the pandemic and lockdowns, due to the shift of the learning modality into online, and due to worrying of home problems. They have also gained new professional learning by practicing tele-counseling.

Furthermore, service improvement is the product with varying remarks from the respondents. The Program Beneficiaries have it regarded as very adequate as they are seeing improvements while both the Program Supervisors and Implementers have lower rates as they are aware of the limited service evaluation. Nevertheless, the status of implementation of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is excellent along the product domain to both Program Implementers and Beneficiaries and very good to Program Supervisor, considering their overseen points for improvement. This further implies, by linking to the concept of product of



Aziz, et al. (2018) and Sugiyo and Muslikah (2018), that the respondents are highly satisfied with the positive impacts and the achieved results and have positive appraisal to this service. The Program Beneficiaries find this service satisfactory, but the majority consider face-to-face more effective than tele-counseling as it is less challenging. This is consistent with the findings of Teh et al. (2014) that for Filipinos, online counseling is beneficial but is less effective than face-to face. However, the respondents agree for this service to be continued and improved; even face-to-face counseling would be permissible again. This is because tele-counseling is beneficial to counselee that are less confident in reaching others for help, according to Program Beneficiary (PB)-1. This agrees to Hamburger & Ben-Artzi (2000 cited by Ardi, 2017) that the anonymity of the contact is especially appealing for introverted people and to those with anxiety disorders such as agoraphobia and social phobias, as affirmed by Bouchard et al. (2000). Besides, this modality is also good for students from satellite campuses of BU with an on-call Counselor to get immediate assistance, according to Program Implementer (PI)-2. Therefore, the majority suggest that this service should be improved taking into consideration the results of the evaluation through this research.

Table 2.D. Status of the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service along the Product Domain

Product	Program Supervisors	Program Implementers	Program Beneficiaries	GENERAL	
	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The service enabled clients to address their personal, social, educational, and vocational concerns.	3.50	4.00	3.56	3.69	Very Adequate
2. The service provided the implementing agency concrete awareness of the concerns of the students.	3.50	4.00	3.69	3.73	Very Adequate
3. The service enhanced the competence of the Counselors in conducting tele-counseling sessions.	3.50	3.75	3.69	3.65	Very Adequate
4. Improvements in the service are evident due to the conduct of regular evaluation.	3.00	3.25	3.63	3.29	Adequate and met expectations
CATEGORICAL	3.38	3.75	3.64	3.59	Excellent
	Very Good	Excellent	Excellent		

Legend:

3.50-4.00

2:50-3.49

1:50-2.49

1.00-1.49

Description

Very Adequate

Adequate and met expectations

Inadequate and needs improvement

Very inadequate

Adjectival rating

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Poor



Referred from Ahorro, M. E. (nd). *An Evaluation of the Bicol University Graduate School (BUGS) Guidance Program using the CIPP Model.*

Problems and Challenges Met in the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service

Table 3 shows the Problems and Challenges met by the Program Supervisors, Implementers, and Beneficiaries. The Program Supervisors primarily met concerns on overlapping counseling schedules of the Counselor, conflict with Counselor's non-counseling activities, inactivity of counselee during counseling session, counselee's lack of personal gadgets or technologies to use, electric power interruption, low internet connectivity in Counselor's end and in counselee's end. These and the lesser met problems and challenges are made known to them through monitoring the implementation of the service and as Program Supervisors, they have been assisting the tele-counselors address these, as mentioned by PS-2. Further, the primary problems and challenges met by all tele-counselors include lack of tele-counselors and low internet connectivity in Counselee's end. The tele-counselors secondarily meet concerns on lack of funds, electric power interruption, insufficient counselee's mobile data, and counselee's gadget or technology problem.

Furthermore, Electric power interruption is the top most problem and challenge met concerning counselee-respondents. Noise destructions on counselee's end, insufficient counselee's mobile data, and low internet connectivity in counselee's end the succeeding concerns met by them.

These problems and challenges met by the Program Supervisors, Implementer, and Beneficiaries in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling services that this research has found out are consistent with several reviewed literature and findings of the previous studies.

Electric power interruption is the top most met concern of the respondents. This causes low or no internet connectivity at any or both the parties. Besides, a counselee that lacks personal gadgets or technologies to use, has no access to quality internet connection and/or has insufficient mobile data cannot have complete access or take long with this type of modality. A tele-counseling that primarily requires these components is definitely affected. Congruent to the conclusion of Lau et. al (2013), limited equipment and internet access are great concerns. This research also has found out that noise destruction, lack of place for counseling, and threat to confidentiality are problems and challenges met.

These are consistent with the findings of Mejah et al. (2020) that ensuring a place with no interruption and can maintain confidentiality and of Ahmed and Fridous (2020) that threat of intrusion of counselee's confidentiality contribute to the concerns in online counseling. Further, both this research and the study of Ahmed and Fridous (2020) have found out that the problems and challenges that are met in online or tele-counseling include lack of Tele-counseling Guidelines as it may lead to ethical issue, difficulty on handling serious counselee's concerns, difficulty on the use of technologies, and having technological problems. Given that BU has not even reached the 1:1000 counselor-to-student ratio, lack of tele-counselor is also a concern; additionally, the lack of funds. These findings agree to David (2017) that the Guidance and Counseling sector has been experiencing financial and manpower shortages. This research and the study of Hunter (2021) have both found out that inactivity or lack of participation of counselees during the session is also a concern. This research has also found out that overlapping affairs the Counselors have to attend cause conflict to the counseling schedule; besides, the other affairs of counselees. This is consistent with the conclusion of Savitz-Romer, et al. (2020) that school counselors are not able to spend as much time as usual counseling students due to overlying tasks. These findings imply that the problems and challenges mostly met in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service, just like other online counseling, are technological, environmental, organizational, and ethical.

Table 3. Problems and Challenges met by the Program Supervisors, Implementers, and Beneficiaries

Problem and Challenge	Program Supervisors			Program Implementers			Program Beneficiaries			Overall		
	F	P	R	F	P	R	F	P	R	F	P	R
Lack of Tele-counseling Guidelines	1	50	8	2	50	7	5	31.25	5	8	36.36	5
Lack of counseling office	0	0	16	0	0	23	2	12.5	13	2	9.09	23



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Lack of funds	0	0	16	3	75	3	1	6.25	21	4	18.18	18
Lack of tele-counselors	0	0	16	4	100	1	3	18.75	8	7	31.82	6
Lack of tele-counseling and technical training of the Counselor	0	0	16	1	25	19	2	12.5	13	3	13.64	22
Threat on the confidentiality due to Counselee's place during counseling sessions	0	0	16	2	50	7	3	18.75	8	5	22.73	11
Threat on the confidentiality due to intrusion on the ongoing tele-counseling session	0	0	16	2	50	7	2	12.5	13	4	18.18	18
Difficulty on handling serious counselee's concern online	1	50	8	2	50	7	4	25	6	7	31.82	6
Overlapping counseling schedules of the Counselor	2	100	1	1	25	19	4	25	6	7	31.82	6
Conflict with Counselor's non-counseling activities	2	100	1	2	50	7	0	0	24	4	18.18	18
Conflict with Counselee's other affairs	1	50	8	2	50	7	2	12.5	13	5	22.73	11
Inactivity of Counselee during counseling session	2	100	1	1	25	19	2	12.5	13	5	22.73	11
Difficulty on the use of technologies and applications	1	50	8	2	50	7	2	12.5	13	5	22.73	11
Counselee's lack of personal gadgets or technologies to use	2	100	1	2	50	7	1	6.25	21	5	22.73	11
Counselee's lack of place for counseling sessions	1	50	8	1	25	19	2	12.5	13	4	18.18	18
Noise destructions on Counselor's end	1	50	8	2	50	7	2	12.5	13	5	22.73	11
Noise destructions on Counselee's end	1	50	8	2	50	7	7	43.75	2	10	45.45	3
Electric power interruption	2	100	1	3	75	3	8	50	1	13	59.09	1
Insufficient counselee's mobile data	1	50	8	3	75	3	6	37.5	3	10	45.45	3
Counselor's gadget or technology problem	0	0	16	2	50	7	3	18.75	8	5	22.73	11
Counselee's gadget or technology problem	0	0	16	3	75	3	3	18.75	8	6	27.27	10
Low internet connectivity in Counselor's end	2	100	1	2	50	7	3	18.75	8	7	31.82	6
Low internet connectivity in Counselee's end	2	100	1	4	100	1	6	37.5	3	12	54.55	2
Other/s	0	0	16	0	0	23	1	6.25	21	1	4.55	24

Legend: **Statistical Treatment**
 F Frequency
 P Percentage
 R Rank



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Strategies Used by the Tele-counselors and Program Supervisors to Address the Problems and Challenges Met in the Implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service

There are numerous problems and challenges met in the implementation of "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Service. However, as per the result of process evaluation, it is attested that these are properly addressed. This implies that the concerns met are manageable and that the tele-counselors are capable of handling these. The Program Supervisors and Implementers enumerate their strategies in addressing the concerns met through the survey and interview.

In the circumstance that there is electric power interruption or low internet connection in any of the Counselor and Counselee, the latter is asked whether they may continue with the session through phone call or rather reschedule the session. The Counselor also notifies the client in advance regarding the postponement of the schedule if there is any emergency meeting or other affairs the counselor has to attend. If there is any, the counselee is asked when the session can be rescheduled.

To be updated with the tele-counseling guidelines, the Counselor attends online training and workshops on tele-counseling offered by the professional organization of Guidance Counselors and Psychologists. In terms of ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the counseling sessions, the Counselor requested the OSAS to utilize its licensed zoom account. There is no risk of intrusion of a counseling session if this licensed conference tool is being used. However, in grant of the counselees' request for data saving, Google Meet is used as an alternative. Moreover, support staff in the counseling office are requested to stay in another office or place for a while or to put their earphones on and the counselors are being requested to ensure that their place is safe, has privacy, and with better phone signal. Immediate calls and counselees who have limited available time for counseling are accommodated even off of the office hours. This is a consideration and practice to ensure that students have the opportunity to access the service.

There is coordination with the Peer Counselors and College Student Council for information dissemination. This shows that student organizations play a vital role in promoting awareness and making the implementation of the service accessible to the students. Monitoring the implementation and providing assistance to the Counselors in addressing problems and challenges met are being initiated and practiced by the Program Supervisors to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the service.

Respondents' suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service

The respondents demand that this "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service be continued and improved. It is primarily suggested to redesign this service based on the results of the evaluation and to clearly establish its context. Other significant recommendations include increasing its visibility in the region through advertisements in different social media platforms. This is supplementary to SWSD's FB page posting regarding the service, online Intake form, and the contact information of tele-counselors. In addition, it is also recommended to collaborate with the Unit Heads and Student Leaders for the promotion of the service. There are also suggestions to establish a clear and uniform Tele-counseling Guidelines as each of them carries out the program differently.

Further, only four Registered Guidance Counselors (RGCs) implement the service. Evidently that the desired 1:1000 counselor-to-student ratio is not met; making the implementation limited and challenging. Regarding this matter, it is also suggested to employ more RGCs. Furthermore, given the limited numbers of tele-counselors, to address any conflict on the schedule, it is recommended to have a clear setting of counseling schedules, and if any changes occur, the counselee should be informed ahead of time.

Lack of funds and adequate resources concerns both Counselors and counselees. There is a suggestion to utilize Google Meet instead of Zoom as it is more data-efficient. Primarily, to improve this service even more, it is suggested that funding be made available also for counselees who cannot afford to pay sufficient cellular load and other necessary equipment. These are taken into consideration in the Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program.

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data, the study has found out and then concluded the following salient points:



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1. The status of implementation of the "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is very good along the context domain and excellent along the input, process, and products domains. Further, this tele-counseling service is satisfactory but is less effective than face-to-face but it should be continued and improved.
2. Though "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service is satisfactory, there are problems and challenges met by Program Supervisors, Implementers, and Beneficiaries in the implementation of this service. The 10 most met concerns by these sectors are electric power interruption, low internet connectivity in counselee's end, noise destructions on counselee's end, insufficient counselee's mobile data, lack of Tele-counseling Guidelines, lack of tele-counselors, difficulty on handling serious counselee's concern online, overlapping counseling schedules of the Counselor, low internet connectivity in Counselor's end, and counselee's gadget or technology problem. These are technological, environmental, organizational, and ethical-related concerns.
3. The problems and challenges are properly addressed through the different strategies used by the Tele-counselors and Program Supervisors such as phone call-counseling, rescheduling sessions and immediate notice, professional tele-counseling trainings and workshops, utilization of licensed Zoom account and Google Meet as alternative, non-office hours counseling, and service promotion in collaboration with Student Organizations.
4. There is a real need to propose an Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program taking into consideration the suggestions/recommendations given by the respondents of this study.

Furthermore, based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby presented by the researchers:

1. The Office of Student Affairs and Services-Student Welfare Services Division (OSAS-SWSD) should inform the Bicol University students of the status of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service through presenting the results of the Context, Input, Process, and Product evaluation. This may inform and then encourage more students to avail of this satisfactory service. OSAS-SWSD should also continue evaluating this service. To clearly establish the context of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling, the OSAS-SWSD may outline or adopt the context of the Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program proposed by the researchers.
2. In addressing the top most problems and challenges met, particularly the technological concerns, the Office of Student Affairs and Services-Student Welfare Services Division (OSAS-SWSD) can also provide mobile data or load assistance to clients upon their request, in partnership with Students Organizations and several Network Providers, state Google Meet as one of the primary video conferencing options the clients can choose from, and operationalize counseling through phone calls as primary alternative to conferencing platforms if there are power interruption and low internet connection. The OSAS-SWSD should follow unified guidelines on the implementation of tele-counseling to ensure no ethical concerns would arise. The Bicol University Administration should employ additional Guidance Counselors to further address organizational concerns, particularly the overlapping counseling schedules due to lack of tele-counselors. To further address environmental concerns and confidentiality issues, the OSAS-SWSD and BU Administration should invest on building tele-counseling rooms with complete functional technologies, with strong internet connectivity, and are secured and free from noise destruction. They can also partner with Local Government Units in establishing or identifying local-based areas conducive for tele-counseling. The BU Administration should formulate interventions that can help in addressing the other problems and challenges the program supervisors, implementers, and beneficiaries met in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service. Commission on Higher Education and/or Department of Education may also check these research-based findings to be able to appropriate programs that can help their governed institutions in addressing the problems and challenges met in the implementation of their tele-counseling services.
3. The Bicol University Administration should extend its support to the Tele-counselors through appropriating budget for establishing tele-counseling rooms, data or load allowance or grants, and for tele-counseling training of the tele-counselors to further enhance their competence to better address or address more concerns met. The other researchers may further the study on the strategies used by other supervisors and implementers to provide the Tele-counselors and Program Supervisors more or better strategies for addressing the concerns in the implementation of "KAUGOS" tele-counseling service.



4. The student-researchers recommend to the OSAS-SWSD to implement the proposed Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program in Bicol University. BU Administration, and other Institutions governed by CHED and/or DepEd may use the research-based findings and/or the proposed Enhanced "KAUGOS" Tele-counseling Program as framework for formulating interventions to help in addressing the concerns and/or for improving or launching their own tele-counseling program.
5. The other researchers may replicate or update this study by probing SWSD's tele-counseling once enhanced and expand the study by probing other or several tele-counseling programs of Institutions around the region taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of the programs; and utilize the research instrument used in this study.

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