

**PERSONALITY TRAITS AND STRESS RESILIENCE AMONG TEACHER  
COUNSELLORS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA  
COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to Graduate School, in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Conferment of the Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy Degree in  
Guidance and Counselling, Laikipia University**

**OCT, 2024**

## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

This thesis is my own original work and has never been presented for an award of any degree in this or any other university.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, Nicodemus Dibondo Kwena and Truedea Onyimbo Ochilo, who meant everything to me and served as my first teachers and mentors. Their unwavering presence and guidance have shaped me into who I am today.

I also dedicate this work to my children, Ken Okubo and Edelquin Okubo, whose love and support inspire me with every step I take in the right direction. They are the steadfast pillar I lean on, through all seasons.

Finally, I dedicate this research report to all counselors who devote their time to supporting clients on their journey toward psychological healing.

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## ABSTRACT

Teacher counsellors with their disparate personality traits encounter stress as they dispatch their noble service of counselling in secondary schools. Managing stress can partially be correlated to their personality traits analogous with their external environment. There is paucity of information on the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study was guided by the General Adaptation Syndrome theory of stress management (GAS) and Seligman's 3P's theory of resilience. A Correlational research design was used. The target population was 327 teacher counsellors from the 327 public secondary schools in Kakamega County. Simple random, stratified and purposive sampling methods were used to determine the sample size. The study sample comprised of 181 teacher counsellors. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. A pilot study was carried out in Bungoma County, Kenya. The instruments' reliability through Cronbach's coefficient index was found to be  $\alpha=0.80$  and was accepted. The instruments were validated by seeking the opinion of the experts from the Department of Psychology, Laikipia University, where construct and content validity was affirmed. Data was analyzed through Pearson's correlation. All the Big Five Personality Traits (except conscientiousness) negatively correlated to resilience. The extroversion personality trait was negatively correlated to resilience ( $r = -0.505$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Neuroticism personality traits was negatively correlated to resilience ( $r = -0.368$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the hypothesis was also rejected. Openness personality trait was negatively correlated to resilience ( $r = -0.176$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Agreeableness personality traits was negatively correlated to resilience ( $r = -0.374$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Conscientiousness personality trait had no linear relation to resilient ( $r = 0.000$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and the hypothesis was not rejected. The study concluded that personality traits are correlated to stress resilience and impact on counselling service delivery. The study recommends more training and empowerment of teacher counsellors to enable them purposefully use their personality traits to enhance their stress resilience in counselling service provision. The findings details intend to assist in the making of policies frame work that would guide properly in the selection, recruitment and motivation of school counsellors. The findings could also contribute to research knowledge about the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience and how this would improve worker morale toward better service provision.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>AIDS:</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>ASCA:</b>	American School Counsellors' Association
<b>BFPT:</b>	Big Five Personality Traits
<b>BFI:</b>	Big Five Inventory
<b>COVID-19:</b>	Corona Virus Discovered in 2019
<b>ER89:</b>	Ego-Resiliency scale
<b>GAS:</b>	General Adaptation Syndrome
<b>HIV:</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>MOE:</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MOEST:</b>	Ministry Of Education Science & Technology
<b>NACOSTI:</b>	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>SPSS:</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>SME:</b>	Small and Medium-size Enterprises
<b>TOD:</b>	Teacher on Duty

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were operationalized, as used, in the context of the study.

**Agreeableness personality:** Agreeableness personality was used in the context to refer to the character qualities that express friendliness, kindness, cordiality and such aspects that generated social conformity in the individuals and their interpersonal relationship.

**Conscientiousness personality:** This refers to trait descriptions that show industrious thoroughness, carefulness and diligence behavior characteristics.

**Counselling:** Counselling refers to a process of sharing information and views between a client and a therapist with the intention of empowering the client to cope with challenging issues in their life and to overcome difficulty.

**County:** The word county refers to political and administrative divisions in Kenya that formed local self-governance and administrations and that were managed by a governor.

**Dual responsibility:** The word as used in the context refers to double relationship and responsibility demanded of the counsellor to the clients (herein the teacher counsellors and the students), where the counsellor played both roles of teacher and therapist, due to the limited number of school personnel.

**Extroversion personality:** Extroversion personality refers to traits that displayed strong self-confidence, out-going unreservedness and impetuosity in the individual's behavior.

- Guidance:** This refers to advice and relevant pieces of information provided by a therapist to a client to help resolve or overcome client's difficulties.
- Introverts:** Was used to refer to persons with Inwardness personality which has traits that show they drew their comfort from focusing on their inner thoughts and ideas rather than from what took place externally. They enjoy their own company and shun large groups and crowds.
- Neuroticism personality:** Refers to behavior characteristics that exhibited phobic tendencies, anxiety, irrational obsession and extreme passion plus persistent perseverance.
- Openness personality:** Refers to character that conveyed sincerity, trustworthiness, reliability and honest frankness.
- Personality:** Was used with reference to all the underlying character qualities that instilled and motivated consistent reactions / behaviors in the individual teacher counsellors in secondary schools.
- Personality traits:** Personality traits refer to tendencies (identified by descriptive adjectives) that inspired behavior in the teacher counsellors in secondary schools, as they provided guidance and counselling services to the learners. These traits were limited to openness, extroversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness.
- Resilience:** Refers to the rejuvenation that gave the teacher counsellors in secondary schools the energy to persistently continue counselling and working successfully regardless of the many stressors they faced.

<b>Role ambiguity:</b>	This refers to a confusing situation that emerged because of vague job descriptions where responsibility boundaries were not clearly stated thus allowing for misuse of the teacher counsellors' man-power.
<b>Secondary school:</b>	This refers to a high school or any school of corresponding rank that was intermediate between primary school and college.
<b>Stress:</b>	Stress as used, refers to emotional strain and fatigue caused by mental or physical pressure on the teacher counsellors in secondary school due to frustrating demands.
<b>Stress resilience:</b>	Stress resilience refers to the teacher counsellors' ability to recover from traumatic strain caused by workplace challenges and the teachers' capability to adapt well and proceed with the counselling even in the face of frustrating demands
<b>Traits:</b>	In the context, traits refer to adjectives that described behavior characteristics of the teacher counsellors in secondary schools. These included Extrovert, Neurotic, Conscientious, Open and Agreeable traits that helped in the creation of stress resilience among the teacher counsellors.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The relationship between personality traits and stress resilience may determine the teacher counsellors' ability to overcome the challenges facing them at the workplace. Teacher counsellors in secondary schools require strong personality traits in order to be stress resilient and attain competence at work. Teacher counsellors play a very important role preparing the youth to identify and manage their issues early in life (Oketch & Kimemia, 2012). Counselling guarantees individual psychological wellbeing, mental fitness and physical aptness (Nelson-Jones, 2011). Counselling also creates an opening for healthy interaction between clients and therapists and by extension between youth and adults. However, workplace situations in secondary schools sometimes pose challenges to the teacher counsellors and cause them a lot of stress (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011).

Teacher counsellors hold dual responsibility, teaching and counselling the same learners. They require adequate stress resilience to enable them to deliver these important services satisfactorily. Maheshwari and Kumar (2016) discovered that resilience allowed the individual to adjust whenever prevailing situations became hostile. Teacher counsellors can use resilience as a tool to counter the strain that dual responsibility places on them. Such resilience is required at all times when the teacher counsellor is carrying out his or her duties as the school therapist. Resilience may be sustainable if it is drawn from the individual's dependable characteristics like their personality traits (De Terte, 2014). This study looked at the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Personality comprises stable, organized and collective emotional qualities in a person (Larsen & Buss 2010). These qualities are often consistent and could be used to predict a person's reactions. Personality influences the link between stimuli and stress reactions in the individual (Chai, 2015). This makes personality significant in identifying the individual's level of perceiving or acknowledging stress. Personality also helps the individual become aware of how to approach the stressors encountered

and how to respond to stressful events. The key factors in understanding one's personality as stated by Rentfrow et al., (2013) are the trends and strengths of the person's observable traits. These traits work collectively to determine the person's attributes and reactions.

Understanding one's own personality enables one to suitably utilize their strong traits (Isaga, 2019) in the event of challenging circumstances. It is important that the individual understands their personality traits because personality traits largely dictate one's reaction to the different situations encountered in life. A person with weak personality traits will easily yield to strain while one with strong personality traits will withstand the difficulties that may emerge in their life and will remain in control of their reactions (Darkwah, 2014).

Resilience was found to nullify stress and to allow the individual to make positive progress at work (Maheshwari & Kumar, 2016). Teacher counsellors need to utilize the positive strengths in their personality traits in order to generate resilience and make strides in their service delivery. They need to be aware of the weak traits that they have and purposefully eliminate them or use them positively to build resilience. Manteo (2015) established that resilience was a mental choice that the individual had to make in order to overcome the effects of trauma. This mental choice was found to be self-inspired by the individual's positive strength that was drawn from their personality traits. Personality traits provide character strengths that determine the worker's inspiration and self-improvement (Darkwah, 2014). Personality traits were found to be a force within the individual that was responsible for shaping his or her behavior and daily reactions.

Stress is physio-mental anguish resulting from prolonged frustration and a sense of defeat (Rosch, 2016). Stress has diverse causes and effects for different people. There is danger in stress because it incapacitates the individual. Stress congests the individuals' mental processes and cause them psychological strain (Lee- Baggley et al., 2005). The major challenge in the successful acquiring of stress resilience for teacher counsellors in Kenya was found to be lack of guiding policies (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). This lack of guiding policies created a void that generated role ambiguity for the teacher counsellors. The ambiguity impeded the teacher counsellors' productivity and subsequently eroded their psychological tranquility at

the place of work. Resilience was found to be key in the fight against stress in case one wanted to achieve competence at work.

Since resilience is a mental choice (Manteo, 2015) it is possible that everyone could make their own choice by relying on the support of their individual character strength. This study sought to establish the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary school in Kakamega County, Kenya. A relationship that would influence the teacher counsellors and direct them towards valuing their individual strength in the fight against stress. This could help them surmount any other challenges in their lives as workers.

In Kenya, school guidance and counselling has not been given much significance as compared to the significance attached to the academic inputs in schools (Wambu & Wickman, 2011). All the education stakeholders placed a lot of emphasis on academic achievements. The passion with which academic excellence was sought in school, at times overshadowed the efforts made to gain other complementing requirements for the learner. The insignificance levelled towards counselling in some institutions directly caused the stakeholders' negative reactions towards counselling. This extensively eroded the teacher counsellors' self-worth (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011). The erosion of self-worth was a leading cause of psychological discrepancy that in turn caused low self-esteem, self-isolation, poor interrelation and temperamental reactions among the teacher counsellors. These consequences led to some teacher counsellors receding into self-sympathy and degenerated social interaction (Wambu & Wickman, 2011).

The School Guidance and Counselling program that is the teacher counselors' domain was introduced in Kenya in the early 1970s as a career service to advise students on career choice as well as assist them to fill-in college entry forms (Ministry of Education Science & Technology [MOEST], 2016). The program was also prompted by other vices that were present in the schools like the emergence of HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, cultic engagements and traumatic incidents that disrupted the learning in the schools (Lelei & Weidman, 2012). The School Guidance and Counselling Program also served as a channel for scheduled out-of-class interaction between teachers and learners.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has become an added reason as to why school guidance and counselling should be considered to be essential in secondary schools even today (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). Thus, with added social calamities and new practices that endangered the progress of humanity, the significance of counselling in school has been accentuated. It is of great necessity that the teachers carrying out this counselling in school should be strong enough to overcome all set-backs so that they are psychologically strong enough to perform competently and offer fruitful counselling services to the learners.

Although teacher counsellors were directly linked to the school guidance and counselling program, they were not accorded similar significance as that attached to the program (Silsil, 2011). For this reason, the ministry of education under-rated the importance of both the counselling service-providers and the services they offered in the school setting. The teacher counsellors who were required to run the School Guidance and Counselling Program, were haphazardly appointed to the counselling offices and little or no effort was made by the Ministry of education at that time to specify their job description or to offer them formal counselling training.

A study by Oketch and Kimemia (2012) observed that in Kenya the significance of the School Guidance and Counselling program kept on fluctuating since inception because of lack of government commitment to the counselling teachers' empowerment. Consequently, School Guidance and Counseling programs in the majority of the institutions suffered retardation and the teacher counsellors suffered demoralization and stress (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). These teacher counsellors lacked support and had nowhere to seek redress in case any of them underwent some form of abuse while in office (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011). They had nobody to turn to and were appointed to the office by the institutions' head teachers who themselves had no specified guidelines nor policies for the appointments. In order to cope under these challenging circumstances that marked their origination and designed attitudes, the teacher counsellors required appropriate personality traits that could prompt rejuvenation and enhance stress resilience.

The current study looked at the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. This relationship was investigated in view of the Big Five Personality Traits

(BFPT). The five personality traits referred to as The Big Five Personality Traits are: Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. These five are a popular dimension that has been studied and discussed as one cluster by a number of psychologists (McCrae, 2002). By looking at each one of the big five traits, this study endeavored to find out how each one of them brought about resilience for the individual teacher counsellor in secondary school. Kabiru et al. (2013) found out that though the social environment, strengthened the successful adaptation to stressful situations and created resilience within the individual, a person's distinct characteristics had greater significance in sustaining resilience. This indicated that traits could be more significant in the development of stress resilience than societal inspirations.

Fayambo (2010) emphasized the importance of the Big Five Personality Traits and revealed that they effectively influenced emotional resilience and that they were manifested in adaptation, coping and hardiness. This was emphasized by the findings by Saeed et al. (2018) which further indicated that the Big Five Personality Traits were highly influential to both psychological resilience and ego-resilience. In a study by Van Aarde et al. (2017) the Big Five Personality Traits were found to have qualities that could help an individual to bounce back to normalcy after facing adversity. Darkwah (2014) reported that conscientious and extrovert employees were achievement oriented, dependable and orderly at work. They had the character traits that kept them strong against stress and that enhanced their productivity. The conscientious and extrovert employees were found to be able to attain resilience with more ease than the neurotics who lacked the essential strong character traits. Bandura (2013) emphasized that every individual had the capacity to adapt strong personality traits that could help them enrich their stress resilience. To adapt strong personality traits an individual needs to adjust his or her ways of reacting to any emerging challenging situations.

Teacher counsellors should endeavor to know which of the traits they have are essential for their resilience. They should also strive towards suppressing any of their traits that have the attributes that contribute negatively to resilience. Additionally, these teacher counsellors should strive towards utilizing the positive traits in a progressive manner (Wang & Wang, 2013). This is because every suitable trait

identified by any individual can be purposefully adapted (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2017). Therefore, it is important that each teacher counsellor should be aware of the traits they possess and be able to relate them to the contribution towards resilience achievement and service provision.

The Big Five Personality Traits are a reliable representation and summary of various adjectives that describe human behavior and character (Saeed et al., 2018). Each of the Big Five Personality Traits has got supportive traits that power them towards the attainment of stress resilience (Martinez-Marti & Ruch, 2017). Among the Big Five Personality Traits extroverts were found to be better placed than the others in the drive to attain the positivity that generated stress resilience (Darkwah, 2014). The extroverts possessed initiatives that inspired personal growth as the individual strove for mastery of power, self-assertion, and self-expansion (Digman, 1997). Digman indicated that the rest of the Big Five Personality Traits were more inclined towards restriction and social desirability than they were towards individual improvement. While the traits in the extrovert personality strengthened the individual, the traits in the rest of the five personality traits had characteristics that focused on enriching the other people within the individual's interaction circles. Agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness were all found to be inclined towards guarding against breaking relationships with the others. They did not directly enrich the individual like extroversion did.

According to Saeed et al. (2018) extroverts were the most associated with stress resilience because they were energetic and easily sprung back to their excitement even when faced with challenges. Extroverts were found to be gregarious and assertive. They had rich positivity of character that could help them to bond easily with others (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). Neurotics were the direct opposite of the extroverts and were poorly linked with stress resilience. They were found to be reserved, independent, even-paced and always treading with care (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). They were also found to be always alert in guarding against any forms of impulsiveness.

Many researchers, like Exenberg and Juen (2014), Fayambo (2010), Kabu and Keklik (2016) and, Malkoc and Yalcin (2015), established that resilience was highly

influenced by behavior patterns. Their studies linked the development of resilience to factors associated with personality traits such as, well-being, self-respect, self-satisfaction, social-control, social-support and focus. These factors were present to a high level in extroversion and in lesser varying degrees in openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Saeed et al., 2018). They were found to be scanty in neuroticism and therefore, where extroverts could easily attain resilience, neurotics required great effort to achieve the same.

Positive thinking and social support, improved personal behavior and characteristics (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). Improved characteristics as seen in the individual's personality traits could be a basis by which stress could be eradicated (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2017). According to Exenberg and Juen (2014) resilience was found to be a product of mutual interaction between the individual and his or her environment. Resilience thrived in affirmative thinking, optimism and self-value. This was because, as stated by Bandura (2013) the environment contributed to character change and traits worked with what was provided in the environment to help the individual master resilience. Character change was seen as possible because one can easily adopt new traits through attachment, modeling, motivation, learning, conditioning or punishment (Woolfolk, 2010).

It is important that teacher counsellors become self-aware of their own traits. In addition, it is equally important that they be able to manipulate the same traits either through deliberate self-motivation or through self-conditioning so that they may use them to fulfill specific intended purposes. Only then can the teacher counsellors be able to invigorate their counselling obligations and take charge of their service-input. They will ultimately be able to take charge of their individual-input as they fulfill their dual obligation to their employer (Silsil, 2011) that requires that they teach and counsel the same learners.

The need to attain stress resilience among teacher counsellors for successful school counselling has been a big concern for Kenya as explained by Wambu and Wickman (2011). This same need is a global concern as well because, gaining stress resilience for all persons offering counselling services would be a great professional achievement. Wherever people have to work on various projects and have to interact with a number of other people, there is bound to be friction that could cause stress. If

the levels of friction and stress escalated then production would be compromised and the workers would require resilience in order to function competently. To succeed as a counsellor one requires stress resilience. Different regions across the globe have had different obstacles that constrained the teacher counsellors' development of stress resilience.

In the United States of America (USA) the teacher counsellors' productivity was hampered by a number of problems. A research by Grossman (2020) showed that in the USA, the ratio between student and teacher counsellor was imbalanced as compared to the American School Counsellors' Association [ASCA] (2019) setting that recommended 455 students to one teacher counsellor. According to the same research by Grossman (2020) one teacher counsellor was at times required to handle more than one school during the same period of service as a counsellor. Further revealed in the same research, was that teacher counsellors were often assigned other duties in their place of work, besides the counselling responsibilities. All these factors wore the teacher counsellors out, causing them frustration, stress and burnout. Grossman recommended in this research that the teacher counsellors should be allowed to do what they were trained for, in order to avoid work overload. He also suggested the increase in recruitment numbers for teacher counsellors in order to curb the assigning of one teacher counsellor to more than one school.

These recommendations if implemented would enable the teacher counsellors to serve competently and purposefully develop stress resilience. The teacher counsellors would be able to identify what their stressors were and engage in combating them categorically. These would improve the teacher counsellors' work output. Fortunately, in the USA it was found that, they had a well-established training policy for teacher counsellors. This policy required that each trainee attained specified requirements that were verified during recruitment (Krumboltz & Kolpin, 1999). They also had a policy that emphasized the provision of in-service courses that kept the teacher counsellors, updated (US department of Education, 2019). The teacher counsellors in the USA were therefore better placed than those from other regions because of these well-established policies and requirements that served as their points of references.

In Turkey, retention and work continuance among the teacher counsellors was hampered by the teachers' lack of stress resilience. Teacher counsellors in Turkey

played a significant role shaping the learner's achievements as Kozan (2020) established. They offered effective guidance and counseling services that added value to the learners. Unfortunately, these teacher counsellors remained vulnerable and were at high risk of stress and burnout. This was because they lacked specified channels, (associations and professional networks), through which to seek self-redress services like supervision and debriefing. They had to heavily rely on their individual self-belief and self-worth to achieve competent performance and productivity (Kotze & Lamb, 2012).

To avoid stress, these teacher counsellors had to turn to their personal supportive characteristics and will-power for self-sustenance. This was detrimental to the profession because the teacher counsellors with weak character remained defenseless against stress and easily suffered exhaustion that eventually forced them to quit. Teacher counsellors like any other institution workers need support in order to grow and be productive (Nelson –Jones, 2011). A study in Nigeria by Olodayo and Ekwebelem (2013) established that lack of resilience greatly inhibited the general worker performance. The study showed that assigning workers to critical or unique tasks based on personality traits ensured optimum performance because the traits enhanced the workers' hardiness and output. An individual's hardiness (Darkwah, 2014) in addition to adaptability and confidence in self are indicators of resilience. This meant that, matching traits to tasks activated the individual's inherent traits making the worker to display character strengths that improved performance abilities.

Personality traits influenced the workers' adjustment and resilience in the face of adversities (Bakker et al., 2010). Teacher counsellors must therefore be aware of their personality traits because these traits are the devices required in building resilience. Personality traits stand out as the means that the teacher counsellor requires to show the difference between a successful counsellor and a non-performing, self-pitying counsellor. Resilience could be the instrument required in fostering successful counselling and subsequently bringing harmony in the teacher counsellors' work environment.

A study carried out in Tanzania by Isaga (2019) found out that, as long as the individuals understood themselves, and were aware of the strength of their personality

traits they would have their own significant influence on gaining stress resilience. Their self-awareness will stand out as the source of their rejuvenation that will stir up resilience. By understanding one's own personality traits one may be in a better position to strengthen their stress resilience because knowledge of your personality allows you to know yourself better. Van Theil (2018) discovered that personality was valued very highly by various communities because of the impact it had on the individual. The traits that the individual possessed made him or her to be valued by the peers. This boosted their self-worth in the community and in the institutions of work. The teacher counsellors should understand their personality and attempt to channel their traits into developing stress resilience in order to adapt to the workplace conditions. Manteo, (2015) in a research finding indicated that traits could be manipulated or learned. So, teacher counsellors should take advantage and manipulate or learn traits and develop suitable qualities for their individual service delivery.

Kabiru et al. (2013) carried out a research in the slums of Kenya and discovered that personality traits were of greater significance than ones social environment in the attainment and sustenance of stress resilience. They found that the environment and societal backing may complement the individual's rebounding strength but, that traits remain key in sustaining stress resilience. Teacher counsellors in Kenya therefore needed strong personality traits more than they needed the right environment and social backing. It was also discovered in a research in Kenya (Ganu, 2014) that personality traits gave the workers the drive to work relentlessly in the attempt to fulfill their desires. For instance an extrovert worker would socialize aggressively to create synergy and attain his or her goals at work. Likewise a neurotic worker would take precaution and work with thorough deliberation to attain faultlessness and realize their goals at the work place.

Various personalities fit into various types of work environments (Darkwah, N. G., 2014). Furthermore, various personality traits agitate various sensations that drive individuals to react in particular ways. Extroverts find comfort in a work environment that allowed for plenty of interaction (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). Such are inclusive of the police-force, teaching, social-work or politics where the individual is in constant interaction with large numbers of people. Introverts were found to be more comfortable working as scientists or engineers where they devoted most of their time

to experiments and laboratory discoveries. Neurotics preferred working with machines where they would not have to interact directly with anybody. Teacher counsellors need to know their traits in order to discover how best to exploit their potential.

Personality traits will always come first whenever the development of an individual's resilience is being considered (Oladayo & Ekwebelem, 2013). This means that traits like the Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) are of significant importance to people working in stressful environments. It also means that such people working in the stressful environments must place emphasis on how they would be able to develop stress resilience. The Big Five Personality Traits – Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism – were found to be highly significant in the enhancement of the individuals' abilities and strength (Van Aarde et al., 2017). All five are traits that fill the individual with self-confidence and contribute to the development of strong character. The five traits have been found to boost psychological and ego resilience (Saeed et al., 2018). They have the characteristics that give the individual inner satisfaction and self-belief. Individuals who have psychological bounciness and ego efficacy hardly bowed to stress or any external pressure.

Teacher counsellors who must attain stress resilience (Silsil, 2011) in order to perform their duties in the challenging work environments in schools require traits such as the Big Five Personality Traits. It is important that the individual be able to relate specific traits in his or her character to the growth of their individual strengths. They must be able to know which trait is an asset to their personal growth and which one is a catastrophe to the same. This ability will enhance the growth of their stress resilience. In addition to knowing the traits they possess, the individual ought to be able to manipulate their positive traits in deliberate attempt to sustain their stress resilience. Eley et al. (2019) recommended that strategies for enhancing resilience should always consider the key traits that motivate or hamper it so that individuals would be made aware of which traits in them are reliable in the building of resilience and which ones are detrimental to resilience. All positive practices and strategies can be learnt by any individual who purposes to improve himself or herself (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2017).

What the teacher counsellors require to excel in their workplace is a mind-set that is open and receptive to new ideas and new attempts.

Kakamega County, in Kenya has 327 secondary schools (MOEST, 2014) categorized as sub-county secondary schools in the country. Secondary schools in Kenya are grouped into national schools, extra- county schools, county schools, sub-county schools and division schools. This study chose to work with the sub-county schools because this is the category of secondary schools that has an intake with the biggest representation of learners from that particular county. The decision to use sub-county secondary schools enabled the study to focus on counselling issues that were specific to the particular geographical environment. Kakamega County in Kenya has adhered to the government directive of offering counseling services to the learners in all schools (MOEST, 2016).

The student numbers in this county is high and the students have many challenges ranging from family background issues to drug abuse as well as academic issues (Okama & Kassilly, 2018). Kakamega County, Kenya has teacher counsellors assigned to the secondary schools to offer psychological therapy to the learners as was discovered by this study. None of the schools visited lacked a staff responsible for counselling. Apart from offering counselling services, the teacher counsellors were also expected to handle at least two teaching subjects in the school (MOEST, 2014). This was found to be overwhelming to the teacher counsellors. It caused stress to them and limited their competence (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011). For school guidance and counselling to be effective, the teacher counsellors needed to understand their own traits and to be able to identify the traits in them that supported their development of stress resilience. Having this understanding of self, the teacher counsellors would be able to manipulate the identified traits to suit their needs. This is made possible by the fact that personality can be changed (Miller & Harington, 2011). This study sought to establish the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary school in Kakamega County, Kenya.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Teacher counsellors play a major role guiding the learners in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. However many of these teacher counsellors suffer

psychological discomfort that cause them stressful personality challenges. The personality challenges include lowered self-esteem, poor interrelationship skills, temperamental reactions and self-isolation. The psychological discomfort results from dual responsibilities, additional duty assignments, work overload and inadequate training that overwhelm and stress them. Stress hampers service delivery. The teacher counsellors require stress resilience in order to perform adequately. This study investigates the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. This relationship may empower the teacher counsellors to serve competently regardless of the adversities at the workplace.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools within Kakamega County, Kenya. By bringing out the relationship between the two variables: - Personality traits and stress resilience - this study would show that personality traits are essential for the development of stress resilience and this relationship may enable successful counselling in secondary schools.

### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives.

- i) To determine the relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.
- ii) To establish the relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.
- iii) To determine the relationship between openness as a personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.
- iv) To establish the relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

- v) To investigate the relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### **1.5. Hypotheses of the Study**

In this study, the following hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no statistical significant relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no statistical significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no statistical significant relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no statistical significant relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**H<sub>05</sub>:** There is no statistical significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

The results of this study may equip teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya with the relevant information about how their personality traits impact the development of their stress resilience. The study results may motivate the teacher counsellors to strive towards strengthening the positive personality traits that enhance their stress resilience, with more determination; and to strive to discard the traits that hamper their positive growth. This may improve the teacher counsellors' competence and bring success in school counselling. It could also contribute to the creation of policies that might support the improvement of the school counselling program.

These results may benefit the secondary school learners in gaining better counselling services from better informed teacher counsellors. By the help of the results of this study, the counselling services in secondary school may be offered by therapists who could be more aware of the value of their personality traits and may therefore be self-confident and more efficient. The results may benefit the MOE through having better informed teacher counsellors managing the School Counselling Programs in the secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. Informed teacher counsellors could carry out their assignments with the awareness that there are some specific personality traits that they need to exploit as teacher counsellors in order to remain stress resilient. The results may add value to research information about the importance of individual personality traits and how traits play a significant role in improving work production regardless of the challenges the worker may be facing.

### **1.7. Scope of the Study**

This study was carried out within Kakamega County, Kenya. The study population included all the teacher counsellors in the sub-county secondary schools in the MOE sub-counties in Kakamega County, Kenya. It involved a population sample of the teacher counsellors from selected secondary schools in the twelve MOE sub-counties in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study investigated the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### **1.8. Assumptions of the Study**

The study was carried out with the following assumptions:

- i) That honest information was obtained from the respondents and that the obtained information was relevant in the successful revelation of the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.
- ii) That the school administrators or principals appreciated the importance of the school counselling program and acknowledged the fact that the teacher counsellors needed to be empowered in order for them to cope amid the challenges facing them in the secondary schools.

- iii) That every secondary school in Kakamega County had an established and operational guidance and counselling office with active teacher counsellors who would be sampled as participants for the study.
- iv) That having identified their individual traits the teacher counsellors would view the positive values of these traits for the enhancement of their self-esteem other than feel discouraged and be defeated by the lack of strength.

### **1.9. Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited by the following factors:-

- i) Accurate measuring of the levels of personality traits of the teacher counsellors was not possible as the degree of a person's character is not measurable. The researcher depended on construct measurement that concerned characteristics that are observed through associative indicators.
- ii) Some participants could be tempted to falsify the information they gave about themselves. The researcher relied on the standardized tools of measurement that had trends of behavior and hoped the right information would be collected from the participants.
- iii) The study was carried out in one county and the results were not fairly generalizable to all the forty seven counties in the country because each county has its own unique counselling challenges. The researcher generalized the results with caution and put emphasis on the common counselling concerns.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter covers the review of related literature with emphasis on the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The literature was discussed in view of how the BFPTs influenced the development of stress resilience in the individual teacher counsellors working in the secondary schools.

#### **2.1 Overview of Personality Traits and Stress Resilience**

Personality is a stable organized collection of psychological qualities and mechanisms in the human person that arise from biological and environmental factors (Larsen & Buss, 2010). It is the disposition of an individual's reflexive reactions resulting from habits gathered through experiences, environment and inheritance. Our personality springs from our psychology. It is an assortment of mental features like judgments, sensations and instincts generated over time through the impact of the environment on the individual's inherited abilities. Wolf and Weissing (2010) in their study emphasized various aspects of personality including: distinguishing factor of the individual that controls the impulses of the person; and plasticity that allows for character interrelation. This means that an individual's personality can be distinct. He or she can be strictly an extrovert or a neurotic or any other without any combinations. It further means that an individual can have behavior that borders two personalities or that has a blend of two different personalities. For instance one may have conscientiousness as his or her personality and in addition have extroversion tendencies to some degree. He or she may exhibit characteristics that show extroversion though these may not be as pronounced as the conscientious characteristics.

Much of what has been revealed in various studies about personality was explored through analyzing behavior characteristics (Lemma, 2006). This is because behavior offers a clearer view into understanding and identifying personality. To understand an individual's personality, one has to observe the way that individual behaves under given circumstances. Oliver et al. (2008) pointed out that majority of the researchers

who study personality often discuss behavior in details. This has made personality almost synonymous to behavior. Dingemanse and Wolf (2010) found that a clear picture of an individual's personality – often seen in the consistency and the stability of their behavior - is portrayed through the trends and displays of that individual's observable traits as exposed in his or her actions and reactions. An individual's daily actions and intentions are driven by their personality.

Traits are descriptive character features that are enduring and that give identity to a person's behavior patterns (Kotze` & Lamb, 2013). They are features that can give a clear picture of a person's habitual behavior to the extent that that specific behavior may always remind one of that particular individual. Behavior patterns that are identified by traits work together to determine the person's unique reactions to emerging incidences (Paris, 2015). Thus, behavior patterns, revealed through observing ones traits can predict a person's trend of reactions. They may point out what behavior is expected of a person in relation to their past actions. The reactions to emerging incidences repeated with consistency are responsible in shaping the person's attributes and controlling their general personality. Thus traits form behavior patterns that by consistency, shape our personality.

Major traits in the individual, which early psychologists like, Cattell (1905-1998) and Eysenck (1916-1997) referred to as primary traits, are prominent and distinctively identifiable in a person's reactions (Netter et al., 2020). They are easily noticeable and will often persist in the person's every reaction. They may be conspicuous in actions that a person is fond of engaging in or become the person's impulsive reflexes. These primary traits are the identity of the individual's personality (Darkwar, 2014). The Big Five Personality Trait -Extroversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness - are an outstanding example of primary traits (Roccas et al., 2002).Although there are many other descriptive adjectives that can be listed, these five have been grouped and assembled with clusters of behavior adjectives that may exhaust the entire list specifically or relatively.

The Big Five Personality Traits are a set that has been found to be easy to work with in evaluating human behavior. Rentfrow et al. (2015) stated that because they are distinct and recurrent in the individuals' behavior, the Big Five Personality Traits are very easy to recognize. Saeed et al. (2018) pointed out that these specified traits once

identifiable are best suited for the development of positive character. All the five can be used for positive development. Such traits that have positive characteristics should be adopted by the teacher counsellors for the general improvement of their individual services. Some traits however contribute to weak personality and cannot help a worker to build positivity unless they are linked to other attributes (Barlow et al., 2014). Positive traits that enhance healthy emotions and high self-image provide additional strength for the worker's competence. They are a source of reassurance and high self-esteem that can generate positive thinking for the individual teacher counsellor.

Primary traits have within them, supportive or underlying traits that build and activate them (Suejung & Pistole, 2017). These supportive traits have been referred to by the early psychologists as secondary traits and they stimulate the strength and prominence that the primary traits exhibit. Secondary traits bring out the basic reactions that are observable in the individual's impulses and outstandingly contribute to the variances in a person's behavior (Darkwar, 2014). It is the secondary traits that mark the boundaries of different personalities by their variances. They also expose distinctions within individuals of one identified primary trait and create different types within the same personality (Carver & Scheiver, 2000).

These dissimilarities are brought about by the different levels of strength of the secondary traits and how they interrelate with each other within the individual (Yahaya et al., 2019). Thus an extrovert may be hard-working with the aim of gaining popularity while a conscientious person will be hard-working to conform to the norms and expectations of a community. Neurotics will often be hard-working to maintain an inclination, to avoid change or to avert blame. By scrutinizing the individuals' behavior patterns we are able to identify a variety of personality traits. The varieties identified could also have their levels recognized according to the aggressiveness of the individual's actions. Personality traits distinguish qualities and reveal enduring character features of a person (Woolfolk, 2010). While traits classify people into various behavior categories, personalities remain consistent and may predict the way a person is likely to react in a specific situation.

Psychologists have over time identified and grouped personalities by means of varying perspectives (Van Thiel, 2018). Hippocrates used body humors; Sheldon used body shapes; Maslow used human needs and Bandura chose to use human cognition and awareness. These are some of the renowned early psychologists. They are among the fore fathers who founded psychological theories that the later analysts queried and modified through research findings for improvement. Hippocrates (460BC-370BC) a Greek philosopher, identified traits by studying the body humors and came up with the Sanguine, Choleric, Phlegmatic and Melancholic temperaments or personalities (Kalachanis & Michailidis, 2015). He found that a person's reactions were controlled by the body fluids such as the blood, the water, the bile and the phlegm.

According to his conclusions, Sanguine were cheerful, even-tempered and confident. They made good company due to their jovial talkativeness. Choleric persons were ambitious, energetic and dominative. They easily convinced people and always strove to win people over to their side. Melancholic persons were contemplative, considerate and creative. They had great ideologies and easily came up with great philosophies. Phlegmatic were self-content, enthusiastic and observant. They made creative artists and came up with great projects from simple ideas (Gill, 2020). Hippocrates believed that these different characteristics that formed the different temperaments originated from the power of particular domineering fluids within the individual's body.

An American psychologist Sheldon (1898-1977) identified personality traits by looking at the different body shapes and grouped the findings into Endomorph, Mesomorph and Ectomorph physiques (Ying et al., 2018). His study related the person's behavior to his or her physical features. According to him big physique contributed to an easy nature and free interaction while small structures resulted in contemplation and mental activity. Endomorphs (big, fat and round body) were thought to be relaxed, good-humored and social. They excelled in carefree merry-making social circles. They loved fun and were hardly troubled by deep thoughts. Mesomorphs (strong, muscular and attractive body) were found to be adventurous, courageous and assertive. They were explorative and keen on finding out facts and working on new ideas. This group of persons was viewed as brave and daring. They showed self-assertion and displayed fearlessness. Ectomorphs (narrow-shouldered, skinny body) were found to be artistic, contemplative and anxious. These ectomorph persons were found to be inventors who loved working on new perceptions.

Ectomorphs were found to be meditative and not keen on social groupings. Sheldon showed by the results of studies that one's behavior and activities were dictated by his or her body form.

Another American, Maslow (1908-1970) studied personality from a genetic concept noting that one's genes stimulated their needs or desires and those needs or desires influenced their personality differences (Van Thiel, 2018). From his findings he stated that a person's needs and desires inspired their reactions and these reactions formed their behavior patterns that constituted their personality. Maslow approached his study of personality differences from the person's subjective expression of his or her own free desires. The pursuit of these individual free desires culminated into the ultimate individual drive towards self-actualization. He asserted that human beings have needs that change depending on circumstances and; that actions involved in the effort to satisfy these needs greatly influenced the individual's personality development. He placed these needs into a hierarchy which he stated, had to be fulfilled systematically from the bottom (where we have the basic needs for endurance) towards the apex (where we have the superior need for self-actualization) (McLeod, 2020). According to Maslow's needs satisfaction, an individual who sought to fulfill his or her needs through friction and aggression developed a different personality from the one who gained satisfaction through humble and mutual negotiations. By fulfilling those needs on the hierarchy progressively, the individual's personality is developed and he or she attains psychological health and self-actualization.

Bandura (1925- ) researching in Canada found personality traits to be an outcome of cognition and awareness as provoked by experience. To him, personality depended upon one's perception and control of the environment (Sincero, 2012). A person's behavior and reactions, according to Bandura resulted from his or her understanding of the situations he or she finds himself or herself in and whether he or she is in charge of the said situation or not. He believed that our behavior is manipulated by our experiences and how we relate to the same experiences. If we emerged to be in control of our situations then we developed strong personality that gave us self-confidence. However if we were threatened by our circumstances and they overpowered us then our personality turned out to be weak and frightful. He found out that personality and behavior were directly related to what one encountered and what

one was compelled to react to. This meant that personality was developed over a period of time by different experiences and that personality could also be manipulated by the same experiences. From this psychologist's study findings, it meant that our experiences when repeated over time shaped our personality.

The findings further state that these experiences if changed will also change our personality. Bandura called this, 'reciprocal determinism' where he stated that there is reciprocal interaction amongst the individual, his behavior and the environmental stimuli. Each one of these factors affected the other two factors. For instance the stimulus in the environment will provoke the individual and bring out a reaction or behavior (McLeod, 2016). Likewise the behavior of the individual may change the stimulus in the environment by reducing/weakening it or by increasing/strengthening it and thus empower or intimidate the individual. Also the individual's characteristics may be domineering and may manipulate the stimuli in the environment and place the individual in control.

From these four perspectives discussed, we find that there are varied causes of personality formation and; that personality is inherent and personality dictates behavior. We also find that personality can be used to foretell possible future reactions and inclinations. All the four psychologists: - Hippocrates, Sheldon, Maslow and Bandura – however recognized that personality characteristics emanated from the individual's reaction to his or her environment. Personality traits were also recognized to be a significant instrument for revealing a person's strength (Fayambo, 2010). Being a predictor of ensuing reactions personality can be used to tell a person's capabilities in the face of challenging circumstances. Traits are therefore a strong factor of human attributes that might be relied upon for the improvement of the individual's life and self-management. Personality might also be relied upon for the planning of a peoples' future improvements. Similar personality brings people together allows them to agree on what is best for them (Rentfrow et al., 2013). In this study personality traits are investigated for the purpose of revealing their relationship to stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Personality is rated and valued by different communities basing on various factors such as the environment, the language or societal norms as Van Theil's (2018) study in Germany revealed. This means that in such communities, people are ranked on the basis of their personalities as related to the prized factor. The values attached to specific personalities would be attributed to the connotations that are related to the issues concerning that factor. For instance a mobilizer will be highly valued in an environment where there is need for communal unity; a radical will be valued highly in a community that seeks vengeance and wants its youth radicalized. Value connected to personality may also arise from the society's language or the society's norms. As examples, the society that values altruism will honor people with compassionate personality while a society whose language is coined in veneration of the wealthy will attach value to personalities that display affluence and materialism. Manteo (2015) in USA discovered that branding personality with community prizing is the cause of both positive and negative emotionality in many individuals. Positive prizing boosted the individual's self-esteem while negative prizing lowered the self-esteem.

Woolfolk (2010) stated that an individual's personality may change with experience, age and the environment. These changes resulted from adoptions to favorable conditions for the purpose of conformity (Mahabir et al., 2016). Traumatic experiences destabilize and change personalities as indicated by Miller and Harrington (2011). This happens because traumatic experiences disorientated people and confused them. Such destabilization was found to result in abnormal behavior and inclinations (Geschwind et al., 2019). Changes in personality will strengthen or weaken the growth of a person's character. Thus changes can make the individual a better or a worse stress manager. Changes however give a second chance and allow people to venture into the second trial.

Teacher counsellors should embrace personality changes and strive to adapt new traits that may benefit the development of individual resilience. Generally human beings recline in habit and find ease and relaxation in their accustomed routines. They easily acclimatize to the comfort zone and find change to be a disturbance. According to Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) in their study conducted in USA, changes to routine created a sense of disorientation that caused stress through panic. School counselling programs in Kenya lacked permanence because they were initially not built on policy

(Wambu & Wickman, 2011). They suffered fluctuation because they depended on individual preferences. Such individual preferences exposed them to random changes that caused disorientation to the teacher counsellors. It is important that the counselling programs in schools take shape other than keep fluctuating because the changes become a source of uncertainty to the teacher counsellors and a cause of stress through panic.

Teacher counsellors in secondary schools undergo a lot of stress. They have to interact with different groups of people in the course of their duty. These interaction groups include the learners who are both the teacher counsellors' students and their clients; the counsellors' colleagues who are their staff mates inclusive of the administration (their immediate bosses); and the school parents and other stakeholders (self-styled supervisors). This is a wide range of people the teacher counsellors have to deal with at the place of work. Grossman's (2020) list of causes of stress at the place of work for the teacher counsellors includes work overload, role ambiguity and dual responsibilities. As Upoalkpajor et al. (2018) found in their research done in Ghana, the list of stressors for the teacher counsellors at the place of work also consisted of lack of motivation, lack of appreciation and isolation.

The research by Rokonuzzaman and Rahman, (2011) increased that list of stressors for the teacher counsellors at the place of work and stretched it to include the stakeholders' negative attitude and the clients' contempt. These are looming obstacles that wore out the individual teacher counsellor's efforts to be competent at work and curtailed the entire institutions' productivity. People experience stress when they do not have enough resources at hand, to cope with the demands in their environments. People also experience stress when they feel their abilities are threatened or frustrated (Southwick et al., 2005). People can also experience stress when they feel they are nagged and their efforts are dismissed or undermined. Although different people have different perception for stress, high levels of stress are detrimental to progress. A study in Kenya showed that the individual's ability to generate resilience could be boosted by encouragement from the community, and by the individual's behavior strengths (Kabiru et al., 2013). Determining the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience is significant because traits are inborn and are a guarantee for sustainable strengths like resilience.

The Big Five Personality Traits, – Extroversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness – were generally considered to be traits that provide adequate capacity for character strength in the individuals; they were considered to be able to help one to overcome challenges emanating from the work place and; they were also considered to be able to make individuals successful and productive in their different responsibilities (Celtin et al., 2015). These factors position the Big Five Personality Traits above all the other character traits that have been studied by other researchers who have worked on personality traits and human behavior (O’Conner et al., 2006).

In order for the Big Five Personality Traits to serve the individual adequately it is necessary that the individual identifies the particular personality traits that specifically gave them the strength to excel over challenges and adversities. This was significantly necessary in view of establishing whether personality traits have any relationship with the development of stress resilience. While stress resilience guaranteed performance for the teacher counsellors in secondary schools not all traits gave one positive character. Additionally, while traits are very important for the individual’s identity, they are subject to change and influence (Woolfolk, 2010). Teacher counsellors need to know the traits that are their strong points and purpose to use them strategically in their counselling service. This knowledge is important because traits are the pillars on which individuals anchor their general reactions (Ahadi & Rothbart, 1994) and can be used to develop character strength while improving personal service delivery.

This study used the Big Five Personality Traits as key traits in the investigation of the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The Big Five Personality Traits have a number of attributes in common. They have plasticity that allows them to stretch over their boundaries (Wolf & Weissing, 2010) and incorporate synergy from the other major traits; they have supple secondary traits underneath them that construct and intensify their impact (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016) and; they have been popularly researched and discussed (Oliver et al., 2008) by quite a number of scholars. In this current study that looks at the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, focus is placed on each one of the five personality traits with

emphasis on how each trait may be contributive to the development of stress resilience for the teacher counsellors in order to improve their work performance.

Personality is related to a person's behavior and abilities (Larsen & Buss, 2010) because behavior and abilities are outcomes of personality. These behavior and abilities could include displays of stress resilience and could serve as a pointer to the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience. Saeed et al., (2018) explained in their study carried out in Japan that personality traits were useful in understanding and planning for the workers' productivity. They linked the success of the individual worker's productivity to his or her personality traits. This present study sought to establish the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega, Kenya. Oliver et al. (2008) in USA discovered that the individuals' personality exposed their inclinations and could therefore be used to plan ahead and improve productivity. This discovery was in agreement with the findings by Rentfrow et al., (2013) that showed that personality has the indicators for the type of reaction an individual is likely to resort to in the face of challenges. From their findings, there was indication that personality could be instrumental in alleviating the people's present life and in preparing them for a better future. Specific personality traits need to be identified by the individual teacher counsellor and be linked to the achievement of intended goals in order for one to surmount the challenges faced in the work environment.

A study conducted in Ghana by Darkwah (2013) emphasized that every individual had at least one of the Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) that he or she was able to identify with. Thus by analyzing each of the Big Five Personality Traits, each individual's strength and productivity was put into consideration, since every person is able to point out whether he or she is an extrovert, a neurotic, an agreeable person, an open person or a conscientious person. There are individuals who could have a combination of two of the Big Five Personality Traits. Such an individual may be an agreeable character with empathy, sincerity and cooperation like the rest of the agreeable persons but may also be thorough, reliable and determined as the conscientious persons. This combination of traits was revealed by Wolf and Weissing (2010) in their study which found that personality traits have got plasticity that allows for character interrelation. This character interrelation is made possible because the Big Five Personality Traits are propelled by a number of supportive secondary traits

that compound them. The supportive secondary traits allow them to have character flow into one another (Martinez-Marti & Ruch, 2017).

The plasticity within the supporting traits brings about an overlap across all the five primary traits (Wolf & Weissing, 2010). In this overlap even neuroticism that appears to be out of the way is embraced. A neurotic person in his or her anxiety to remain accepted (by the institution) may work as diligently and strategically as the conscientious persons. The flexibility of the Big Five Personality Traits owing to the plasticity of the secondary traits permits the individual to improve self by capitalizing on the positive traits. This flexibility requires that the individual's positive efforts be complemented with societal support to serve as a drive to improve personal behavior and character even in seriously adverse settings (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). It is an indication that the individual can be improved by the society's attitude, the family support and the individual's own initiatives. The possibility to improve self gives the individuals chances to be more adapting to the situations encountered.

Traits can be changed through attachment, modelling, motivation, learning, conditioning or punishment as Woolfolk (2010) discovered. It is also possible that the individual may simply unlearn the negative traits and increase value for the positive traits. Because of this possibility of change of traits, the individual will be able to decide what traits to adopt and for what specific purpose. Resilience thrives in affirmative thinking, optimism and self-value. This is because, as Bandura's theory of learning stated, it is the environment that contributes to character change (McLeod, 2016). If the individual lays out a positive attitude in his or her thinking and actions then he or she will be prone to adapting positive traits that will inspire resilience. Where negative attitude dominates, there will be no possibility of adapting positive traits that can cause resilience. Bandura explained that traits work with what is provided in the environment to help the individual control his or her reactions and learn new ones. The reactions could include stress resilience that may improve work productivity.

Stress was described by Sahi and Raghavi (2016) as a nervous agitation that one experiences when caught-up under excessive demands emanating either from the workplace, the family or from a person's health or financial obligations. Since stress causes nervous agitation to the individual, it slows down work production. An

agitated person will be unsettled and unable to perform at work. He or she will need to first resolve the cause of the stress before directing their energies towards work performance. Stress was further described as a set of measurable objective psychological events in the body that could be expressed and reckoned (Mate, 2011). These are psychological happenings that the body senses within it and that can be quantified and understood. The psychological events may manifest in fatigue, aggression, erratic eating habits, sleep disorders and other signs that are observable and can be explained.

Stress causes reactions in the body, which clearly show the disturbance it creates in the individual. Stress brings about mental and emotional strain and generates tension which negatively impacts the individual (Southwick et al., 2005). A person undergoing stress finds it difficult to relate with peers and to fit into the environment. However, individuals who have low stress perception may fail to recognize the presence of stress in their situations (Saeed et al., 2018). They may be faced with a number of stressors but they may not acknowledge these stressors as being of significance and may therefore dismiss their effects. In most cases, such individuals also have very high positive adaptation and can easily conform to challenging situations. Stress will impact different persons differently because of the individual levels of perception of stressors.

Chai (2015) from Malaysia stated that work environments that are hostile and demanding may cause stress to the individual especially when they lack personality traits that can generate character strength. The weight of stressful exterior influences will cause the individual psychological strain and interfere with his or her routine jeopardizing work production. These two arguments, one by Saeed et al and the other by Chai, are very important to this study that seeks to determine the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in Kakamega County, Kenya. The two arguments indicate that stress can be ignored and that it can also be overcome by the power of one's character strengths. The arguments further indicate that it is necessary for the individual to be able to evaluate and perceive the stressor and to apply their positive character strategically in order to be able to overcome stress. Where the stressor turns out to be rated as insignificant then it will be ignored. If the individual braces himself or herself against the stressor by

fronting their positive strong characteristics then the stress will easily be overpowered.

Stress has numerous effects on the individual worker. Apart from having different impact on different individuals owing to their personality traits, stress has varied effects on different persons. A study by Wambu and Fisher (2015) found that stress could be the major cause of incompetence among teacher counsellors in secondary schools. Faced with numerous challenges in their institutions of work, the teacher counsellors are vulnerable to stress. This makes it difficult for them to perform as expected of them. Stress also causes self-doubt and may send one to self-rejection due to lowered self-esteem. Kozan (2020) explained that the physical and psychological effects of stress slowed down teacher counsellors in their performance.

These physical and psychological effects of stress are demoralizing to the teachers and restrict their progress. Failing to be productive due to stress, the teacher counsellors are caught up in gloom and are forced into self-isolation due to frustration. Consequently their self-esteem becomes eroded and they suffer psychological wounding. In the Netherlands Bakker et al. (2010) showed in a study that stress was a cause of burnout for most workers entrusted with dual responsibility at their places of work. Pairing responsibilities may cause antagonism and inconvenience a worker. Teacher counsellors are caught up in such a situation. They are faced with antagonizing responsibilities in school. This is majorly because counselling is anchored on creating personal relationships between the therapist and the client while other responsibilities that teachers engage in at school may call for master / servant relationship. Teacher counsellors are always exposed to dual responsibility because they teach and counsel the same learners during the same period at school. They are put at the risk of suffering burnout at work. Compulsively, the teacher counsellors offering two services will naturally be forced to either favor one responsibility at the expense of the other or give up on both responsibilities due to excessive overload.

Stress also causes the teacher counsellors to react abnormally to the situations in their workplace because the psychological effects of stress may strain their mental abilities. Presly and Walton (2018) found that, when stress gets at its peak it could cause one to lose control of their mind and resort to abnormal reactions. This showed that stress

could be very dangerous to the individual's mental health. Positive mental health is very important in the individual's daily life. Without good mental health the individual cannot function in any given position because mental illness is corrosive and stealthy. High levels of stress are retarding because they may overshadow the individuals' positive traits and block his or her development of stress resilience (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016).

Having so many adverse effects, stress ought to be countered with sustainable resilience. Resilience that can be relied upon by the worker should be lasting because stress is continuous. The teacher counsellors should be able to continuously replenish their resilience in order to be assured of uninterrupted service provision at their places of work. A conducive work environment and positive personality traits are the worker's major requirements for the development of stress resilience (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). People with different personality traits work comfortably in different types of environments. Once the individual's traits are suitably matched with the conditions in the work environment then the individual will be productive and will overcome the stressors that emerge. It is therefore important that the guidance and counselling teachers strive to adapt to their work environment by engaging their positive personality traits. They should employ with strategy the traits that can assist them avert stress and build positive character.

For the individual to stand out strong at the place of work, he or she must be conscious of the inevitability of stress. Being alert about the possibility of being caught up in stressful situations will prepare the individual so that he realizes stress on the onset rather than get deeply caught unaware. They should then be conversant with their own personal strengths and weaknesses that are secured in their personality traits. In general, being aware of one's personality traits helps the individual to utilize their positive traits purposefully to suit their needs. The same awareness helps one to socialize pleasantly with others particularly those associates they interact with at the place of work. It is this awareness of the personality traits one has that enables a person to strive to increase their individual character strengths (Praveen & Shrestha, 2017). The current study looks at the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study focuses on the Big Five Personality Traits and deliberates each trait in attempt to analyze its relation to stress resilience. The study also tries to consider

various factors within the traits that may be contributive to the teacher counsellors' competent performance.

## **2.2. Extroversion Personality Trait, and Stress Resilience**

Extroversion is the most motivating among the Big Five Personality Traits, because none of its underlying adjectives is of dull reactions (Praveen & Shrestha, 2017). The adjectives underlying the extrovert personality trait are adjectives that invigorate and fill the individual with active life. All the supportive traits for the extroverts have the force in them that keep the individual agile and interactive at all times. Extroverts are gregarious, assertive, energetic, talkative, initiative, outgoing, and friendly, (Thompson & Goodvin 2016). They have the social magnetism that connects them enthusiastically to the other persons in the community.

Extroverts are never comfortable being alone or in isolation. They always find reason to be relating with others. The extrovert persons have a rich positivity that keeps them dynamic and cheerful and at the same time enables them to cheer up those who are around them as well (Saeed et al., 2018). Extroverts are capable of easily influencing those people they interact with and winning them over to their line of thought or way of reaction. They are very persuasive in their talk. They are also capable of convincing others to adopt an outlook of issues that is similar to the extroverts' own. This gains them popularity as most of their listeners will end up being in agreement with them. Extroverts are charmingly social and they enjoy a charisma that may enhance positive character strength (Larsen & Buss, 2010). For the extrovert, drawing crowds of listeners into their audience is easily done and holding the crowd's attention is also done with ease. Their outgoing nature makes them to be the glamour within their institutions of work. Their cheer and excitement is always welcome among the majority of their colleagues. This means that extroversion gives one the capacity to relate confidently at the workplace.

Since extroverts are in need of company, their friendliness indiscriminately encompasses everyone they are able to reach. These characteristics of the extroverts successfully bring about easy and harmonious relating among workmates within a given institution. In a study carried out by Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) in El Salvador, it was found that there was complementation between extroversion as a personality trait, and resilience as an outcome of strong emotions. There was found to

be reciprocation from extroversion to resilience and from resilience to extroversion that benefited and improved both. This complementing lays within extroversion having characteristics like outreaching and sociable that boosted resilience. On the other hand resilience had characteristics like bounciness and agility that in turn, reinforced extroversion. The two aspects therefore advanced each other in a reciprocal manner.

Ercan (2017) discovered in a study in Turkey that extroversion had more qualities that enriched character strength and improved performance than the rest of the Big Five Personality Traits. This finding by Ercan was supported by similar findings by Ganu (2014) in a research done among medical workers in Kenya which proved that extroversion had the predisposition to character strengths that made it more appropriate for development of strong character than the other four of the Big Five Personality Traits. Extroversion has positive secondary traits like joyfulness, alertness, aggressiveness and pleasantness that worked jointly to create positive character and generate resilience in the individual (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). Teacher counsellors who are extroverts stand a better chance to work in comfort and to be productive in the school environment because they possess the characteristics that one requires in order to be fight stress. Resilience once generated will give the individual bounciness and creativity that will revitalize extroversion.

People who have extroversion as their major personality trait are capable of handling challenges and springing back to normalcy with more ease and agility than the ones who are introverts (Netter et al., 2020). Introversion is a personality trait that has often been discussed alongside extroversion because they have characteristic that are opposite each other yet could be paralleled since they contain a great likelihood (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Extroverts are able to handle challenges because they expel their energies outward by reaching out to others rather than remaining in isolation and self-pity. Extroverts reach out both in times of comfort and in times of distress. The outgoing behavior of the extroverts exhausts the impulse to acknowledge and dwell on stressors, (Suejung & Pistole., 2017). It generates low stress perception and makes some stressors go undetected by the extroverts. Thus extroverts, owing to their character strength, are able to prevail over some stressors and emerge unaffected by them. The character strengths that are rooted in the extroverts' secondary traits are

responsible for helping them to remain stable and face adversities with confidence, (Lawson & Graham, 2007).

Introverts on their part are deeply contemplative. They take time to analyze and understand everything that they experience or encounter. They retain all their energies and dwell with thoroughness on specific issues (Eysenck, 1998). Introverts purposefully shut out others to give themselves time for reflection. They manage to analyze the stressors and discover methods of overcoming them. According to Darkwah (2014) in a study conducted in Ghana, extroverts are expressive and assertive and have rich positivity above the rest of the Big Five Personality Traits. The same study states that although life is full of challenges, extroverts are better prepared to survive through hard times and even to excel after experiencing challenges. This is because they think more flexibly and they possess a wider range of opinions to choose from when faced with hardships (Praveen & Shrestha, 2017). It is also because they have varied social skills and have closely knitted interpersonal relationships that serve as additional mechanisms for their individual generation of resilience.

Introverts cannot boast of possessing the flexibility nor the social skills similar to the extroverts. Instead, they are solution finders (Eysenck, 1998) who will engage all their energies on a particular problem until they find the resolution. They have the determination that bears good fruit but they linger over events to the extent that is destructive to social interaction. This lingering exposes them to vulnerability to stress. South African researchers Rothman and Coetzer (2003) investigating with mine workers discovered that extroverts were effective achievers at various assignments. They found that extroverts performed competently in jobs characterized by high social interaction like the police force and marketing, where they could easily build interpersonal relationship while carrying out their work obligations. These relationships allowed for ease in performance (Larsen & Buss, 2010) alongside their routine socialization and accustomed interrelating. Their effectiveness that supports their competence together with their interpersonal relationships all contributed to their development of resilience.

Similar competence paralleling social interaction was found in a study in India where the extroverts' productivity was found to be higher in companies that allowed for

friendly socializing (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). Extrovert workers will not be comfortable to work in a closed environment where they cannot meet people to talk to or to socialize with. For instance, they will not be at ease in a quiet room working alone. The extroverts' ability to capitalize on social relationships and achieve productivity at work was also established in the research by Ganu (2014) which examined health workers in Kenya. Socialization brings out the best in an extrovert worker. Ganu's study found that extroverts who worked in places where they meet lots of people were inclined towards giving deliberate and intense individual attention to the people they worked with. This created bonds between the extroverts and the others and brought about mutual comfort. The extrovert teacher counsellors working with large numbers of students could utilize their traits to create harmony, friendliness and a conducive environment to work in. They could successfully achieve the client's free opening-up as an outcome of their (extrovert teachers') free socialization.

Praveen and Shrestha (2017) explained that extroversion contributed more positively to the development of resilience as compared to the remaining four of the Big Five Personality Traits. By contrast, introversion trait may not contribute as much to the attainment of resilience given a similar environment. Eysenck in his early researches paired extroversion and introversion as bipolar traits (McLeod, 2017). He placed the two at the apex of his behavior hierarchy and used them to accentuate each other. Introverts have underlying descriptive adjectives such as quiet, analytical, systematic and logical. They also have contemplative, reserved and isolated as other additional supportive adjectives (Roccas et al., 2002). These are the secondary traits that are responsible for the introverts' always being distant and for their preferring their own company, as explained by Rothman and Coetzee (2003). Introverts devote most of their time rationalizing and internalizing issues as opposed to extroverts who are carefree and unretentive of issues. With the kind of supportive adjectives mentioned here, introverts may easily be stuck in a problem as they battle to resolve it. This may deny them progression and entangle them in stress and self-judgement. According to Barlow et al. (2014) introverts have a higher level of perceived stress than extroverts, because of their attentiveness to the stressors. Extroversion and introversion have a number of facts strikingly opposite to each other that they may appear to reverse one another.

The secondary traits in extroversion are generally confidence inspiring and will uplift the individual's self-esteem and lower their perception of stress (Celtin et al., 2015). Teacher counsellors who possess extroversion as their major trait are likely to have self-value and will work without fear of intimidation. By their cheerfulness the extrovert teacher counsellors will subdue self-pity and sloppiness and be able to generate resilience. Extroverts stand out at the workplace as a force to be cautious of because they vocally speak out their mind at all times (Martinez-Marti & Ruch, 2017). Being vocal, extrovert teacher counsellors exercise self-defense against both the internal and external stressors at the workplace through being outspoken. Potential stressors will be intimidated by the blatant talking done by the extrovert.

Extroversion has a bigger capacity to generate resilience than the rest of the Big Five Personality Traits for a number of reasons. According to Eley et al. (2019) the first and major aspect in extroversion that will empower extroverts to attain resilience and that will relate extroversion to resilience is focused self-directedness. Focused self-directedness is a quality that gives the extroverts determination to identify goals and to focus on them (Rentfrow et al. 2013). It also gives them purposeful concentration with a personal drive that propels them forward in their quest for achievement. Focused self-directedness contributes to making extroversion a pivot of resilience as it makes the individual plan ahead. The benefit of focused self-directedness to the extroverts is that it helpsthem to avoid distraction and gives them maximum individual achievement of a targeted purpose (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Achievements that are made singly generate self-pride and self-appreciation for the extroverts and enhance resilience. This helps them gain publicity in which they greatly thrive.

Extroverts enjoy being in the lime light. They instinctively seek out the crowds from whom they gain listeners and admirers (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016). They are extremely enthusiastic in reaching out to others. Compared to the introverts who linger in the shadows and prefer their own company, extroverts avoid being out-shined. It is in reaching out that the extroverts have their positive strength which intensifies their development of resilience. Extroverts strive for excellence in their responsibilities and seek to outsmart others so as to impress the audiences (Suejung & Pistole, 2017). They gain publicity through the achievements they make due to their focused self-

directedness. Extroverts will often be witnessed giving and seeking friendly attention at the workplace (Ganu, 2014).

Introverts too value focused self-directedness but unlike the extroverts, they do not seek the attention of the audience. Instead they work for individual self-satisfaction. Both extroverts and introverts have the urge to be successful in pursuing their goals. Focused self-directedness inclines the individual towards faster achievement of self-satisfaction (Eley et al., 2019). This is because it gives them a chance to re-examine their capacity and to gain self-believe through achieving goals without the distraction or influence from others. The extrovert teacher counsellors in secondary schools should exploit focused self-directedness to build their resilience.

The second aspect that empowered extroverts to attain resilience is explorative creativity. Explorative creativity helps extroverts to maintain their coveted frontline position and capture the attention of others (Rentfrow et al., 2015). The extroverts' desire to remain in the limelight at all times compels them to be creative and explorative. This need for publicity is what keeps the extroverts perpetually energetic. They must be creative and explore widely to remain in the frontline and avoid being overshadowed. These qualities make the individuals aggressive and they strongly contribute to their work productivity. Extroverts have in them, creativity and imagination that they can use to generate practical ideas (Lam & McBride-Chang, 2007). These practical ideas that keep them at the center of attention must of necessity be unique and attractive. They need to change their strategies regularly in order to come up with new impressive ideas that must keep them afloat and away from redundancy. Being attention seekers who strive for perfection as Eysenck found in his early studies of personality (Netter et al., 2020) the extroverts often use these practical ideas to explore newer strategies for maintaining their popularity. These strategies keep them alert and keen on their creativity.

Ganu (2014) stated that as workers in an institution, extroverts were often found to be able to bond with workmates and administrators concurrently, giving balanced personalized attention to both with perfect explorative creativity. These involvements by the extroverts created a conducive atmosphere at the workplace bringing about positive interrelation for them and for those they worked with. Rentfrow et al. (2013) found that extroverts had positive inner traits that they used in many creative ways to

attain stress resilience. Their friendliness cushioned adversity by lessening its severity and nullified its negativity making it bearable. Their assertiveness intimidated adversaries and made them submissive. Their talkative and gregarious nature turned their frustrations into humor (Stone, 2011). This enabled them to achieve laughter therapy for their own stress, and for that of the others around them, with considerably least effort.

Extroverts creatively used collective force to bond with others, with the purpose of generating group comfort for easy adaptation (Chai, 2015). This they achieved by expertly remaining the center of attraction. It enabled them to excel in after-trauma or post suffering situations through synergy with others in similar situations and others who were sympathizers or supporters of the prevailing situations. Celnik et al. (2015) stated that, resilience was best experienced in consideration of well-being, self-respect and self-satisfaction. A resilient person displays an outlook of well-being or comfort. He or she has self-respect and contentment. Teacher counsellors in secondary schools, who have extroversion as their cardinal trait will therefore be able to overcome challenges and maximize their resilience while enjoying well-being, self-respect and self-satisfaction.

A third aspect that empowered extroverts to attain resilience was optimism. Resilience is the source of optimism and high positive emotionality (Southwick et al., 2005). Individuals who have successfully overcome difficulties in their lives and have regained normalcy become self-confident and independent. They cultivate a positive world-view considering everything with a lot of optimism. Generally extroverts have positive affect in their observation of life (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Their character patterns portray maturity, responsibility, perseverance and cooperation, as showed by Eley et al. (2019) in a study carried out in Australia. Besides striving to gain stress resilience through positive traits as teacher counsellors, the extroverts will also attain pleasant trends in line with their optimism. These qualities make extroverts to be good-natured and friendly, and they build in them positivity.

In addition to their own positivity, as Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) explained, the extroverts believed in others and hoped for reciprocation from them. This meant that extroverts encouraged others by believing in them. When extroverts believe in other people's abilities, the other people value themselves and they are able to reciprocate

in appreciation of the extroverts' value of them. The hope for positive reaction from others makes it necessary for extroverts to maintain and rely on optimism (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016). Looking forwards to positive counteraction from people they interacted with required of them to uphold unending optimism and preserve high belief in positive outcomes. Extroverts do not give chances to any form of negativity because it lowers their hope for success. For the teacher counsellors in secondary schools, optimism will enable them to engage their positive traits with hopeful determination and aggressiveness as they offer their services to the learners.

Relying on others for their reassurance is the extroverts' major strong-hold (Brown & Taylor, 2015). They are solely dependent upon others' reactions because social acceptance is of paramount significance for extroverts. It gives them confidence and the drive to go on. For this reason, they need to maintain hopefulness at all times in order to be strong and remain resilient. Also, strategies of focused self-directedness like charity and altruism are characteristics that make reaching out easier for the extroverts (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). It is in reaching out that extroverts have their positive sovereignty which increases their growth of character strength (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016)

### **2.3. Neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience**

Neuroticism is one of the Big Five Personality Traits that a number of people seldom appreciate because they focus on the controversy in its supporting traits. People also fail to appreciate neuroticism because they compare it to the other four of the Big Five Personality Traits. In a study done in South Africa, Van Aarde et al. (2017) observed that neuroticism stood out as unique, among the Big Five Personality Traits. This uniqueness was attributed to the fact that neuroticism had its reactions generated from the repercussions of its supportive traits. This meant that the supportive traits in neuroticism appear to be negative yet they have great strength vested in them. This strength is realized in the subsequent outcomes of the supportive traits. Such strengths included their great capacity to be cautious and vigilant, as an outcome of their being phobic (Silsil, 2011); their keenness and precision as a result of their obsession and; their determination and loyalty as an aftermath of their insecurity.

Eysenck in his work done in the 1990s identified anxiety, fanaticism, obsession, temper, jealousy and resentment, as tributary boosters for neuroticism (Netter et al.,

2020). All these attributes lacked positivity and were expected to weigh down the individual neurotics and submerge them in gloom and dissociative nature. Contrary to the expectations all these supportive traits generated hidden strength that inspired the neurotics and gave them a lot of positivity. According to Barlow et al. (2014) in a study in USA, neuroticism had neither desirable qualities nor positive cohesion and was lacking in character strength. This study by Barlow and others found that neurotic persons were emotionally insecure and were constantly threatened by phobia. The negativity in the neurotics' underlying or secondary traits which most scholars focused on was accentuated only when they were directly paralleled with the attractive traits in the other Big Five Personality Traits (Bakker et al., 2010). However, when analyzed in isolation without comparisons, neurotics ironically displayed very strong will-power and individual self-belief. Will-power and self-belief emanated from within the person and are manifestations of inner strength. These rare qualities are possessed by the neurotics who were otherwise found to be very aloof. They are qualities that contributed quite positively to the attainment of resilience.

Strong will-power and self-belief enabled the neurotics to take charge of themselves and their resolutions, (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). Neurotics habitually re-track back into themselves and concentrate on their self-abilities without seeking external help or approval. According to these two researchers – Tuteja and Sharma – neurotics made their own decisions while handling the other people's views with great precaution due to lack of trust. They carefully checked and rechecked the decisions they made because they were always suspicious and anxious. Once they were satisfied with the decisions they had made, they held onto the decisions with great loyalty because they have a phobia for venturing into anything new. This therefore meant that neurotics believed in making their own decisions; they keenly verified the decisions they made and; they got hooked to their own ideas. Due to their value of loyalty, they worked fervently on their intentions purposing to achieve success. As a result, they embraced a strict finality and insistence that eradicated all possibility of being swayed or adulterated. Owing to these restrictions held by the neurotics, it was found that it was very difficult to convince neurotic persons to change their resolutions (Ercan, 2014).

With such determinism, there are very limited chances of neurotics failing to attain their intended goals. Successful achievements come with self-confidence and self-

esteem which inspire the development of resilience within the individuals who are neurotic. Neurotics are reserved, independent and even-paced (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). They are always treading with caution. These features of neuroticism should however not be judged by their face value because they have hidden positivity that relates neuroticism to resilience. They are the pillars that give each individual neurotic person his or her deliberate keenness. Neurotic persons do not get into action hurriedly (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). They take their time in both decision making and in action taking. For this reason they have been branded as phobic, but there is positive outcome found in this their hesitation. It allows them time to think and contemplate between right and wrong or between good and bad decisions.

Teacher counsellors who have neuroticism as their primary personality trait will successfully develop stress resilience in their work. Though neuroticism has been very poorly interrelated with the rest of the Big Five Personality Traits as Eley et al. (2019) in a study in Australia observed, they are not as self-isolating as the introverts. While introverts avoided associating with others, neurotics only lacked trust but they did interact with others although with caution. Neurotics showed positivity by venturing into company even though they did not take the initiative to mingle with others or to invite others. Rothman and Coetzer's (2003) study in South Africa, explained that positive response was often reciprocated by recipients who found the neurotics' free interaction to be of value to them. Bakker et al. (2010) found that personality traits predicted the emotional state of a person. This meant that the neurotics' interaction and passion coupled with their firmness harbored character strength that needed to be analyzed in order to determine whether neuroticism could inspire the development of resilience or not.

Neurotics have the determination to learn (Vedel, 2016). Their fear and nervousness does not inhibit their curiosity to learn. Learning facilitates individual growth and the improvement of traits. The neurotics' perpetual anxiety is an inspiration that drove them towards hard work. Suejung and Pistole (2017), found that traits could be learnt. This gave the neurotics a chance to learn new traits and new strategies for handling issues at the work place. Neurotics were also found to value particularity (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). This allowed them to perfect the specific desired intentions and preferences that they valued. Being particular leads the neurotics to successful

isolation of the relevant traits from what they may have learnt and use them to improve their individual resilience.

Resilient people are those people who manage to preserve their mental well-being in the aftermath of trauma and disturbance (Ercan, 2017). They remain psychologically steady and in a stable mental state even after going through an ordeal. These are people who will not display any differences in their behavior after experiencing calamities when compared to the way they behaved before the strenuous happenings in their lives. Such strength is majorly aided by the individual's personality traits. As Rothman and Coetzer (2003) expressed in their study, neuroticism is simply a tendency of experiencing negative affect which stimulates criticism and obsession in the individual. It is a state that arouses the individual's inclination to question with a lot of suspicion and scrutinize, everything that they encountered. The researchers (Rothman and Coetzer) ascertained that neurotics were calm, relaxed, and even-tempered and were able to face stress without becoming agitated or upset. Neurotics did not jump into the action center like the Extroverts did, nor did they put up a show of friendliness like the Agreeable did, instead they remained aloof and assessed every situation before making any major decisions.

The absence of agitation in the neurotic persons was seen to be a facilitator of resilience. As Tuteja and Sharma (2017) observed, the calmness allowed the neurotics to have time to contemplate and understand the stressors. It allowed them to face the stressors and deal with them strategically. Neurotics can work in any environment without preference because they are people that will not be influenced easily. The individuals who are neurotic are hardly attracted to anything that is strange to them and therefore they will content with their prevailing occupation and put their time wisely into it without entertaining changes (Silsil, 2011). They will endure all there is in their prevailing occupation. Their endurance works positively for the institution and endears them to the management. Endearment to the management generates appreciation, self-value, and competence. Subsequently they achieve high self-esteem and resilience.

Neurotics have got substantial qualities that play a big role contributing to the development of resilience. They have the determination that leads them to achieve their intentions (Vedel, 2016). They demonstrate by their involvement in their

responsibilities that they are very committed workers (Brown & Taylor, 2015). They are relentless and focused (Ganu, 2014). Additionally, as Rentfrow et al. (2015) found, the neurotic persons are judgmental and full of criticism. All these are qualities that add value to the individual neurotic worker. Being judgmental and critical appears to have focus on the people the neurotics interact with, and also appears to have hints of negative connotation. However, they make the neurotic individual watchful of self so as to have the authority to question the perfection in the other and stand the chance to judge and criticize. These qualities put checks and measures on the individual himself or herself in order to give them the authority to venture into evaluating others. By these positive qualities the neurotic person achieves competence and resilience at work.

Determination for the neurotics springs from their persistence and selectiveness. Their character and their operations indicated that they exercised a lot of cautiousness (Vedel, 2016). This was to the advantage of their working institutions and it labeled them as workers who could be depended upon. Thus determination was for the neurotics a source of inner strength that propelled them over the boundaries of trauma and adversity. Kabiru et al. (2013) found that determination helped the neurotics to over-power some stressors and achieve resilience. The determination to press on with whatever they set out to do until they realize success greatly helped the neurotics to surmount their stressors.

A worker's commitment to the organization and to his or her own responsibilities is positive character that yielded positive outcomes for both the worker and the institution. Caschi et al. (2016) explained that besides creating harmony and trust across the institutions' fraternity, commitment gave the neurotic individual purposefulness and motivation. Commitment enhanced production and earned the worker recognition and increased self-value while the institution recorded profits. Tuteja and Sharma (2017) discovered that neurotics' deliberation and devotion to their jobs and responsibilities endeared them to their institutions and bonded them to their workmates. It made them to be persons that could be depended upon. Allik et al. (2018) found that the neurotics often enjoyed their work, because they easily got attached to their assignments and dedicated a lot of their time to it. They worked with contentment once they were self-convinced that they were in the right field of work. Their commitment to their institutions of employment gave the employer the

reassurance of long service and gave encouragement to the other workers in the institution (Brown & Taylor, 2015). Neurotic workers therefore, apart from being branded at face value as persons with negative demeanor, were found to be workers and workmates of great value to the institution's administration as well as to the co-workers.

Neurotics are insecure (Barlow et al., 2014). They have a phobia for change and for adventure. These seemingly negative traits work out positively because they prevent the neurotics from venturing into changing of jobs or exploring new avenues that cause distraction. For fear of ejection from what they have, the neurotics strive to do their best to ensure retention. They also maintain their acquired positions, courtesy of their value for habitual comfort (Thiruvvarasi & Kamaraj, 2017). The neurotics' phobia for change and their poor social connection was of advantage to their employer. This was because neurotics hanged onto routine until they got acclimatized to it (Rentfrow et al., 2013). This acclimatization positively contributed to institutional culture and to the formation of traditions that curved the organizational brands. It also entrenched the neurotic worker in the institution as it made him or her to work with fortitude and skillfulness. For the teacher counsellors who have neuroticism as their major trait, capitalizing on culture and traditions created bonding between them and their clients. This led to successful counselling. The creation of strong bonds between the teacher counsellor and the clients inspired diligence that created an increase in resilience for the counsellor.

Being relentless and focused, the neurotic people were historically viewed as being stable, and as having pervasiveness or dominance that was linked to inherent tradition (Barlow et al., 2014). Their character was identified through their consistent behavior that portrayed the type of people they were. Their stability was rooted in their fear of exploring and discovering that which was new and unknown to them (Rentfrow et al., 2015). Their prevalence was seen in their dogmatic strictness. Teacher counsellors who were neurotics were able to focus on their intentions and carry them through to fruition without derailment. Neurotics were found to have room only for specific accepted involvements on which they focused with devotion. They only ventured into interactions of necessity, that were need-satisfying and that earned them community acceptance or recognition (Thiruvvarasi & Kamaraj, 2017). Neurotics will learn only what they choose to learn, as stated by Rothman and Coetzer (2003). They preferred

their view and criticized most of what was offered to them by others. Relentlessness gave the neurotic people such decisiveness that allowed them to employ personal conclusive trends of action that were safe from influence. This positively enhanced their self-regard and generated their resilience.

Neurotics were further found to be strengthened by their being judgmental of themselves and of others (Rentfrow et al., 2015). By persisting on criticism, neurotic people become thorough and conscious about detailed aspects of mistakes that could ruin decision making. They build cautiousness that helps them to avoid slips. In addition, their negative emotions that heighten autonomic activity with narrowed attention as was shown by Southwick et al. (2005) together with their suspicion as indicated by Chai (2015) also reinforced their resilience. By being highly critical, the neurotics often set unique standards of reference for their actions. These standards informed their unique decision making. The result of this unique decision making created the worker's satisfying productivity and self-belief. Neurotic persons appeared on face value, to be stoic, reluctant and choosy but they had the inner potential to develop resilience with vested authority.

Neuroticism has unique positives that benefited both the worker and the institution and boosted the individual's value and self-regard. Neurotics are able to pursue their intentions with sovereignty (Silsil, 2011). They are also able to perfect particular assignments as desired by the institutions or by the employer and carry these assignments out to the desired end (Thiruvarasi & Kamaraj, 2017). These qualities have double positivity because as they generate contentment for the employer so do they generate significance for the worker amongst his or her fellow workmates within the institution. According to Van Aarde et al., (2017), neurotics are competent workers, because they have the ability to steer off distraction as they take up their tasks at work. This gives them concentration that helps them to perfect their skills of interest. For the teacher counsellors in schools this concentration resulted into quality production and self-appreciation that bred high self-esteem and positivity that inspired stress resilience.

#### **2.4. Openness Personality Trait and the development of Stress Resilience**

Personality traits provide the force of inner power that gives the individual the drive to move towards resisting the effects of stress (De Terte, 2014). Traits dictate the level of stress resilience that each individual generates from within himself or herself to overcome the effects of adverse experiences. Openness, one of the Big Five Personality Traits, has honesty, sincerity, simplicity, frankness and trustworthiness as its building pillars (Praveen & Shrestha, 2017). These building pillars power the people with openness and keep them virtuous in their dealings with others. These building pillars that are also the secondary traits control the reactions of the individuals with openness. They ensure that people with openness retain credibility towards all the people whom they interact with. The secondary traits also determine the level of self-worth and the significance that the individual with openness attaches to himself or herself as a worker or as a member of an institution.

The supportive traits directly motivated the person's high self-esteem. This is because the underlying traits provide the assurance that the person with openness as a trait require, in order to serve without fear of negative judgment from fellow workmates and all acquaintances. Openness is positively interrelated with resilience and is easily adaptive to change (Ganu, 2014). These underlying traits give the individuals with openness the virtuousness that allows them to easily develop positive character strength. Lee-Baggley et al., (2005) found that openness had the characteristics that could cushion one against the strains of stress. The individuals who have openness as their major trait are inclined, towards themselves. Their underlying characteristics demand of them reactions that spring from within themselves and expect harmony and righteousness from them. They have underlying traits which bring cohesion amongst workmates (Kelley & Pransky, 2014) and, help in building resilience. All these underlying traits are characteristics that must come from within the individuals themselves.

Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) in a research in El Salvador established that persons with openness had strong positive emotionality within them that encouraged them to be optimistic. Their honesty and sincerity inspired others to look at life with contentment and hope. Their characteristics as Brown and Taylor (2015) observed in their study, made them stand out as people who are sociable, charitable and loving.

They were found to be good company in their places of work because they are pleasant to relate with. Teacher counsellors with openness as a trait may inspire self-disclosure from their clients by their reliability and friendliness. Fayambo (2010) in a study on the resilience of Caribbean adolescents in Barbados revealed that openness had significant influence on psychological resilience. This is because persons with openness impart a lot of peace in the people they interact with. These positive characteristics of persons with openness are of value to teacher counsellors because they bond them as the service providers to the learners who are their clients and they make counselling goals achievable. Achievements cultivateself-satisfaction that motivates the growth of resilience.

In USA a study by Kelley and Pransky (2014) indicated that openness had underlying traits that enhanced positive thinking. It is through positive thinking that one is able to embrace simplicity, honesty and straightforwardness. Darkwah (2014) in a study carried out in Ghana confirmed that the underlying traits in openness generated trust, commitment and productivity. Openness was found to be particularly strong in providing chances for stress resilience because, as discovered by Suejung and Pistole (2017) the individuals with openness as their major trait are very receptive and free to try out new ideas. This trying out of new ideas make them liberal and capable of exploring varied stress resilience strategies. Workers with openness were found to be able to engage in their responsibilities without supervision (Ganu, 2014). Being responsible helped them to avoid the many organizational challenges that come with institution hierarchy and overseeing. Their ability to perform without supervision resulted in character strength that improved their production. Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) explained that character strength was essential for the development of resilience.

Openness relates favorably with work efficiency, as found in a study in Nigeria by Olodayo and Ekwebelem (2013). By streamlining the self to ensure that one attracts trust, the individual with openness generates self-discipline. Openness trait has the disposition to improve one's wellbeing in order to be appealing to those people they interacted with. Rentfrow et al. (2015) explained that the positive character and adaptation in openness emanated from their bonding with the community and their social understanding. Both bonding and understanding are great sources of acceptance by the others in the community. The acceptance may help the individual to generate

resilience that will be used to fight stress. The study done in India, by Tuteja and Sharma (2017) found that people with openness had great curiosity. They possessed an inquisitiveness that lead them into wanting to know more and more about the things that impacted them. They were also found to be actively inclined towards improving themselves and their entire community (Kelley & Pransky, 2014). This curiosity plus the urge for improvement opened up avenues for discovering better ideas for self-management which generated resilience for improved work productivity.

Ercan (2017) in Turkey discovered that people with openness were capable of maintaining positive cohesion even under stressful living conditions. This meant that they were able to prevail over stress and become stress resilient. The study in South Africa by Van Aarde et al., (2017) indicated that people with openness trait were humane and were always ready to help others. This earned them social acceptance and emotional satisfaction with less conflict in their interpersonal relationships. Teacher counsellors and workers whose major trait is openness have traits that create harmony between them and their acquaintances. Having relaxed interpersonal relationship enables these teacher counsellors to work comfortably and achieve productivity that in turn inspires sustainable resilience at their work place.

In Italy Caschi et al. (2016) established that openness brought about competence and institution friendliness. Openness trait thrived in companies that supported learning of new ideas and the adaption to change (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). This meant that openness as a trait was favorable for teacher counsellors because it allowed high interaction between clients and therapists and enabled two-way learning to take place from one to the other. With learning as the key activity in the institutions where the teacher counsellors work, it follows that there is great room for change particularly because learning brings about change. These factors enhance successful counselling and are responsible for the development of stress resilience among the teacher counsellors.

Openness has a number of supportive underlying traits which have positive strength that incline the trait towards stress resilience (Caschi et al., 2016). Most of the underlying traits in openness require that the individuals who have openness as a major personality trait focus on pleasing the people they interact with. Pleasantness

drives away strain from the individual and brings up ease. The supportive traits of openness include, trust, predictability and commitment. They place the person with openness in a position of being easily accepted and appreciated. These inner traits align Openness towards the generation of resilience. Open people maintain predictability and trust by striving to comply and appeal to the people within their interaction circles (Rentfrow et al., 2015). They always strive to avoid controversy and distrust in all their activities.

An open person's behavior list is topped with sincerity. This gives the individual predictability and trust that will make him or her dependable. In addition, workers with openness can be entrusted with responsibilities that they carry out without being followed up (Raccas et al., 2002). This is because they are self-directed and focus on accomplishing an intended goal without expecting to be supervised. This ability that the people with openness have– to progress on their tasks to fruition without being supervised or directed– is self-rewarding and boosts positive character strength. Trust is the most important trait for people with openness because it has great value in the fact that it generates harmonious interrelation. This is because trust inspires trust. One who offers trust to his or her acquaintances will very likely receive the same from them. Praveen and Shrestha (2017) argued that openness has affirmative effect on the worker and on the institution and will attract positive external influences that may enhance stress resilience. This affirmative effect may inspire the worker's commitment to the institution or organization.

Openness drives the workers to willingly render competent services to the institutions (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). This willingness is generated by the fact that by rendering good service the worker proves his or her own worth. By this worth the individual gains the trust and faith of the other members of the institution. Openness thrives in trust and belief. Openness can be an asset to social comfort and security at the place of work (Kelley & Pransky, 2014). With sufficient comfort and security within the institution the worker may develop commitment to the institution. These may help him or her to achieve stress resilience. Resilience brings about optimal functioning, well-being and emotional satisfaction for the individual (Eley et al., 2019). Resilience may be a guarantee of good performance for the teacher counsellors in secondary schools. Workers who are emotionally satisfied developed trust and attachment to the institution. They work with determination and are able to achieve

competence with little or no supervision. The worker's comfort and competence resulted in the institution's benefits and general progression (Van Aarde et al., 2017).

Through the institution's success, the co-workers and administrators attained satisfaction and a general positive atmosphere was realized in the institution. People who have openness as their major trait have the interest to learn new ideas, as shown by Vedel (2016). They are able to enrich their positive emotions through learning new facts. By enriching their positive emotions these people with openness trait positively influence the entire institution and gain their wish to improve the community. Teacher counsellors in secondary schools who fall within this trait excelled as school counsellors because they reached out to others with friendly commitment and zeal (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). These teachers have innate drives to do good to the people they interact with. Doing good to others is a trait that brings a wide achievement scope for the individual (Thiruvarasi & Kamaraj, 2017) and benefits entire institutions. Its outcome uplifts the worker and the workmates, and also satisfies the employer and the community around. Good deeds are reciprocal and enriching. It is important that persons with openness as their trait practice high self-respect and self-value while avoiding depending on others who may misguide or derail them. They must heavily rely on their own values to ensure they do not betray trust.

### **2.5 Agreeableness Personality Trait and the development of Stress Resilience**

Agreeableness trait has everything to do with cordiality. The persons who have agreeableness as their major trait are generally warm, affectionate and have receptive love. Praveen and Shrestha (2017) outlined their supporting characteristics as pleasurable, delightful, amicable and conforming. They always tend to be friendly and to lean toward the others. This tendency to lean towards others opens up ways for healthy relationships that allow for the development of stress resilience. Agreeable persons take great precaution against hurting or offending those people with whom they interact (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). In this manner, they win over great friendships. The teacher counsellors whose main trait is agreeableness will adapt to the school situation with ease regardless of the negative environment because of the friendliness they create. They are able to motivate the clients and persuade them to freely confide in them as their therapists because the clients find comfort in their

company. Consequent to this, they promptly attain stress resilience because they offer competent and satisfying service to the learners.

Agreeable workers often go out of their way to ensure the well-being of the others (Ganu, 2014). They are always mindful of the other, checking that what they say and do does not hurt others. These are the workers who prioritize their relationships with others over their career success and work progression. To them nothing comes before the peace, comfort and happiness of the other person. They are often altruistic and will reach out impulsively whenever the other person is in need. They also bond positively and widely with people at the workplace. A study in USA, by Kelley and Pransky (2014) indicated that the underlying traits in agreeableness enhanced positive thinking and a willingness to better the society. The underlying traits in agreeableness personality trait inspire the individual to always have optimism in matters concerning their encounters and experiences. For them life is best when they are being pleasant to others. Having such a cohesive attitude, the agreeable workers are the joy and consolation of their institutions.

As Brown and Taylor (2015) found in their study, people with agreeableness are sociable, charitable and lovable. These characteristics uplift the feelings of the entire workplace community and alleviate adversities not only for those with agreeableness but also for the other persons in the institution who have different personality traits. It makes the individuals with agreeableness to be good company for all their acquaintances. Agreeableness trait according to Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) has characteristics which help one to adapt during stressful periods by creating friendliness and trust with others. It was found that agreeableness is a handy trait during times when one is troubled because the agreeable person's good nature will attract reciprocating goodness and tone down the adversity. Having such interdependence the agreeable person is able to build resilience with considerable ease. Agreeable people do not cause friction with others and will rarely be the victim of combat or disagreement because they are impressively compliant.

In their study of the Big Five Personality Traits, Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) observed that, agreeableness had strong positive emotionality that encouraged

optimism in the individuals. Positive emotions strengthen resilience because the individuals remain filled with hope and are not easily discouraged by stressors. According to Ganu (2014) agreeableness is positively interrelated with resilience and is easily adaptive to change. This is mainly because their friendliness intensifies their optimism and their conformity helps them to adapt to new situations. Agreeableness also relates favorably with work efficiency, as found in a study in Nigeria by Olodayo and Ekwebelem (2013). By purposing to do what is virtuous, the agreeable workers apply their best skills and efforts so as not to be a disappointment to fellow workers and to the administration. This leads to efficiency and contentment on the part of the service provider while satisfying the employer. It also generates resilience and positive character for the worker who has agreeableness as a trait.

Agreeableness has specific positive characteristics that draw the individual towards stress resilience (Caschi et al., 2016). These include focus, determination, commitment and selflessness. Agreeableness as a trait induces focus since the individual must maintain healthy interpersonal relationship with the people they interact with (Kelley & Pransky, 2014). To remain pleasurable, friendly and conforming at all times, the agreeable persons need to remain focused so as to avoid influence and digression that cause disagreements. Successful friendliness and harmony are what makes the agreeable persons feel accepted. Agreeable persons focus on holding those they interact with in pleasurable delight in order to win their confidence and attain positive emotionality for self-satisfaction (Southwick et al., 2005). With their attention centered on pleasing others, the individuals who have agreeableness as their major trait, have the capacity through the underlying supportive traits, to direct their energies towards loving others with sincerity and towards interacting harmoniously.

Suejung and Pistole (2017) noted that agreeable persons have strong determination. They carry on in pursuit of an identified goal without relenting. They rely on their optimistic nature to build friendship, which is what they need to power their emotional strength. By their determination they gain work competence and social pleasantness towards the others. This way they get the self-satisfaction and contentment that power their bouncing back to normalcy after stressful experiences. Agreeable workers have affective commitment (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016). This affective commitment is caused by the concern they have for others and it generates

resilience. Commitment to the organization by the workers can make a big difference in the institution's productivity. It creates a bond between the employer and the employee based on the profits and benefits made (Thiruvarasi & Kamaraj, 2017). Being committed to their work is a pointer that the agreeable persons are able to get attached to their jobs and carry out the assignments they are given at their place of work with devotion. Since they are generally optimistic and value virtuousness, the agreeable workers are a moral force in the institutions.

Ganu (2014) found that: - agreeable workers had high organizational continuance; that they had sacrificial persistence while carrying out tasks; that they pursued their tasks to completion even if it was demanding on their time and; that they could go to any extent to avoid hurting others by ensuring that they were pleasant to those they interacted with. Agreeableness has respectable or upright work behavior that endears them to their fellow workers and employers (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). They are good company and they often bond positively and widely with people at their workplace. As teacher counsellors or as workers, people with agreeableness trait may elicit self-disclosure from their clients and workmates by their friendliness (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017) and their institutional commitment. These qualities eliminate internal stressors like despise and enhance positive attitude from the institutions' stakeholders. Subsequently, they improve the workers' self-esteem and generate in them positive character.

The agreeableness persons' characteristic ability to adapt and to always remain positive as found by Rentfrow et al. (2015) comes from their habitual bonding with others and their good social interaction. This adaptability and positivity help the agreeable persons to relate easily with workmates and administrators. They boost their value addition and enhance their commitment and output at work. Individual competence results in contentment and self-confidence and makes one resilient. Vedel (2016) in Denmark found that agreeable individuals are selfless and they also display great positive social capacity. This selflessness together with the positive social capacity motivates these workers to be reliable while accomplishing their assignments and responsibilities. Agreeable individuals always strive to remain pleasant to the others (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). They are that kind of persons that can willingly incur personal losses for the others' pleasures and gains.

## **2.6. Conscientiousness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience**

Conscientiousness is an admirable personality trait that draws envy and respect from others because conscientious people display orderliness and confidence that is self-fulfilling and attractive (Suejung & Pistole, 2017). They appear to know what they want in life and also to know how to go about obtaining it. They often give the impression that all is well and this makes them the envy of quite a number of people. Conscientiousness is harnessed on precision, diligence, commitment and industry. These their secondary traits are positive strengths that contribute to productive work. Conscientious persons are efficient and organized. Their precision borders sternness but should never-the-less not be mistaken for rigidity (Ercan, 2017). This is because they are never adamant in their dealings but are always very flexible when interacting with others. Conscientious persons attract a lot of admiration because they have character that nears perfection and they exhibit trends that a number of people may wish to have.

Conscientious persons have the thoroughness that may prevail in the face of stress and combat its negative effects as found by Manteo (2015). Thoroughness helps the conscientious to eliminate mistakes and other misgivings in their actions and this elimination incapacitates stressors. An additional plausible quality of conscientiousness is that it increases with experience (Kelley & Pransky, 2014). This makes one who has conscientiousness as a trait to be an increasingly better manager of his or her personal relationships and daily occupations as he or she gathers more experience in life and in the institutions of work (Yahaya et al., 2019). A conscientious person gets better with time and earns more admiration from their colleagues as they continue to interact. Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) in a research in Italy found that people with conscientiousness as a trait gained daily improvement of self and of the achievements they made at work because they were always persistent in their various activities. With their persistence, conscientious people gain perfection and achieve good production.

Given that conscientious persons are competent and love to work in a rule regulated environment as shown by Darkwar (2014) in a study in Ghana, they continuously recharge their positive strength, like self-value, determination and self-acceptance. These individuals develop additional positive traits as a result of work satisfaction and

self-acceptance. Traits can be nurtured, conditioned, extracted or re-aligned as Dweck (2008) found. They can also be fitted into desired intentions as suits the individual. This makes it possible for a conscientious person to diligently learn and nurture an identified positive trait that can contribute to the development of his or her stress resilience. Thompson and Goodvin, (2016) found that traits enhanced social interaction and positive thinking and intensified the strong characteristics that build stress resilience. The individual's traits help him or her to interact in an acceptable manner. This brings up satisfaction and creates a positive world view that transforms his or her thinking and makes it positive. Resilience is generated through mutual interaction between the individual and the environment (Exenberg & Juen, 2014).

The individual's awareness of what the environment has for him or her, prepares him or her to utilize the best of the traits possessed in order to cope with the emerging situations. Being able to manage the situations that the environment presents to you in an amicable manner is in itself a show of resilience. Conscientious people are determined and always focus on attaining what they set out to do (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). The determination in the conscientious person acts as a self-drive to positive achievement and social approval. The self-drive for social acceptance is aggressively sought by workers of all personalities (conscientiousness included) because it increases productivity and inspires satisfaction that generates stress resilience. Southwick et al. (2005) stated that conscientiousness had positive affect that enhanced adaptive values and attracted positive traits from any of the other Big Five Personality Traits. Traits can be learned and adapted by anybody who has the interest and the determination. Conscientious persons are achievement oriented, dependable and orderly in their carrying out of job assignments and of their general responsibilities (Darkwah, 2014). They are also competent and enjoy working in an orderly environment. This makes them self-moderated and easy to work with.

A research carried out by Ercan (2017) showed that conscientiousness was complemented by resilience. This complementing is found in the determined diligence that conscientious persons have that enables them to preserve their mental well-being in the face of adversity due to focused drive. Conscientious persons are plan-oriented, organized and patient (Caschi et al., 2016). They are also single-minded and reliable although they can be persistent and unwavering. Conscientious

workers in South Africa were found to be self-controlled and task-oriented (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). They were found to be generally productive and excelling in companies that had worker autonomy and that valued goal-setting (Tuteja & Sharma, 2017). Having all these positive qualities, conscientious persons are pleasant and very easy to work with.

The enabling factors that boost a person's resilience include their behavior characteristics, family conditions and community support (Kabiru et al., 2013). These factors and the force within conscientiousness make it possible for persons with this major trait to effectively generate positive desirable traits. The desirable traits are identified as intended by the individual worker or counsellor in order to overcome specified challenges. Determination is a key trait in Conscientiousness that the teacher counsellors should focus on to overcome the influences that limit their development of resilience at the workplace. Conscientiousness, according to Carter et al. (2015), is a personality trait that can be successfully used in the creation of positive character strength. It is a trait that helped the teacher counsellors to cope at the place of work because it allowed the person to take a direction of his or her choice and perfect it by strengthening suitable characteristics. Conscientiousness persons through diligence, aggressive self-drive and commitment can purpose to achieve their desired goals without fail. These are positive qualities that make conscientiousness a resilience generating trait.

Conscientious workers should strive to create positivity that makes them overcome workplace stressors and emerge competent. The study by Ercan (2017) stated that by using the strong supportive traits, the conscientious workers were able to industriously direct their efforts towards productivity and stress resilience. Conscientious persons have the capacity to come up with goals and use their rich supporting traits to work their way directly to positivity of character and development of resilience. Ganu (2014) expressed that the work environment had external influences that curtailed progression towards stress resilience for most workers. Thus for the teacher counsellors, aggressive self-drive should be maintained to avoid digression and minimize negativities. This will enable them to put emphasis on what is relevant and to work towards the achievement of set goals (Wolf & Weissing, 2010). For

sustainable resilience, it is necessary for every individual to identify the resilience enhancing traits and adopt them with relentlessness.

Competence that rests on organizational commitment, as Thiruvarasi and Kamaraj (2017) in Pakistani found, is substantial competence that creates worker satisfaction and stimulates resilience. Conscientious workers were found by these researchers – Thiruvarasi and Kamaraj – to have organizational deliberation and to take nothing for granted. The conscientious workers were found to go about their assignments with the intention to do their best. This was because conscientious persons always sought to conform. It is that conformity that gave them genuine commitment that enabled them to emerge as competent workers. This competence empowered them as individuals while it profited the employer in terms of production (Miller & Harrington, 2011). Ganu (2014) explained in the research findings that Conscientious workers persevered up to the successful completion of a task and were consistent predictors of performance across jobs. This meant that their commitment to the institution was a guarantee for productivity and productivity is a pointer to resilience.

Conscientious workers were also found by Rothman and Coetzer (2003) to be unwavering in carrying out their responsibilities. This made them reliable and earned them appreciation from the institution. Being appreciated made them feel valued at work and gave them the morale that granted easy generation of stress resilience. According to a study by Woolfolk (2010) conscientious people are very industrious and thorough in their work. They do not require being followed up by the authority in order to perform their duties. Industry springs from within the individual and comes automatically. It is a quality of value that made conscientiousness persons generate resilience and overcome stress at the place of work.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

This study seeks to determine whether there is any relationship between personality traits and the development of stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study looks at the Big Five Personality Traits and how each of them helps the individual generate stress resilience. The study was guided by the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) theory of stress management and Seligman's 3P's theory of Resilience.

These two theories relate suitably with the variables of this study. The dependent variable – stress resilience – is enhanced by understanding the progression of stress in the individual's body and managing the stress. And the independent variable – personality traits – can be exploited to correct individual behavior and overcome cognitive distortion. The two theories were used because they complement each other. While the general adaptation syndrome theory directs the individual towards knowing and monitoring their state as they undergo stressful experiences, Seligman's 3Ps theory of resilience inspires the individual to be on the lookout and avoid slipping into destructive cognition. The theories collectively provide the grounds for the teacher counsellors to carefully monitor their psychological state and know whether they are under stress and whether they are receding into entertaining false comfort. This information is significant to the teacher counsellors because it may help them organize their stress management and use their traits to appropriately control their reactions and habits. It may enable them to gain stress resilience.

### **2.7.1 The General Adaptation Syndrome Theory of Stress Management and the development of Stress Resilience**

The General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) theory of stress management states that the body responds to stressful situations in three successive stages: the alarm stage, the resistance stage and the exhaustion stage (Gross, 2015). Through the GAS theory, one learns to respond to stress by understanding how stress affects the body at each of these three stages of its progression. The individual may use specific personality traits in fighting the stress at different stages.

The three stages of stress development discussed in the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) theory of stress management are interrelated because they run into one another. In the alarm stage, one becomes aware that they are stressed. This awareness may cause the individual psychological imbalance, disturbed emotions, anxiety or alarm. All these reactions need to be resolved by the individual so as to manage the stress. At the resistance stage, the individual attempts to combat the stress after acknowledging its presence. The body responds to the stressor by fight or flight, which is also referred to as the hyperarousal response to stress (Szabo et al., 2012). The individual must be aware of their capacity against the impact of the stressor, because this capacity is what informs their decision to either fight or take flight. Unless the individual takes account of the magnitude of the stress versus their own

capacity, he or she is likely to make a wrong decision when choosing between fight and flight. The third stage comes with the persistence of the stress.

The individual may use a lot of resources during the resistance stage that he or she may experience exhaustion. The body's energy could be depleted at this stage, leaving it vulnerable to risks and void of all ability of adaptation (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016). It is dangerous for the individual to enter and linger in the second stage because it poses danger to the body system. Quick solutions must be found. If the individual notes that the body is not in control then he or she must seek assistance, before the body system attains exhaustion. Tan and Yip (2018) agreed that the GAS theory systematically analyzed the development of stress. In their study, they looked at how stress affected people's medical conditions and they related their study findings to the general adaptation syndrome theory. They found that the theory appropriately explored the management of stress through the employment of the individual's personality traits. Mariotti (2015) too while studying brain-body communication during chronic stress related the discussions to the progression of stress as indicated in the General Adaptation Syndrome theory of stress management.

Successful response to the three stages of stress development in the GAS theory depends on the individuals' personality traits and their application to each prevailing situation. The traits must be manipulated to serve purposefully in the management of the various stages of stress (Suejung & Pistole, 2017). Awareness of the stages of stress development empowers the workers to take charge and put in place the necessary precautions (Chai, 2015). It also makes them conscious of their character strengths (Darkwah, 2014) that reduce stress perception and increase the chances of resilience. It is the quality of personality traits that the individual possesses that will strengthen or weaken the impact of stress. Every individual has his or her own level of stress resilience. This is designed by their personality traits which create behavioral response patterns of reaction (Olodayo & Ekwebelem, 2013). The response patterns depend on the individual's habitual style of reaction to different occurrences. These response patterns can be modified by the individual to suit his or her own challenges (Exenberg & Juen, 2014).

Through this modification the individual fortifies his or her reaction patterns that will safeguard him or her against the progression in the stress development. The GAS

theory of stress management indicates that resilience can be achieved through strategic responses to the effects of the three different stages of stress (Sahi & Raghavi, 2016). Whenever one is faced with stress, it automatically becomes the full occupation of the body to deal with the stress exclusively to conclusion. This is mandatory because stress allows the body no chance for peace or rest until it has been fully resolved (Mahabir et al., 2016). The GAS theory of stress management displays situations in the course of the progression of stress that clearly depict the significance of personality traits in the development of resilience, (De-Terte & Stephens, 2014). Awareness of the facts in the GAS theory empowers the individuals to use their personality traits, in resolving the issues encountered as the stress progresses. The theory indicates that stress is best managed at the initial stage (Gross, 2015) even though decision making and focus are necessary during all the three stages. Choices must be made at all stages and they must be carefully made in order to avoid plunging deeper into worse situations which may accelerate the stress.

The General Adaptation syndrome (GAS) theory of stress management inspires the teacher counsellors to understand what traits they need to employ at what stage of their stress progression. This is so because when one is aware and recognizes the presence of stress from its onslaught one is able to purpose for the strategic use of personality traits to generate the required resilience. At the initial stage the individual must be alert. He or she must engage the traits like keenness, investigative or probing. This is to enable a thorough psychological and mental search of what is taking place within the entire body system. The second stage requires confidence, determination, trust and self-belief among such others. This stage demands for self-defense. The individual has to win the battle because resolving to take flight might only offer temporary solutions. In the third and last stage, one needs rejuvenation. The individual must not give up but instead seek encouragement through socialization, synergy and third party backing or intervention. This backing may come from friends, family or therapists. At this stage the individual should not stand alone particularly after realizing the stress is too strong for him or her to handle.

### **2.7.2. Seligman's 3P's Theory of Resilience and its relation to Personality Traits and Stress Resilience**

Seligman's 3Ps theory of resilience looks at the obstacles that may hinder the growth of resilience in an individual. This theory has its roots in positive psychology which advocates for an optimistic outlook on life. Positive psychologists believe that life is good and is worth living at all times for the simple fulfilment of humanity at all times (Srinivasan, 2015). They argue that everyone is entitled to living a good life and enjoying it fully. Seligman derived the title to his theory from the initials of three emotional qualities: – Personalization, Pervasiveness and Permanence – that he uses to explain how resilience is emphatically restrained by cognitive distortions in unsuspecting individuals.

Seligman's 3Ps theory of resilience states that Personalization, Pervasiveness and Permanence are destructive tendencies that must be addressed and resolved to enable one to build sustainable resilience (Srinivasan, 2015). They are realistic emotions that people inadvertently happen to discover while in anguish; these people then slowly get attracted to and cherish the emotions; and finally they resort to reclining in the same emotions whenever they are faced with any form of adversity. Often, these tendencies are so spontaneous that they stealthily become routine in which one retreats and constantly seeks comfort. All three are cognitive distortions and have negativities in them that cause mental misrepresentations. In the absence of such mental distortions, as stated by Luthar et al., (2014) resilience comes with ease and the individual does not have to struggle to attain it. These three emotions however, are strong forces that may work in isolation or in unison to hamper resilience.

Personalization means branding and aligning oneself to some beliefs. By personalizing a misfortune the individual identifies with it and owns it as a personal belonging. They refer to it as 'my misfortune'. Such people internalize the problem and repeatedly accuse themselves of being accountable for every happenings that caused the adversity (Kermott et al., 2019). They dwell at fault and constantly remind themselves of being the cause of the problem and finally convince themselves to accept the misfortune and get used to it. This acceptance perpetuates deep guilt consciousness that fills one with gloom and self-pity robbing them of the search for resilience. They gradually get stuck in the mess of a single misfortune.

Pervasiveness is a wholesome dominance that leaves no room for anything else. It makes people believe that a single misfortune can fill and ruin their entire life. Pervasiveness causes one to view everything about themselves with negativity and see nothing good in themselves (Yates & Masten, 2004). As a result, they despairingly subscribe to failure and rate themselves as none-starters. They fail to limit the misfortune to the particular event that caused it, or to the specific circumstances and time that concern it but instead they faultily see their past, present and even future as one massive failure because of that particular single event. This blocks all their paths of progress filling them with fatigued inability to make any attempts at anything. They are rendered incapable of generating resilience because they linger in past events that went wrong.

Permanence is the notion that bad things last forever. It darkens all the events surrounding one particular misfortune, plus its horizons giving the individuals an equally dark view of tomorrow (Srinivasan, 2015). Such individuals do not believe in self-forgiveness. They even erase the past successes and nullify them because they focus only on one specific misfortune. This cages their efforts and closes all doors, blocking all tunnels of hope. They succumb to unending failure and are inclined to giving up in the event of any other misfortune. For them resilience becomes unrealistic because they are blinded by the past happenings. Having any one of these misconceptions is destructive to character strength. It may wear out the individual's personality traits and block the chances of progress. Anybody can be caught up in this 3P's deceptive scenario especially where traits are lacking in character strength and positivity because they invade stealthily.

Manteo (2015) says that managing any overwhelming situation and bouncing back to normalcy and even exceeding adversity to excellence is a mental choice. This means that one can choose to fly or to crawl by the manipulation of their own personality traits during situations of stress. One will make the decision to give in and flee or to remain firm and fight on until resilience is attained. Successful resilience depends on one's prevailing mindset, regardless of the nature and magnitude of the adversity (Manteo, 2015). There is no big or small stress causing adversity because stress always impacts one psychologically. All that is significant is the individual's decision to combat or succumb to the situation.

This theory focuses on the positivity in the individual's personality. The positivity that is essential for the individual's desirable living that the positive psychologists advocate for. Seligman explains that this positivity in the individual that earns him or her a good life can be destroyed by distorted cognition. The theory states that distorted cognition retards the development of resilience and that successful reconstruction of emotional cognition improves resilience. The theory encourages individuals to avoid emotional tendencies that rob them of the good life that gives fulfillment to all regardless of the challenges one may be facing in life (Luther et al., 2014). Positive psychology is what the teacher counsellors and all workers should embrace: "to be happy and productive even in the face of adversity".

Wolf and Weissing (2010) explained that the Big Five Personality Traits had behavior plasticity that indicated their absence of limitations. Individuals can have outstanding traits that identify them, but they can also exhibit characteristics of other traits that may be supportive of any other trait from the rest of the big five. All the big five traits have positive inclinations that enrich the individual's emotions and give them an optimistic worldview. Positive inclination and enriched individual emotions (Yates & Masten, 2004) are aspects that Seligman advocates for in the 3P's theory of resilience. Yates and Masten have argued that Seligman's 3Ps theory of resilience remains the best known positive psychology framework of resilience. He (Seligman) believes in humanity. He encourages their positivity and their rich emotions which he believes leads to resilience and continuous good life for all. The theory strengthens the individual's fight against self-defeating emotional tendencies that bar the development of resilience.

Resilience can be elicited through character strengths and positive emotions (Martinez & Ruch, 2017). What the individual has in him or her as traits and character is what he or she will be able to draw from in order to build resilience. People who have characteristics that show emotional strengths, intellectual strengths or restraint-related strengths are people who will readily be resilient if faced with challenges (Jowkar et al., 2014). Resilience is necessary for effectiveness in all daily involvements and can fluctuate to extinction if not purposefully stimulated and maintained (Kruger & Prinsloo, 2008). It is not enough that one attains resilience; it is necessary that one further nurtures and strengthens that resilience to keep it steadfast. The teacher

counsellors in secondary schools need to be aware of their strength and constantly put their positive traits in use to keep on being resilient.

Each individual needs to sensor and question their reflexive perception of their adversity (Luthar et al., 2014). Habitual self-questioning and re-evaluation of one's inclination may help one steer off from emotional distortions and false comfort. This is the way to ensure that one does not fall victim of the 3Ps distortions. Traits can be nurtured to develop a protective way of thinking and reacting to calamities (Woods et al., 2016). The individuals need to be informed, in order to protect themselves from cognitive distortion. They need to constantly engage their positive traits and use them in every moment of stress so that they do not recline to beliefs that are destructive to their growth.

Understanding Seligman's 3P's perspective is important for the comprehension of how thoughts, mental approaches and beliefs can affect one's perceptions and reactions to life experiences and to stress resilience. Teacher counsellors should appreciate the fact that cognitive distortions can unwittingly permeate into their judgments of challenges and weaken their efforts to adapt positively and achieve stress resilience. They should always value and utilize their character strengths (Jowkar et al., 2014). Seligman argues that it is not enough for the workers to have the capacity to develop resilience, but that they must also be aware that there are hindrances to the development of resilience that can arise from within themselves through their own mental distortions (Srinivasan, 2015). The Big Five Personality Traits must be applied consciously and continuously to overcome emotional misrepresentations (Taylor, 2013). Besides having all the traits that may be relevant to the building of resilience, the individual must remain vigilant and guard against internal and external influences that may impede resilience. There is need to evaluate one's beliefs because not all of them may be correct or relevant to the individual's positive development.

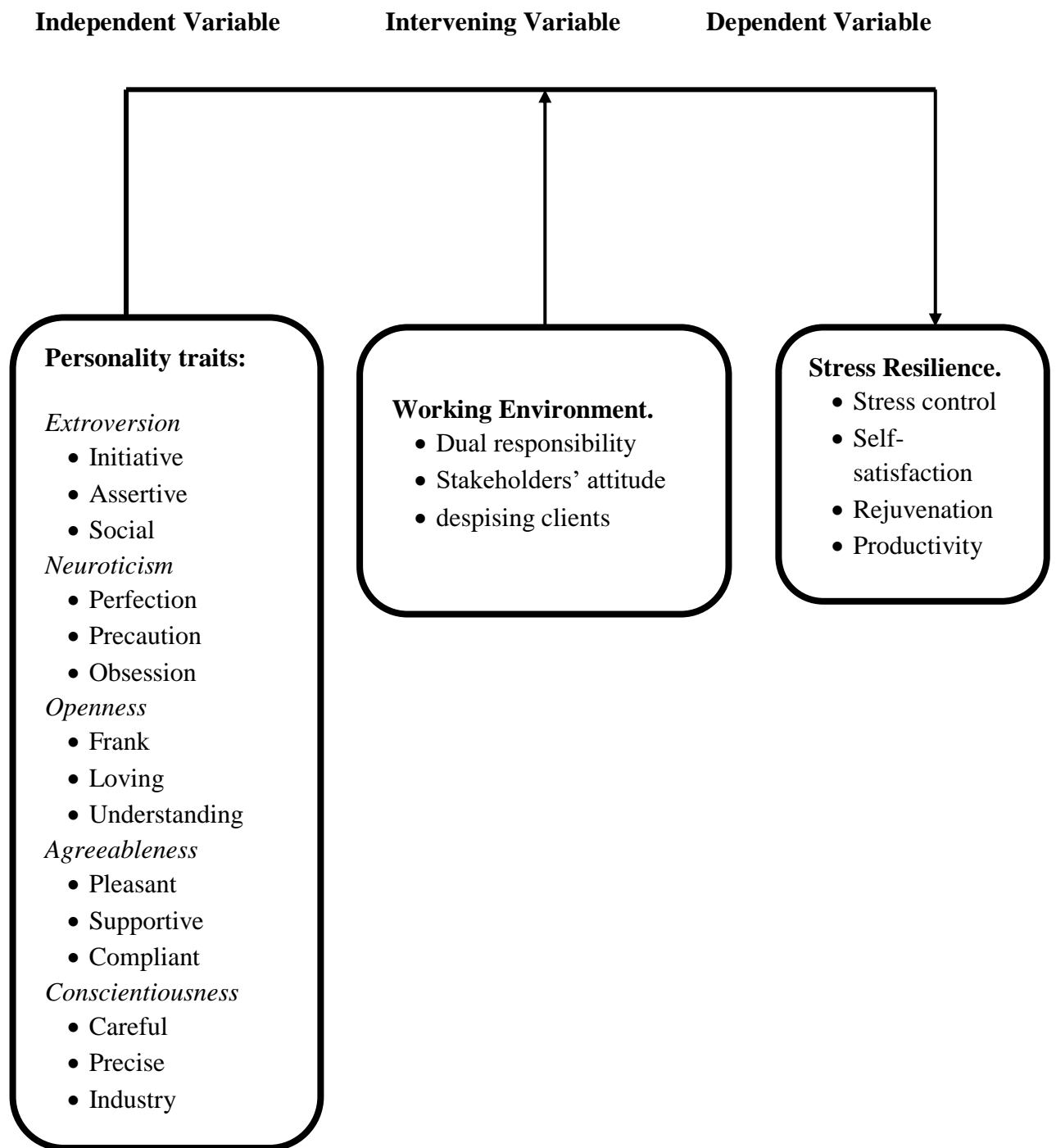
The three emotional distortions can be reversed through activating traits that have character strength and that may inspire resilience (Martinez-Marti & Ruch, 2017). For instance, diligence can nullify self-pity and set the individual working to free himself or herself. Determination may get one out of self-blame and set him or her working for the betterment of self. All the Big Five Personality Traits have character strengths

that can be used to negate the beliefs generated by the 3P's. These character strengths have to be purposefully employed to safeguard against the emotional distortions in the 3Ps theory of resilience. Eley et al. (2019) recommended that strategies for enhancing resilience should always consider the key traits that motivate or hamper it so that individuals are made aware of which traits are reliable in the building of resilience and which ones are detrimental. In view of this fact, teacher counsellors should strengthen their positive traits while keeping in mind that Personalization, Pervasiveness and Permanence of misfortunes are major eradicators of resilience. The 3P's theory of resilience indicates that, in order to nurture resilience, it is essential to root out all its obstacles, particularly Personalization, Pervasiveness and Permanence of misfortunes.

## **2.8. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of a research study is a system of ideas, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs the research (Maxwell, 2013). It is the graphic or narrative explanation of the key factors that are studied and the presumed relationships among them. A conceptual framework comprises all the notions and all the variables in the study and how they are linked. An analysis of the conceptual framework should give the reader the major dynamics of the study. It should portray the aspects of investigation and how the researcher intends to relate them.

In this present study, the conceptual framework represents the notion that the individual's personality traits determined the level of the individual's stress resilience. It further presents the notion that resilience determines the individual's work production which at times could be curtailed by various influences emanating from the work environment. The conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between independent, dependent and intervening variables of the study.**

Figure 2.1, shows the conceptual framework of this study, which represents the independent variable (the personality traits), the dependent variable (stress resilience) and the intervening variable (working environment). While ones personality traits predict and determine the level of the stress resilience that one achieves, the working

environment comprises forces outside the individual that hinder the progress of the person's stress resilience. The independent variable which is personality traits interacts with the situations in the environment to generate stress resilience which is the dependent variable. The elements in the intervening variable may cause the workers to be easily overpowered by stressors in the working environment. These elements could weaken the worker's traits and hinder the growth of stress resilience. They might contribute to the worker's difficulty in adapting to situations where there are adversities.

Both the independent and the dependent variables may be curtailed by the intervening variable. Particular factors in the work environment may prevent the teacher counsellors' traits from flourishing and reduce the individual teacher counsellors' level of stress resilience. These factors in the intervening variable that were likely to cause obstruction include stakeholders' negative attitude, dual responsibility and lack of appreciation (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011). Stakeholders' negative attitude cropped up from the assumption that academic achievement was the only goal a learner needed to gain from school. The rest of the achievements were considered insignificant and were given very little attention and commendation. Dual responsibility was a result of poor staffing in the schools and the small population of trained counsellors.

Counselling being lamped with the less important activities in school by the academic oriented members of the school community made it receive little or no appreciation from most of the learners who were also the counselling clients. A teacher counsellor could have positive qualities that made him or her a very good teacher and a competent counsellor, but the learners would only appreciate his or her teaching prowess and disregard the counseling expertise. The intervening variable can be counteracted by the teacher counsellors' underlying traits. Strong personality traits may enable the individual teacher counsellors to take control and override the elements in the intervening variable. With the supportive trends in the big five personality traits, the teacher counsellors may emerge competent at work for as long as they remain focused and determined.

From the conceptual framework, it was apparent that each trait impacted the development of the worker's stress resilience in a different way. This impact by the

different traits can be purposely used to predict the development of stress resilience. Where personality traits are utilized correctly resilience will be gained and subsequently there will be competent worker productivity (Van Aarde et al., 2017). The teacher counsellors in secondary schools need to identify their major traits and utilize them correctly. This will help them to be in control of the prevailing situations at their workplace – like despise or rejection – and enable them to work competently. The conceptual framework figure also brings out the objectives of the study since it portrays how every major trait in the Big Five Personality Traits directly leads to the attainment of stress resilience. The teacher counsellors in secondary schools must however first and foremost identify their own positive traits and deliberately use them in order to gain stress resilience.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter comprises the general methodology that was used in this study. It includes the research design, location of the study, target population and sampling procedure. The chapter further has instrumentation, data collection and data analysis. Matters of ethical considerations were also discussed in this chapter.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design is the blueprint for the study to ensure clarity and systematic execution of procedures (De Munck, 2009). It drove the collection process to effectively address research questions (De Vaus, 2001). This study employed a correlation research design to investigate the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

The correlation research design was ideally chosen for this study due to its ability to examine associations between variables quantitatively. The design facilitated the identification of patterns and trends in data to provide insights into how personality traits were related to stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. In addition, the design was chosen because it enables and supports focus on exploring natural relationships as they occur in the real-world context without manipulation (Price et al., 2017). The design enabled the researcher to explore the relationships between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, in a natural setting without imposing experimental controls or manipulation of variables. Therefore, the correlation research design was deemed appropriate for this research study to achieve its objectives effectively and efficiently.

#### **3.3 Study Location**

This study was carried out in Kakamega County, Kenya. Kakamega County is county number thirty seven of the forty seven counties in Kenya and is situated in the Western part of the country. Kakamega County borders Bungoma and Trans Nzoia Counties in the north, Nandi and Uasin Gishu Counties in the east, Vihiga County on the south and Siaya County in the west (Appendix D). The County has an area of

3,051.3 km<sup>2</sup> and an altitude of 1,535 meters. It has a population of 1,867,579 people and lies 30 km north of the Equator.

Kakamega County, Kenya is one of the counties that have a high number of secondary schools as reported by the Ministry of Education. These schools have teacher counsellors who offer counselling services to the learners as required of them by the Ministry of Education. The teacher counselors were however required to have two teaching subjects as demanded of them by the employer, the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC). They were also assigned other responsibilities like class teacher, co-curriculum teacher or teacher on duty (TOD) alongside the counselling duties. These added responsibilities were found to greatly overwhelm the teacher counsellors causing them stress and curtailing their psychological comfort. Curtailed psychological comfort had adverse effects on the teacher counsellor. It caused them low self-esteem, poor interpersonal relationship, temperamental reactions and self-isolation.

The low self-esteem came as a result of poor performance; interpersonal relationships were eroded because the teacher counsellors thought they were despised as counsellors by the other members of staff; temperamental reactions resulted naturally as a way of expressing dissatisfaction about treatment received and; self-isolation became a mechanism of running away from hostile company. It is for these reasons that Kakamega County, Kenya was chosen for investigating the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools.

### **3.4 Population of the Study**

Population as a concept in research methods refers to all individuals who fit into the criteria that the researcher has laid out for the research participants (Given, 2008). Population is the people, the animals or the objects that the researcher intends to use in investigating his or her research topic. The population of this current study consisted of the teacher counsellors from the 327 sub-county secondary schools located in the twelve sub counties demarcated by the ministry of education (MOE, 2019) in Kakamega County, Kenya. Each school was found to have one teacher counsellor. These teacher counsellors in the 327 sub-county secondary schools are the accessible population of the study. The participants in the study were the teacher counselors from specified sub-county secondary schools within the twelve MOE sub – counties in Kakamega County. They were the teachers, assigned the responsibility of offering counselling services to the learners in the sampled schools.

### **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures**

Sampling is a strategy used to select elements from a population (Crano & Brewer, 2002). It is choosing a sub-group from the target population to create a subset that is manageable and easy to work with in a study. It is using a small representation instead of a huge number that is inclusive of the whole group. Sampling should give a satisfactorily representative picture of the larger population through the selected smaller group (Breakwell, 2008).

According to Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) sampling table for fixed population sizes, (Appendix C) the sample size for this study was found to be 181 teacher counsellors. The 181 teacher counsellors were taken from 181 secondary schools sampled out of the 327 sub-county secondary schools in Kakamega County. These 181 secondary schools were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. The proportionate stratified random sampling enabled the 181 secondary schools to be nominated proportionally in accordance to the different total numbers of schools in each of the twelve Ministry of Education (MOE) sub-counties in Kakamega County. Proportionate stratified random sampling is an unequal sampling method that is done in proportion of the sample strata in relation to the size of the population identified (Borden & Abbott, 2016). For the selection of an equal percentage of secondary

schools across the twelve sub – counties, an equating form of calculation was applied. The number of secondary schools to be selected per sub-county was the total number of secondary schools in the said sub-county divided by the population of the study ( $n/N$ ), multiplied by the sample size required.

This was worked out as follows:  $s = \frac{n}{N} \times r$

Where:  $s$  – was the proportionate sample size to be selected from the sub-county.

$n$  – was the number of schools in the particular sub-county that was being considered.

$N$  – was the population of the study (327).

$r$  – was the study's sample size (181).

Thus:  $s = \frac{n}{327} \times 181$

After the total number of secondary schools required for each sub-county had been allocated throughout the twelve sub – counties; and the total of 181 schools that made up the sample size had been attained, the particular schools from which participants were to be drawn were identified. These specific schools from where the participants were drawn, were selected through simple random sampling (Law, 2009). This was done by randomly assigning numbers to all the schools in each county then the required total for that particular county was randomly picked from the lot of numbered schools. The numbers that were picked gave the name of the school that was sampled.

The participants for the study were selected from the specified schools through the non-probability, purposive sampling procedure. This sampling procedure selects participants basing on predetermined criteria as preferred by the researcher (Borden & Abbott, 2016). The sample size of the respondent teacher counsellors in this study was as shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Sample size distribution**

<b>SN</b>	<b>MOE Sub-Counties</b>	<b>No. of Sec. Schools Per Sub-County</b>	<b>Sampled Schools Per Sub-County</b>	<b>No. of Sampled Teacher Counselors Per Sub-County</b>
1.	Kakamega Central	18	10	10
2.	Lugari	24	13	13
3.	Butere	29	16	16
4.	Kakamega North	39	22	22
5.	Kakamega South	23	13	13
6.	Kakamega East	41	23	23
7.	Mumias	17	9	9
8.	Matete	13	7	7
9.	Khwisero	19	11	11
10.	Matungu	30	17	17
11.	Likuyani	28	15	15
12.	Navakholo	46	25	25
<b>Total Number of Schools</b>		<b>327</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>181</b>

The purposive sampling applied in this study was based on the predetermining criterion that identified the participant as the teacher in charge of the guidance and counselling program in the respective secondary school. They were identified as teachers who headed the guidance and counselling departments in the particular secondary school that had been sampled.

### **3.6 Instrumentation and Piloting**

The researcher used questionnaires to collect data (Appendix B). By using questionnaires, the study efficiently gathered data from a geographically dispersed sample, reflecting a broad spectrum of teacher counsellors in Kakamega County. The questionnaire responses were utilized to gather data from a diverse range of

participants, allowing for a comprehensive data collection approach (Stuart & Maclean, 2011).

The use of questionnaires was found to be appropriate because questionnaires can be designed to contain questions that relate to the objectives of the specific study. They give the researcher the leeway to formulate questions that will inquest into the depths of the problem being studied. At the same time they give the respondents the chance to individually reflect on and give appropriate responses to the items on the questionnaire. This present study is about the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

The independent variable which is the personality traits (herein represented by the Big Five Personality Traits) was measured using the Big Five Inventory (BFI) developed by Naumann and Soto (2008). This BFI is a self-report instrument that has short, easy to understand and answer questions that may be comfortably used by respondents to give exhaustive information as required. It inquires into the individuals' reactions to issues affecting them during different situations, and this made it suitable to establish the teacher counsellors' personality traits and the level of strength of their characteristics. This instrument's original 44 items were customized and scaled down to suit the current study.

The dependent variable – stress resilience – was measured by use of the Ego-Resiliency Scale (ER89) that was developed by Block and Kremen (1996). This tool has 14 clearly stated items that are easy to answer. They establish a person's level of resilience. This tool was likewise customized to fit this current study's objectives. The pilot study aided the researcher to establish the clarity of statements for respondents (teacher counsellors in secondary schools) and discover possible omissions for correction. The pilot results indicated that the statements (items) in the questionnaire for teacher counsellors in secondary schools were clear to them except for some omissions of words which were corrected.

### **3.7 Validity of Instrument**

Validity according to Naibei (2015) assess that the instrument satisfactorily measured what it is expected to measure or what it purports to be able to measure in this

particular study. Both the instruments used in this current study were standardized, published tools whose validity had been accepted through peer ratings. The tools were found to be especially valid for this current study because they had the ability to measure construct validity (John, et al., 2008). Construct validity concerns characteristics that can be observed through associative indicators. For example one of the BFPT – extroversion – could be determined through observing ones reactions to establish whether they exhibited aggressiveness and impulsivity. The observer could then determine whether the person was an extrovert or not.

The research instrument and tools for this study were scrutinized by experts from the Department of Psychology Counselling and Educational Foundations Laikipia University for verification. Piloting was done on different teachers other than those sampled in the study for the validation of the instruments. Factor analysis was also considered for the validity of the instruments. Factor loadings guarantees the construct validity of an instrument. Factor loadings show the effect of a factor on variables in factor analysis. According to Samuels (2016), the recommended acceptable factor loading is 0.40 and above. Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) also supported that scholars and researchers ought to employ a loading level of 0.40 and above to satisfy the criteria. Subsequently, this research adopted the threshold minimum level of 0.40 to find the construct validity of the research survey that informed the basis for acceptance of all the items used in this study. The outcomes of the factor analysis indicated that the factor loadings were above 40% for all the variables. The tools used were both found to be suitable for the variables in this present study. The results are presented in chapter four of this report.

### **3.8 Reliability of Instrument**

Reliability of an instrument is the consistency of the results obtained by its use on different occasions. The reliable tool should not post varied results when used several times with different participants. This means that it should be random error-free even if tested with different persons or under different examining conditions (Fowler, 2009). The two instruments used in this study (The Big Five Inventory (BFI) by Jon et al and The Ego-Resiliency Scale (ER89) by Block & Kremen) are published standardized tools with published reliability coefficient value. They were used in a

pilot study in Bungoma County, Kenya to ascertain the localization of their reliability. Bungoma County was selected for the pilot study because it had similar characteristics as Kakamega County. It has schools with teacher counsellors who are faced with similar challenges as the teacher counsellors in Kakamega County. The reliability coefficient (p value) of the customized tools was done through Cronbach's coefficient and was found to be  $r = .851$  for the BFI tool and  $r = .790$  for the ER89 tool. Both the tools were found to have a reliability coefficient  $r > .70$  which was acceptable to be used in this study.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

Official permission from relevant authorities is required before any researcher embarks on data collection. This is because data collection involves visiting the study areas and investigating or working with different participants. This must be rightly done with all legal considerations to avoid any possible discontentment. Before collecting data for this study a research permit (Appendix E) was obtained from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation [NACOSTI] that authorized the research to be carried out. To obtain this permit, the researcher requested for an introductory letter (Appendix F) from the graduate school in Laikipia University. The introductory letter was presented to the university's ethics review committee that is mandated to give clearance to researchers before NACOSTI issues the research permit. After receiving the research permit, the office of the County Director of Education Kakamega County was notified about the research.

Data was collected by use of questionnaires. The researcher worked with two research assistants. Participation in the research was voluntary after each participant signed a consent letter (Appendix A) accepting to take part in the research. The participants, were reassured of confidentiality and were informed of all the obligatory responsibilities involved in the research. The researcher and the assistants strongly embraced respect and self-discipline while strictly observing the research ethics throughout the exercise. This was for the purpose of creating a bond with the respondents and to solicit for honest responses.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Procedure**

The data obtained was edited, coded and keyed or grouped in relation to the study variables and objectives. Data was presented in form of frequency distribution tables, charts and graphs. It was analyzed through Pearson's correlation with the help of the Microsoft Excel Statistics Worksheets. Microsoft excel was preferred because besides having all the qualities that the otherwise popular Statistical Package For Social Sciences (SPSS) had – such as being effective and covering a wide range of general statistics and graphic data analysis, – it was found to be contemporary and easy to use. It was also preferred because it can be used with researches of all disciplines. The data was analyzed at the significance level of 0.05.

In this study, correlation analysis was employed to assess the extent of association between each personality trait (independent variables) and stress resilience (dependent variable) among teacher counsellors in secondary schools. In order to evaluate the statistical significance of these relationships, hypothesis testing was conducted. This structured approach to data analysis ensured rigorous statistical methods to validate hypotheses and contribute meaningful insights to the research study. By following established procedures and utilizing appropriate statistical tools, the study aimed to provide reliable and interpretable results that would advance understanding in this study area. The hypotheses analysis was done in relation to the analysis matrix in Table 3.2. The results of the analysis are presented in chapter four of this report.

**Table 3.2 Data Analysis Matrix Table**

<b>HYPOTHESIS</b>	<b>INDEPENDENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>DEPENDENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>DATA ANALYSIS METHOD</b>
<b>H<sub>01</sub>:</b> There is no statistical significant relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools.	Extroversion personality trait	Stress resilience	Pearson's correlation
<b>H<sub>02</sub>:</b> There is no statistical significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools.	Neuroticism personality trait	Stress resilience	Pearson's correlation
<b>H<sub>03</sub>:</b> There is no statistical significant relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counselors in secondary schools.	Openness personality trait	Stress resilience	Pearson's correlation
<b>H<sub>04</sub>:</b> There is no statistical significant relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools.	Agreeableness personality trait	Stress resilience	Pearson's correlation
<b>H<sub>05</sub>:</b> There is no statistical significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools.	Conscientiousness personality trait.	Stress resilience	Pearson's correlation

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics is important in all disciplines for maintaining individual integrity and for satisfying organizational and professional demands for the purpose of accountability. Research ethics are the moral principles and norms that guide the researcher and protect the participants (Borden & Abbott, 2016). Research ethics are important because they are intended to help avoid all possible harm to both the participants and the researcher. They are basically concerned with: respect for participants, elimination of physical harm, general debriefing in cases of psychological stress, maintaining privacy and confidentiality, informed consent and controlling deception or fraud (Stuart & Maclean, 2011). By adhering to all the ethical requirements the researcher is able to treat all participants with humanity, ensure nobody suffers any harm, offer counselling to those who are emotionally violated and uphold participants' discretion and agreement.

This study adequately sought informed consent from the teacher counsellors who were the respondents from whom the data required for the study objectives was collected. Each participant was requested to sign an agreement form (Appendix A) signifying their agreement to participate, before embarking on responding to the questionnaire. Anonymity was maintained by instructing the participants to strictly avoid indicating their identity anywhere on the questionnaire. Confidentiality was further ensured by availing the data only to authorized persons (herein, the trained research assistants). The collected data was coded and stored in a computer guarded by a password. Issues of plagiarism were addressed by acknowledgement of every reference made of other people's work. All the moral obligations were observed with commitment.

## CHAPTER FOUR

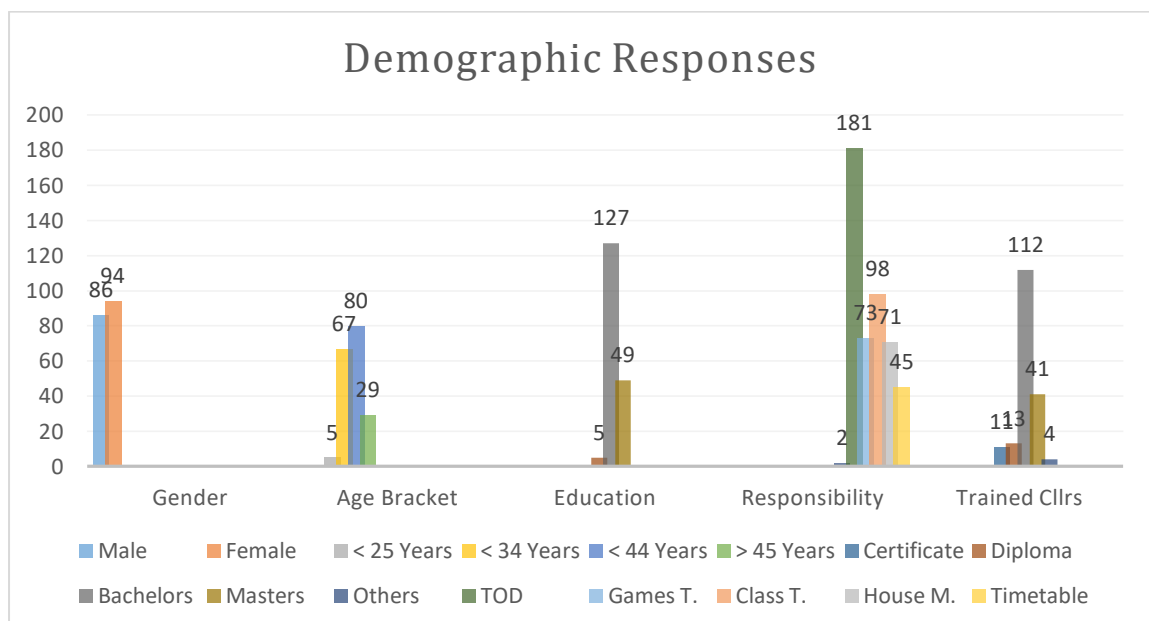
### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the presentation of the results of the analyzed data collected for this study on the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The results are presented along with interpretations and relevant comparisons to other research findings. The data was collected through questionnaires whose items were focused on finding the personality traits and the resilience level of the respondents. The collected data was analyzed using Pearson’s correlation with the aid of Microsoft Excel. The data analysis was done by editing, coding and grouping the data in relation to the study variables and objectives. Data results were presented in form of frequency distribution tables, charts and graphs. The sequence of results presentation flowed from, the demographic information gathered from the teacher counsellors, into the information concerning the objectives based on the big five personality traits. It ended with the findings from the different traits and how stress resilient they were for successful counselling in the secondary schools.

#### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Teacher Counsellors.

The responses to the demographic information of all the teacher counsellors interviewed was as indicated in Figure 4.1.



Source: (Field data 2023)

#### **Figure.4.1 Demographic Responses of the Teacher Counsellors**

In this study about the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya the demographic information of the respondents was considered to be of great significance. Demographic information was viewed as very relevant because it laid the ground for the kind of responses that would be given by the respondents concerning their personality traits and their resilience. The demographic facts about each respondent specified the uniqueness of that specific individual. This uniqueness associated with the particular personal backgrounds provided the difference in reaction to the same situation from one respondent to the other. The different reactions were an indication of the diversity with which each individual handled the issues encountered daily in the work environment.

The demographic characteristics therefore affected the teacher counsellors' performance and dictated their work output. The counsellor's profile and actions according to Gibson and Mitchell, (2009) also dictated the attitude and respect he or she commanded within the place of work. In particular, the contact between the clientele and the counsellor (Lavusa, 2010) greatly depended on the facts about the type of person the counsellor is. It is for this reasons that the questionnaire items captured the respondent's background information. The data collection tool requested the respondents to indicate their gender, their age bracket and their highest level of education. The tool also requested that they indicate the counselling training they had and the additional responsibilities they held in their respectful institutions of work.

#### **4.2.1 Teacher Counsellors' Gender**

The first item on the teacher counsellors' questionnaire requested the respondent to indicate whether they were male or female. The teacher counsellor's gender was considered relevant because it affected the interaction between the client and the therapist during the counselling session in a number of ways. First, in areas where gender value is embraced, with emphasis placed on the male child more than the female, the male clients may feel resentful towards having to share their concerns with a female therapist whom they would (due to cultural attributes) view as inferior to them (Lutomia & Sikolia, 2011) regardless of the gaps between them that may favour the therapists. These cultures preach forbearance to the girl-child who is

trained to persevere and remain silent through all her plights. Here the cultural upbringing of the clients will curtail their relating with the counselor, on gender basis.

In such communities, visiting the counsellor would be considered as violating the cultural teachings and be judged as weakness for boys or insolence for the girls as Lutomia & Sikolia found. These particular cultures encourage the male to be diehards and the female to remain quiet and accept every situation as it presented. Second, dual-relationships which often are a great hindrance in the counselling profession could emerge owing to gender issues. Such could be transference that relates to romantic involvements between the counsellor and the counselee, or projection where hurts and vengeance related to gender concerns are mistakenly directed towards innocent targets (Upoalkpajor et.al. 2018). Third, some institutions hold perpetuated norms and values that inculcated wrong attitudes into their members, (Corey & Callahan 2007). These norms propagated negative connotations on gender and thus affected the communication between the counsellors and the clients concerning gender differences.

In this study that investigated the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, the data collected and analyzed showed that both male and female teachers were attracted to school counselling as an occupation. The data frequencies revealed that the numbers of male participants against the female were near parallel as indicated in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Teacher Counselors by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	86	47.5 %
Female	94	51.9 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>180 (out of 181)</b>	<b>99.4%</b>

Source: (Analyzed Data 2023)

Out of the 181 teacher counsellors interviewed 86 of them comprising 47.5% of the total were male while 94 of them, making 51.9% of the whole number, were females. One participant did not indicate the gender for reasons not indicated. This gave a difference of only 8 (4.4%) female teacher counsellors above the male teacher counsellors. It indicated that counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County was carried out by both male and female teachers on almost equal counts. Basing on the study findings, the success of counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya was not determined by the gender of the teacher counsellor because the challenges involved in school counselling were similar for both the male and the female teacher counsellors. The results also showed that gender was not an issue that caused stress for the teachers because both male and female ventured into counselling.

The study results showed that personality traits and not gender, were significant for competent counselling. Successful counselling was based on the ability to create rapport, listening actively and having genuine empathy (Kozan, 2020). None of these success qualities were attributed to being male or female. In counselling, clients undergo healing through expressing themselves therefore they require being listened to. Both male and female can be good listeners for as long as they can maintain interest in the speaker and commit to less talking.

#### **4.2.2 Teacher Counselors' Age Brackets**

The second item on the teacher counsellors' questionnaire requested the respondents to indicate their age within ranges that covered ten years. These ranges were grouped from: below 25 years old; 25 – 34 years old; 35 – 44 years old to above 45 years of age. Age has no impact on counselling. From the data analysis results it was noted that the sampled teacher counsellors belonged to all the age brackets as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table: 4.2 Teacher Counsellors' Age Brackets.**

<b>Age bracket</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 25 years	05	2.8 %
25 – 34 years	67	37.2 %
35 -44 years	80	44.4 %
Above 45 years	29	15.6 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: (Field Data 2023)

Majority of the teacher counsellors were found to fall between 35 to 44 years of age. These were 80 in total and they made up 44.4% of the participants. The least number of respondents were those found to be below 25 years of age. They were only 5 in number, and made 2.8% of the total number of the teacher counsellors interviewed. As seen from the analyzed data, 67 out of 181 teacher counsellors were within the 25 to 34 years age bracket that constituted 37.2% of the participants. 29 teacher counsellors were found to be above 45 years of age. This was 15.6% of the total 181 teacher counsellors sampled. The age differences of the teacher counsellors as seen from the data findings was attributed to the individual's initial age at the time of employment because the employer, Teachers' Service Commission did not put emphasis on the applicants' age but rather on their academic qualifications (TSC Recruitment and Selection Policy 2019). The respondents' wide variation of age was also attributed to the individual's age at the time of enrolment at the university or college because the Kenya universities and colleges central placement services (KUCCPS) likewise did not consider the students age at the time of placement into the institutions of higher learning (KUCCPS.net2023).

Both the individual's age at the time of enrollment into college and their age at the time of employment as teachers did not affect the individual's choice to become a counsellor. If the teacher counsellor carried out his or her counselling responsibilities competently, then the success could not be credited to his or her age. It is generally argued that the older counsellors are more experienced (Henderson & Gysbers, 2012) and therefore better counsellors than the younger counsellors who may be considered to be less experienced. However, the data findings of this study showed that all the sampled teacher counsellors whether young or old, underwent similar challenges at

the workplace. For instance, they all suffered relegation by fellow staff mates and students. They also both suffered responsibility assignment overload, yet they all used their personality strength and not age to overcome these situations. It was found that successful counselling depended on the individual's stress management skills rather than the individual's age.

#### 4.2.3 Teacher Counsellors' Level of Education

Item number three on the questionnaire seeking to find the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in Kakamega County, required the participants to indicate their level of education. Education brings changes in an individual's behavior and reactions. The results of the analyzed data indicated that the teacher counsellors' had diverse education levels, as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Teacher Counsellors' Academic Qualifications**

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Diploma	5	2.2%
Bachelor's degree	127	70.6%
Master's degree	49	27.2%
PhD	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: (Analyzed Data 2023)

The questionnaire item requested the sampled teacher counsellors to indicate their highest level of education by selecting one option from among the following: - diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD. The data results indicated that a large number of the teacher counsellors in Kakamega County were holders of bachelor's degrees. These constituted 127 out of the 180 teacher counsellors interviewed. They made 70.6% of the total number of teachers that were interviewed. Those who had master's degrees and diplomas comprised less than one third of the total number of teacher counsellors interviewed. There were 49 (27.2%) master's degree holders and 5 (2.2%) diploma holders. None of the teacher counsellors interviewed, had a PhD. These totals were attributed to the fact that the secondary

school teachers' employer, TSC, gave priority to teachers with bachelor's degree during their recruitment (TSC Recruitment and Selection Policy 2019).

The 49 who indicated they had attained master's degrees had put in individual efforts to upgrade their academics through private studies. The total lack of PhD holders was attributed to the fact that most of the secondary school teachers who managed to further their studies to PhD level, often promptly quit teaching in the high schools to join other institutions in preference for higher level jobs. In addition, the employer TSC, promoted these PhD holder teachers to higher positions and deployed them to areas other than classroom teaching. Attaining higher education for the teacher counsellors empowered them to overcome misinterpretation of issues within the work place that created imaginary stressors. The participants' high education level imparted positive strength for the counsellors because education helped one to be more resilient (Jowkar, et. al., 2014) and to have better understanding of issues around them.

#### 4.2.4 Teacher Counsellors' added Responsibilities

The questionnaire for the teacher counsellors further requested the participants to indicate whether they held any other responsibilities in school apart from counselling and teaching. They were to indicate whether they were class teachers, house masters or mistresses, games teachers, timetable masters or mistresses, teacher on duty or had any other assigned responsibility. The data collected and analyzed revealed that all the sampled teacher counsellors in Kakamega County, Kenya had added responsibility assigned to them by their respective school administrations as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Teacher Counselors' Additional Responsibilities.**

<b>Additional Responsibility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teacher on duty	181	100%
Class Teacher	98	54.4%
Games Teacher	73	40.6%
House Master / Mistress	71	38.9%
Time Table Master /Mistress	45	25%
Others	2	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>–</b>

Source: (Analyzed Data 2023)

These teachers when posted to the schools were mandated to teach and to counsel the learners as a requirement by the employer TSC, (TSC Recruitment and Selection Policy 2019). However, the head teachers in the institutions assigned them various additional responsibilities that ranged from class teachers to surrogate parents. All the 181 teacher counsellors interviewed stated that they had to serve as teacher on duty (TOD). This meant that they had to oversee the smooth-running of all the activities in the school for a period of one week. The assigning of every teacher on the staff to act as Teacher on Duty was apportioned on rotation to all the teachers on the school staff until the end of the year. There were other responsibilities in addition to being the TOD. Out of the 181 teacher counsellors interviewed, 98 confirmed that they also served as Class Teachers. They were in charge of a given class right from when the learners enrolled in the school until when they did their final exams and exited.

The class teacher monitored the academic and social progress of every learner in their class. They also were the link between the parents of the learners in their class and the school administration in all matters concerning their sons or daughters. The analyzed data results indicated that 73, (41%) of the teacher counsellors served as the schools' Games Teachers. They took charge of all the extra-curricular activities in the particular schools. Those who showed they were serving as House Master / Mistress were 71 (39%). They ensured cleanliness of the dormitory was upheld for healthy conducive habitation. A total of 45 (25%) teacher counsellors were responsible for time table allocations in their respective secondary schools. This was a daily responsibility as there were always changes on staffing that created reasons and requests to make new adjustments on the teaching time table. Of the sampled teacher counsellors 2 (1.1%) indicated the option 'Others' as their responses to additional responsibilities. Under 'Specify' they indicated, 'Surrogate parent'.

This meant that these teacher counsellors served as alternate parents or mentors to the learners. These same teacher counsellors had by mandatory, to teach two subjects in the schools. This was in addition to offering the counselling services to the learners. Teacher counsellors were also required by the school authorities to give counselling support to any other member of the school community (who were not learners), in case of an emergency that required psychological counselling. These additional responsibilities were assigned in accordance to the individual's capability and the administrators' trust and belief in the person being tasked with the duty. Each teacher

counsellor needed to know what he or she had in stock as the supportive traits that could be relied upon before he or she ventured into too many responsibilities. The assigned responsibilities were essential to the study variables because they helped the researcher to gauge the teacher counsellors' strength of character. The assignments reinforced the teachers' personality owing to the additional services they delivered.

The study found this to be a positive strength for the teacher counsellors because it gave them added self-confidence that asserted their personality traits. It was found that these teacher counsellors had to cultivate individual strong character to enable them cope. This was significant to the study because counselling responsibilities depended heavily from the counsellors' psychological strength (Rokonuzzaman & Rahman, 2011). Nevertheless, having so many assignments running concurrently, caused these teacher counsellors to become vulnerable to stress. It was for this reason that this study sought to determine the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County.

#### **4.2.5 Teacher Counsellors with Counselling Training**

The teacher counsellors were asked to indicate whether they had any training in counselling. In response to this, the teacher counsellors showed, that they were all trained at different levels as counsellors. The different levels queried included, certificate in counselling, diploma in counselling, bachelor's degree in counselling, masters' in counselling and PhD in counselling. The teachers also indicated that they had other trainings in counselling which they specified as in-service courses, workshops and social-work short courses. The responses indicated for the teacher counsellors' training in counselling were as showed in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Teacher Counselors Trained as Counselors.**

<b>Training as Counselors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Certificate	11	6.07%
Diploma	13	7.18%
Bachelor's degree	112	61.87%
Masters' degree	41	22.65%
PhD	0	0
Others	4	2.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: (Analyzed Data 2023)

The data collected indicated that a total of 112 (61.87%) teacher counsellors had a bachelor's degree in counselling. They were the majority in number. While the teacher counsellors who indicated that they had Master's degrees in counselling were 41 (22.65%) in number, 13 (7.18%) teacher counsellors showed that they had attained a diploma in counselling. The study results further showed that 11 (6.07%) teacher counsellors had certificates in counselling and 4 (2.23%) had undertaken other trainings in counselling. These other trainings included in-service-courses, workshops and social-work short courses. This study considered the findings that showed the participants' training at different levels of counselling to be of significant positive strength for the teacher counsellors. This is because the trainings enhanced personality traits and improved stress resilience. These findings are similar to those found by Saeed et al., (2018) that showed that trainings strengthened individual's personality, boosted self-confidence and created positive character in the individual.

Generally, the demographic information collected from the teacher counsellors was found to relate appropriately to the study's major concerns: - stress resilience, personality traits and successful counselling. Both gender and age can degrade counselling if infiltrated by culture or low self-esteem. Such infiltration will weaken personality traits and destroy resilience leaving the counsellor vulnerable to stress. The teacher counsellors' education level, their added responsibilities and training in counselling were found to be pillars of determination that gave drive to the teachers'

personality traits and their resilience and contributed to their competence. A study by Allik et al. (2018) found that determination at work yielded positive results for the worker and earned him respect and self-appreciation. Similarly this study on the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya found that by being assigned other responsibilities the teacher counsellors earned respect from the school community and attained self-confidence. This made them resilient and improved their personality.

Looking at the data collected on the participants' trainings in counselling, the study found that teacher counsellors' purposed to build resilience against workplace stressors such as relegation, by attaining competence skills. The participants' acquisition of trainings in counselling was found to be an added advantage to the teacher counsellors because through training they were able to adopt positive personality traits and develop resilience. The training also gave them competence in their counselling as it opened up chances of self-improvement. The teacher counsellors gained positive traits by learning new competence skills through training. The positive traits helped them to counter workplace stressors. Manteo (2015) indicated that traits can be learnt, changed or discarded in line with whether the individual thought they were valuable or not. The trainings helped the teachers to make informed judgment as to whether the traits they had were relevant or not.

Data collected in this study showed that counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County was very successful. The frequencies for successful counselling in school showed that the teacher counsellors were in agreement with the indicators given in the questionnaire. Successful counselling was credited to the teacher counsellors' determination to acquire counselling training although the success was also an outcome of the strength of the individual teacher counsellor's personality traits. The two factors were found to be linked because the acquisition of skills improved the individual's character traits. Though a big number of the teacher counsellors,(127 [70.6%]) had the bachelor's degree as their highest level of education, there was evidence from the data collected, that all the sampled teacher counsellors, who did not have counselling in their indicated highest level of education, had made efforts to attain training in counselling.

This was seen as an indication of the teacher counsellors' ability to depend on themselves for rejuvenation within their harsh work environments. It signified that they valued resilience which was key for their competent work performance. The counselling service providers in Kakamega County were thus found to be well equipped with the required qualifications. The big number of teacher counsellors with bachelors' degree in counselling was not totally attributed to added individual efforts to improve self. The big number of bachelors' degree in counselling was partly credited to the introduction of Guidance and Counselling as a course of study in a number of teacher training institutions (MOE, 2019) including the universities.

In summary, the demographic responses of the teacher counsellors interviewed showed that the teachers were not bound by gender or by age differences. The responses also showed that to a larger extent, the sampled teacher counsellors had significant levels of education since majority had Bachelor's Degrees (127 teachers) and a good number had Masters Degrees (49 teachers). Only a few (5 teachers) had Diplomas and none were employed as Certificate holders. The teacher counsellor's responses to the added responsibilities indicated that they were all very responsible persons entrusted with more than one extra assignment each. The responses to the demographic information of all the teacher counsellors interviewed showed that all the teachers had other responsibilities. The demographic characteristics of the teacher counsellors who were interviewed contributed abundantly to the success of the counselling services they offered to the learners in the secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

#### **4.3 Findings on the big five personality traits and how they influence resilience development**

The objectives of this study were constructed on the Big Five Personality Traits – Extroversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. This study examining the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya investigated each of the big five personality traits as a separate objective and explored its contribution to the teacher counsellor's development of resilience. The data analysis results presented in this chapter were guided by the study's objectives and hypothesis.

The study sample consisted of 181 teacher counsellors taken from selected secondary schools in Kakamega County. First the study established the number of participants that belonged to each of the five personality traits that were being investigated. Then the individual participant was examined in relation to the personality trait that he or she was found to belong to. The participants were grouped according to their responses to the secondary traits supporting the big five personalities. By analyzing the data collected the 181 participants were identified as being Extroverts, Neurotics, Openness to experience, Agreeable or Conscientious teacher counsellors. These findings are as shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Number of Teacher Counselors per Personality Trait**

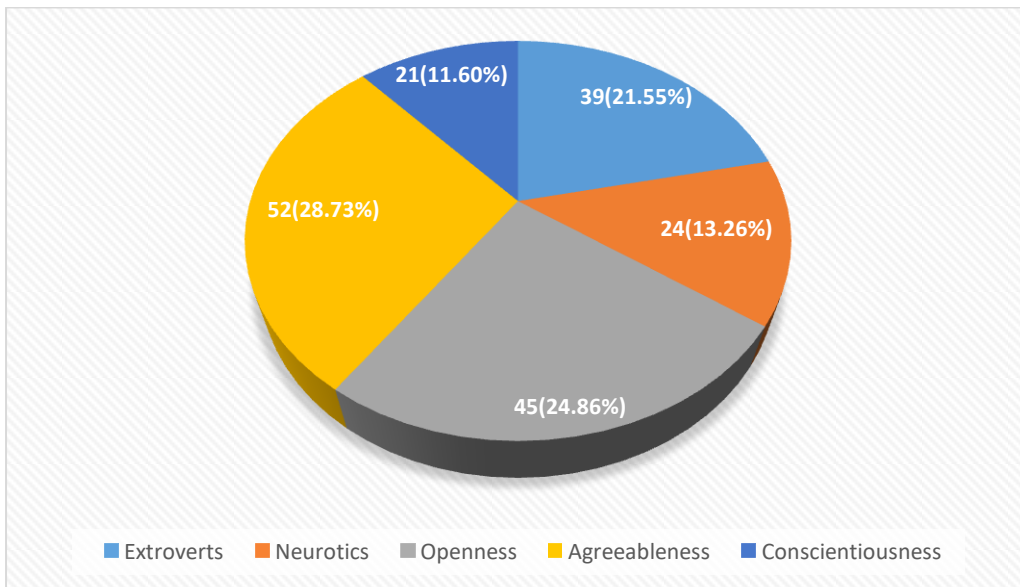
<b>Personality Trait</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Extrovert s	39
Neurotics	24
Openness	45
Agreeableness	52
Conscientiousness	21
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>181</b>

Source: (Field data 2023)

The data results showed that personality groups of the sampled teacher counsellors ranged from 21 (11.60%) conscientious respondents who were the least in number, to 52 (28.73%) agreeable teacher counsellors who were the majority. The teacher counsellors with openness personality trait were second in numbers to the conscientious teachers by having 45 (24.86%) individuals. Extroverts came third having 39 (21.55%) participants, while the neurotics were fourth with 24 (13.26%) participants. Traits were found to be very essential as they played a big role determining the way an individual behaved in a given situation especially where the situation was such that it caused stress to the individual. These findings are similar to findings by Wang and Wang, (2013) that stated that personality traits are essential for the individual's positive development.

It was also found that the participant teacher counsellors belonged to all the five personality traits. This finding corresponded to Darkwah (2013) in Ghana which showed that all individuals ultimately identified themselves with one of the big five

personality traits. The numbers of participants per personality trait were found to be close to evenly distributed since none was found to be lacking and none was crowded with participants. This indicated that none of the big five personality traits had dominance over the others. The distribution of the 181 participants among the five personality traits was as shown in Figure 4.2.



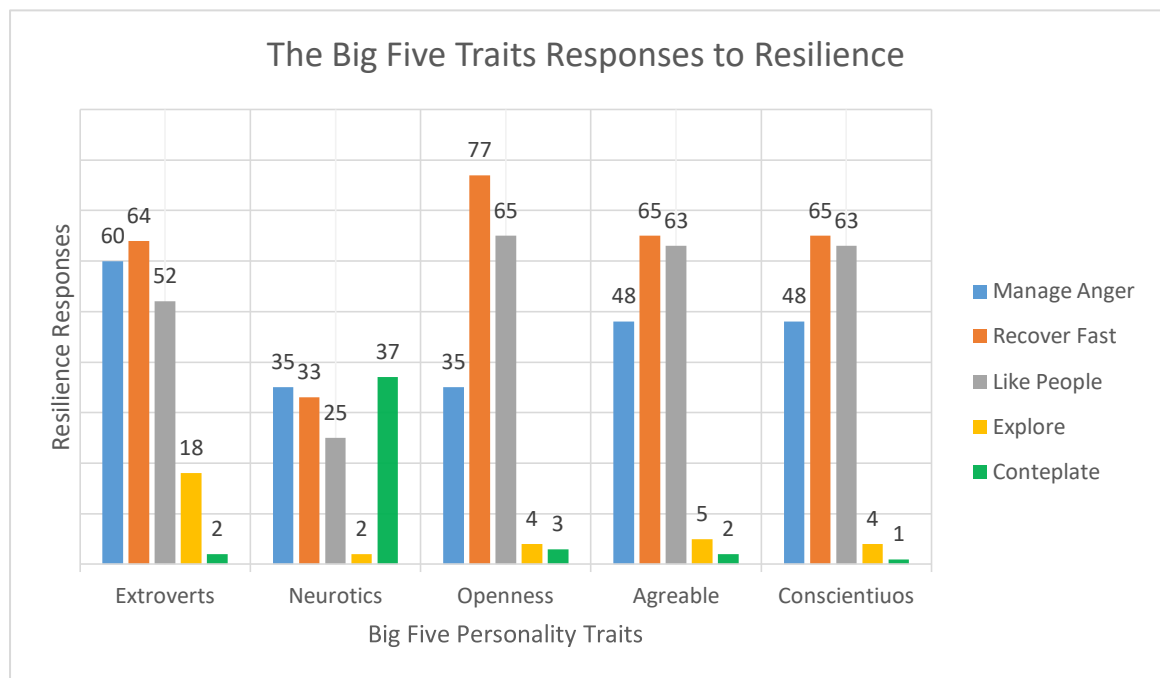
Source: (Field data 2023)

#### **Figure.4.2 Percentages of Teacher Counsellors per Personality Trait**

Results from the responses based on the supportive secondary traits of the teacher counsellors showed that some traits had richer positive characteristics than the others. Extroverts were found to be more social than the neurotics as indicated from the data concerning the individuals' response to the supportive traits. Conscientious participants were found to be very determined and of admirable character. They indicated that they were thorough, reliable and efficient. However the participants fitted into all the five traits regardless of the fact that some supportive traits lacked attraction and were described as causative of easy agitation and fault-finding. This was an indication that personality was not a choice but a development that was based on innate features of the individual stimulated by the environment and the experiences (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016).

### 4.3.1 The Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) and the teachers' responses to resilience

Generally, the data analysis results indicated that the personality traits of the teacher counsellors in secondary schools influenced their resilience towards the stress they underwent at their work place. Although the results of the analyzed data concerning responses to the different indicators of resilience were almost similar among the big five personalities (except for neuroticism), the actual levels of resilience varied from one personality trait to the other among these five major traits. The neurotic teacher counsellors' results were lower than the others while the openness teacher counsellor's results were above the rest. These variations were found to be as shown in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3**The Big Five Personality Traits and Resilience

The five personality traits recorded low frequencies for being explorative and contemplative, except for the neurotics. This was attributed by this study to the teacher counsellors' multiple responsibilities and their need to remain resilient at the work place. Being explorative has the potentiality of derailing one from a given course and hinders the achievement of the teacher counsellors' many responsibilities. Contemplation is an opening to self-consciousness and an exposure to high stress perception that is a hindrance to resilience. Extrovert teacher counsellors managed

their anger better than the teacher counsellors with other personality traits. This was at 60% as shown by the data collected from the sampled teacher counsellors. They however recovered from startles (64%) in a similar way as the Agreeable teacher counsellors (65%) and the Conscientious teacher counsellors (65%). Respondents who showed that they were extroverts also showed that they were very free and liberal with their friends (52%).

The data also indicated that the extrovert teacher counsellors were the most explorative with 18% as compared to the other traits that ranged from 2% to 5%. The extrovert teacher counsellors also showed by the data collected that they were able to bond easily with the people they interacted with. These were the workmates, the learners and the stakeholders. These positive qualities that the extrovert teacher counsellors possessed enabled them to be more resilient against the stressors than the other personalities. They showed a balanced response over all the resilience indicators as opposed to the other traits that fluctuated from very high to near nil. Extrovert teacher counsellors have strong character traits that help them manage stress. Neurotic teacher counsellors showed from the data collected that they were non-compliant to the indicators of resilience. Their responses showed that they were hardly free or liberal with their friends (25%); they did not recover fast from shocks (33%) and they avoided unfamiliar situations and persons (2%).

However they showed that they had aftermath characteristics that enabled them to develop stress resilience. For example the neurotic teacher counsellors' quality of being fearful made them think carefully about something before taking action. This was seen to be a great booster of resilience. By taking time to think the neurotic teacher counsellor was able to comprehend the stressor and come up with ways to combat it. The data collected indicated that the neurotic teacher counsellors were the most contemplative of all the sampled teacher counsellors. They had 37% responses on contemplativeness while the other traits had between 1% and 3% for this indicator. According to the findings, some neurotic teacher counsellors managed their anger quite well. Others also recovered quite fast from startles. This study attributed these indications of the neurotics' to their avoidance of interaction that also kept them away from confrontations. This fear of interaction self-trained them to manage anger in order to keep away from confrontational interaction with others.

Openness as a major personality trait was found from the data analysis to be connected with the development of resilience. The data collected from the teacher counsellors who showed that they had openness as their major personality trait proved that comparatively they were the greatest in recovering fast after being startled or disturbed. They indicated this recovery by 77%. This quality was found to be responsible for the rejuvenation and resilience of the persons with openness as their personality trait. They also showed that they had other supportive traits that made them resilient. Such traits included their avoidance of dishonesty which stood out as a positive strength that enabled them to interrelate well with others and keep away from atrocities. This honesty led them into bonding widely and minimizing stressors. The teacher counsellors with Openness also showed that they had the highest frequency for liking the people they interacted with (65%). This led to the interpretation that they were the most friendly compared to the rest of the big five personalities.

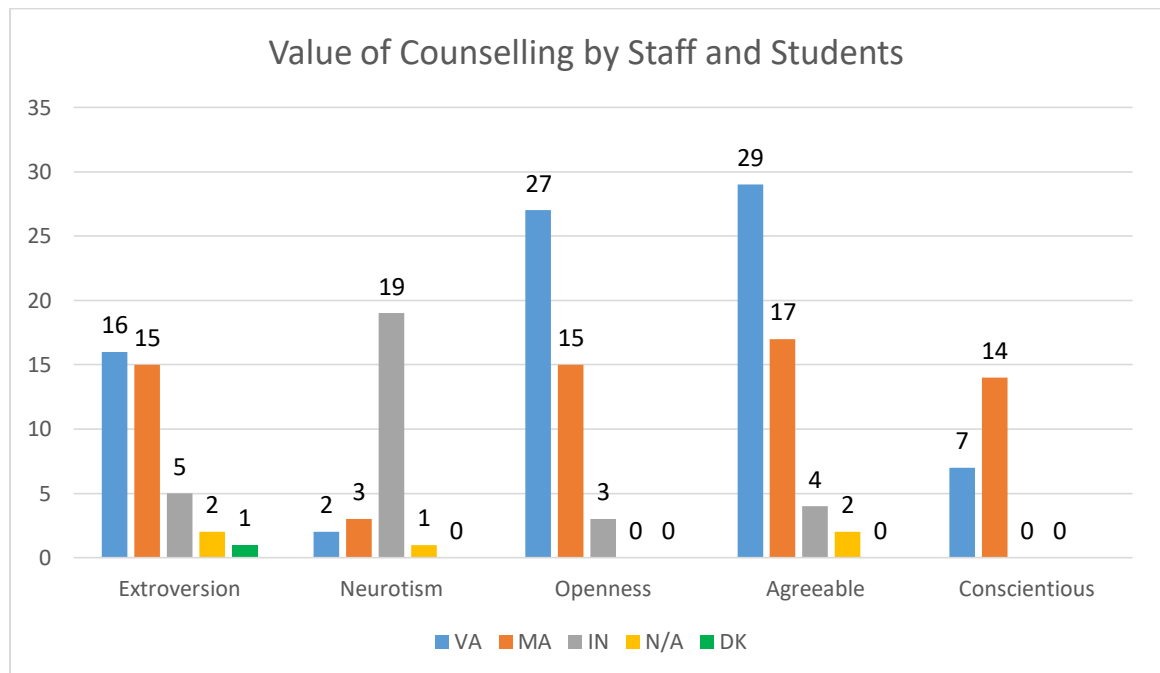
Agreeableness as a major personality trait was found to be strongly conforming to the items on the questionnaire that inquired about the possession of resilience indicators. The responses by the teacher counsellors with Agreeableness personality trait indicated that they were as good as the extroverts in recovering from startles (63%) and in relating positively with others (65%). Agreeable teacher counsellors showed that they had the ability to manage anger (48%) and familiarize with new situations (5%). These qualities gave them resilience and made them manage the stressful situations in the work environment. Conscientiousness teacher counsellors were found from the data analysis to have positive inclination towards resilience. They showed high frequencies of managing anger (48%), recovering fast from startles (65%) and liking the people they interacted with (63%). The sampled conscientious teacher counsellors showed from the data collected that they were not contemplative (1%). These are action people who have diligence as one of their supportive traits that they are admired for. Conscientious persons have many positive characteristics and positivity that enhance resilience.

The data collected from the sampled teacher counsellors indicated through the analysis that the three basic resilience indicators: – I quickly get over and recover fast from being startled; I find most of the people I meet to be likeable; and I get over my anger at someone reasonably quickly – were found to be almost equally distributed within the responses by the teacher counsellors from the different big five personality

traits. The neurotics had the lower frequencies while the openness personality had the highest frequencies. None of the five personalities had zero frequencies for any of the resilience indicators. This meant that all the five traits had a relationship with resilience.

#### 4.3.2 The Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) and Successful School Counselling

This study was concerned with personality traits and how they would boost resilience and help the teacher counsellors offer competent services to the learners in the secondary schools. The teacher counsellors were examined in view of their inclinations, their personality traits and the successful services they offered to the learners. According to the results of the analyzed data, there was evidence that the counselling that was done in secondary schools in Kakamega County was quite successful. The teacher counsellors interviewed showed that counselling was highly valued by both staff and students in the schools. The responses by the different personalities were as indicated in Figure 4.4.



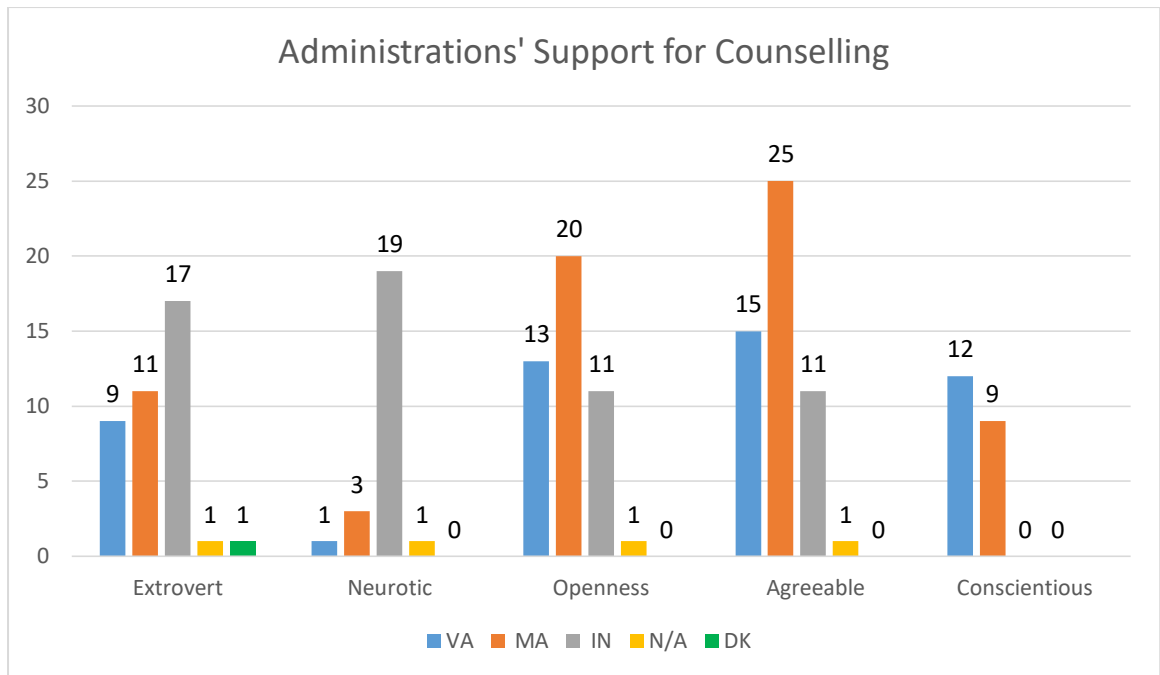
**Figure 4.4 Big Five Personality Traits Responses to Value of Counselling in school.**

The results in regard to the questionnaire item whether counselling was highly valued by both staff and students, were found to vary from one personality trait to the other. Agreeable teacher counsellors had the highest frequencies on this indicator. They

accepted that the indicator was Very Accurately (VA) applicable to their schools. Out of the 52 Agreeable teacher counsellors interviewed 29 (55.77%) said it was Very Accurate, 17 (32.69%) thought it was Moderately Accurate (MA) in application to them and only 4 (6.69%) indicated that it was Inaccurate (IN). Two Agreeable teacher counsellors responded with Not Applicable (N/A).

Respondents with Openness as their personality trait agreed with the indicator and gave responses that were almost as frequent as those of the Agreeable respondents. They had results of 27(60%) VA, 15(33%) MA, and 3 (7 %) IN. None of them indicated N/A or DK as their response. The Conscientious teacher counsellors had results that were a reflection of what is generally expected of them. They gave clear-cut responses that supported the indication that all of them agreed that it was accurately applicable. None of them indicated IN, N/A or DK. Over half of the Extrovert teacher counsellors sampled (79.49%) agreed that counselling was highly valued by the staff and teachers in their schools. The rest of the sample thought it was IN or N/A. The Neurotic teacher counsellors gave the lowest indications of counselling being valued by both staff and students in their schools. The data results showed that only 2 (8.3%) neurotic teachers thought that counselling was highly valued by both staff and students in the school in which they served as counsellors. Those who thought it was moderately accurate were 3(33.3 %) and 19 (43.6%) responded with Inaccurate (IN). One teacher said it was not applicable (N/A) and none responded with a Don't Know, (DK).

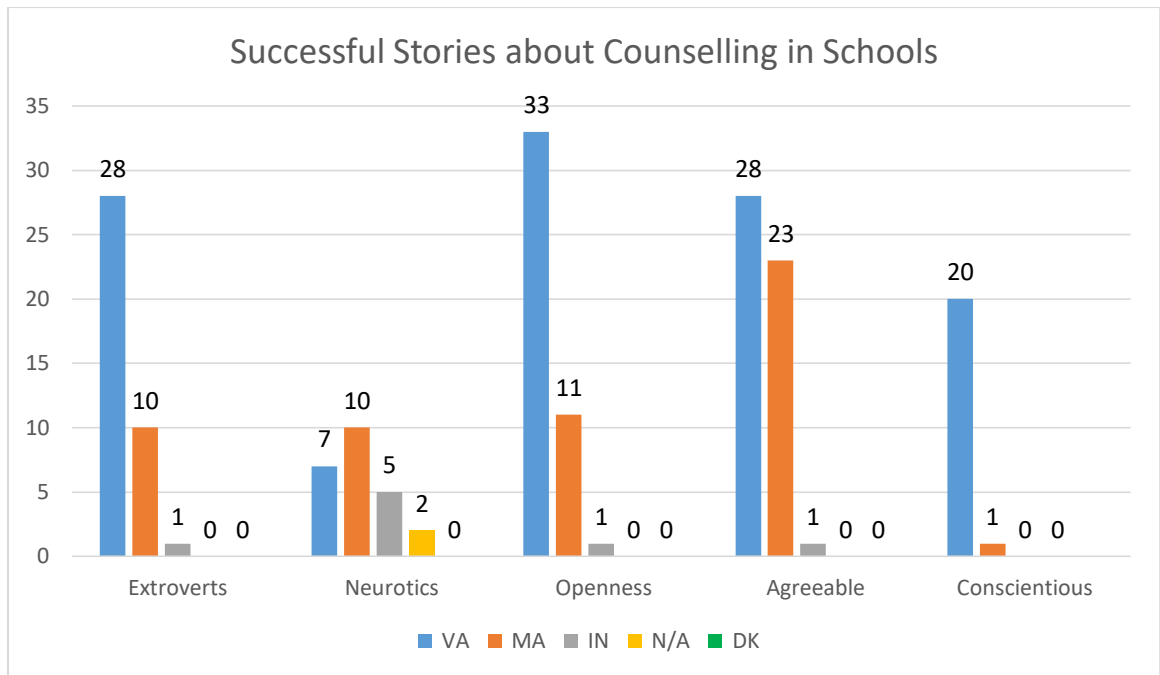
The second indicator of successful counselling in the schools inquired whether the schools administrations supported counselling in the schools. The results for this item of the questionnaire were found to be generally negative. As seen in Figure 4.5, the high frequencies were for Inaccurate (IN) and Moderately Accurate (MA).



**Figure 4.5 School Administrations' Support for Counselling**

The school administrators did not support counselling in the schools significantly enough. Data results showed that the teacher counsellors were not satisfied with this support. They found the indicator to be inapplicable (IN) to them with the neurotics indicating 19 (79.16%) and the extroverts indicated 17 (42.58%). The Conscientious teacher counsellors however responded with VA by 12(57.14%) thus agreeing that the school administration supported counselling. This study attributed this response to the conscientious persons' positive character that tended to find positivity in everything they were involved in. Openness teacher counsellors indicated by 20 (44.44) that it was moderate MA.

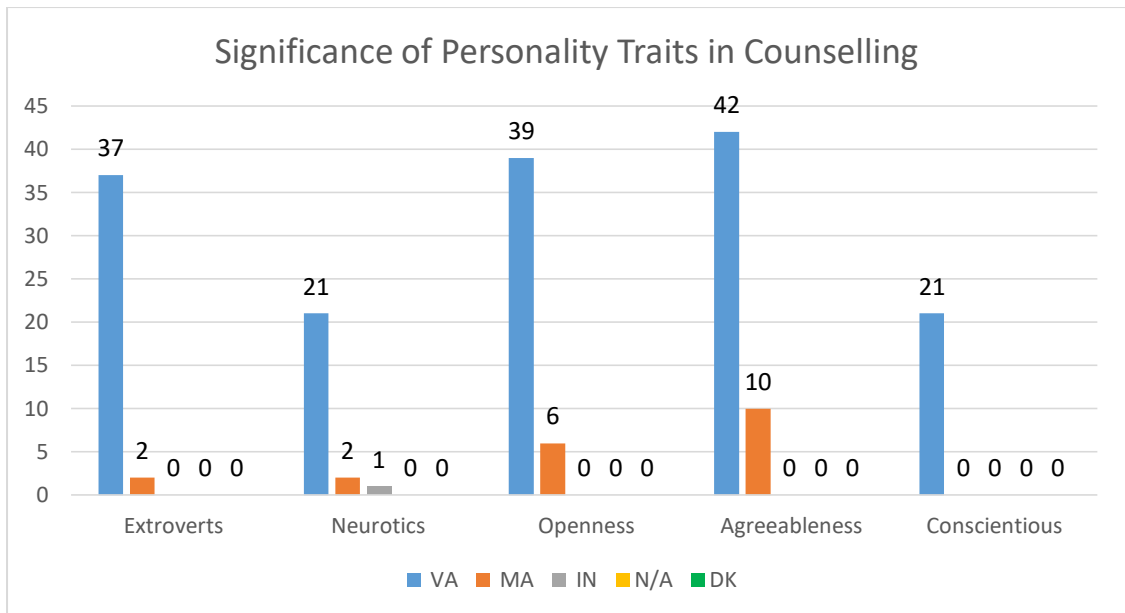
More than half of the 181 sampled teacher counsellors indicated that they had many inspiring success stories about the counselling in their departments. This was the third indicator on the questionnaire that inquired about the successful stories about counselling in the secondary schools. The indications in Figure 4.6 showed the dominance of the Very Accurate (VA) response from the teachers interviewed.



**Figure 4.6 Responses for success stories about counselling in schools**

The data results indicated that the sampled teacher counsellors had several counselling success stories in their departments. This was an indication that school counselling was satisfactorily successful. The teacher counsellors with openness as their major personality trait had 33 (73.33%) indicating that they had many counselling success stories. The rest of the traits were found to be in agreement as the extroverts had 28(71.79%) and the agreeable had 28 (53.84%). The conscientious teacher counsellors had (20) 95.23% frequencies while the neurotics had only 10 (29.16%) for this indicator. The Conscientious teacher counsellors unanimously agreed with the indicator by responding only with Very Accurate (VA) 20 (95%) and Moderately Accurate (MA) 1(5%).

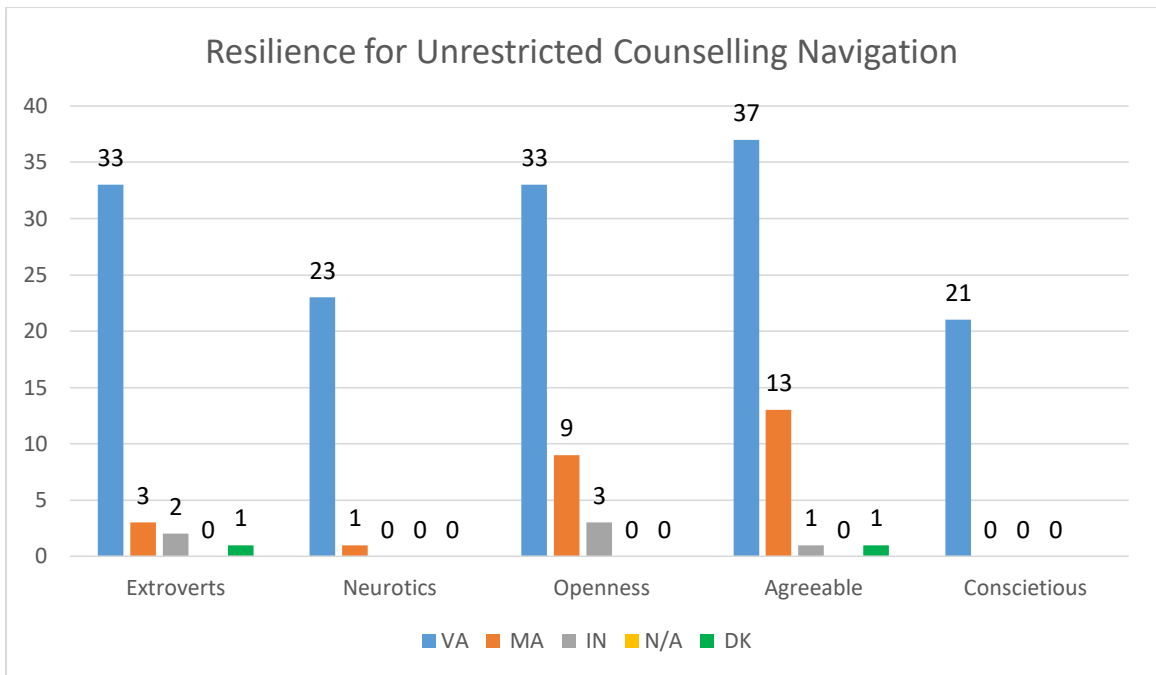
The teacher counsellors interviewed consistently agreed with the fourth indicator that stated that personality traits were very significant for counselling service delivery in secondary schools. This indicator was accepted with totality as all the respondents indicated either VA or MA with the exception of one Neurotic teacher counsellor who indicated Inaccurate (IN) as the response. The responses to this indicator were found to be as shown in Figure 4.7.



**Figure 4.7** Responses to significance of personality traits in counselling service delivery.

Data results showed that only 1 (0.5%) of the 181 teacher counsellors interviewed indicated that personality traits were not significant for the delivery of counselling services in the secondary schools. 160 (88.41%) of the sample were in total agreement as they responded with Very Accurate (VA) while 20 (11.05%) thought their significance was Moderately Accurate (MA). By acknowledging the significance of the counsellors' personality traits in their service delivery, the teacher counsellors confirmed that personality traits influenced the success of counselling. This was found to enhance the findings that personality traits impacted the development of resilience in an individual. It was evident from the data results that it was resilience that enabled the teacher counsellors to perform under the stressing circumstances in their work places.

According to the final indicator on successful counselling in school, - Stress resilience allows for counselling navigation - it was found that stress resilience allowed for unrestricted navigation of counselling activities. These results indicated that if an individual was able to manage their stress efficiently then he or she could venture into any avenue to improve their counselling prowess because they would surmount all the unanticipated stressors ahead. Responses on resilience and counselling navigation were as shown in Figure 4.8.



**Figure 4.8 Responses for Resilience and Unrestricted Counselling Navigation**

The teacher counsellors agreed by a majority of 123 (67.96%) with Very Accurate (VA) indication that stress resilience empowered them to work freely by networking with other counsellors. Additionally 14 (7.73%) participants responded with Moderately Accurate (MA) supporting the same indicator. Only 5 (2.76 %) teachers indicated that it was an Inaccurate statement while 2 (1.10%) teacher counsellors showed that they had no answer for the indicator by responding with DK. Majority of the teacher counsellors therefore were of the opinion that if a counsellor was free of stress then he or she would be in a position to widely explore the counselling field in order to serve better.

In summary the study results found that counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya required more support of the school administrations, the staff and the students. This is because the results of the data analysis showed that the schools' administrators' support for the counselling services offered in the secondary schools was insufficient. The same results also showed that the staff and students did not value counselling as highly as it deserves to be valued. This was in view of the fact that counselling did a lot of good for the learners in secondary schools. It prepared them for academic success by addressing their academic constraints; it resolved the concerns between parents and learners or teachers and learners and it also

helped the learners accept their weaknesses in readiness to face the world outside the schools. When the teacher counsellors failed to get support from the school administrators and encouragement from their colleagues and clients, then their good performance was jeopardized. For the improvement of counselling in secondary schools the teacher counsellors needed adequate support from relevant partners since this would enhance the development of positive character traits.

#### **4.4 Extroversion Personality Trait and the development of Stress Resilience among Teacher Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

The data collected for this study concerned the big five personality traits and how they contributed to the development of stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools who were the participants from whom the information was gathered. The data was collected in view of the study objectives and research hypotheses, and was analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The study results were presented in the order in which the study objectives were arranged in this study.

The first objective presented was: To determine the relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The data collected was centered on the supportive traits that boosted the extroversion personality. From the 181 teacher counsellors sampled 39 extroverts were identified after the analyzed results indicated that they possessed the relevant extroversion supportive traits that enabled them to remain stress resilient even under stressful situations. Under this trait, the supportive traits which were the indicators included being social, energetic, assertive and explorative. The responses are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7 Extroverts response to the Supportive Traits**

<b>Extroverts Supporting Traits</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>I am very talkative and can easily convince others.</b>	28	6	5	0	0	39
<b>I am full of energy and inventiveness.</b>	32	4	3	0	0	39
<b>I like to impress others and to be in the limelight but I fear failure.</b>	14	16	9	0	0	39
<b>I am assertive and explorative.</b>	23	12	4	0	0	39
<b>I am very friendly, outgoing and sociable.</b>	34	5	0	0	0	39
<b>Total Responses</b>		43	21	0	0	----

131

Source: Field data

Key: **VA** – Very Accurate    **MA** – Moderately Accurate    **IN** – Inaccurate    **N/A** – Not Applicable    **DK** – Don't Know

The 39 teacher counsellors were found to be primarily extroverts as they responded positively to the major supportive traits. The data analysis showed that these 39 indicated that the supportive traits provided in the questionnaire referred to them 67.12% Very Accurately (VA), 22.15% Moderately Accurate (MA) and only 10.76% Inaccurate (IN). None of them indicated that the traits were N/A or DK. This showed that the 39 were not affected by the big five plasticity or the stretching over boundaries that Wolf and Weissing (2010) found in their study. The research data collected pointed to the interpretation that those teacher counsellors who were talkative and could easily convince others; and were also energetic and inventive, were the extroverts. These same teacher counsellors who were talkative and convincing were in addition found to be friendly, outgoing and very sociable. They were assertive and explorative too. These teacher counsellors were identified by the study as extroverts because the traits they exhibited were the underlying traits for extroversion.

#### 4.4.1 Extroversion and Resilience Indications

The data gathered to respond to the study objective that aimed at establishing whether there was any relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools showed that indeed there was a relationship. This was established through the analysis of data collected. This analysis indicated that the extrovert teacher counsellors identified their characteristics with resilience indicators that were listed in the Big Five Inventory questionnaire. These indicators of resilience were examined in relation to all the teacher counsellors who exhibited extroversion traits among the 181 participants sampled. The response distribution of the sampled teacher counsellors to the resilience indicators was as presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8 Extrovert Teachers' Responses to Resilience Indicators.**

<b>Resilience Indicators</b>	<b>frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage (181)</b>
<b>Manage anger well</b>	60	33.12%
<b>Recover fast from startles</b>	64	35.36%
<b>Find people likeable</b>	52	28.78%
<b>Explore new and different things</b>	18	10.4%
<b>Contemplate carefully before acting</b>	5	3.6%

Source: Field data

The teacher counsellors who possessed the supportive traits of extroversion showed that they had a high level of stress resilience. The frequencies for resilience indicators were as high as 64 responses. Extroverts were thus found to be associated with stress resilience. The study also found from the data frequencies that some teacher counsellors who by the show of the supportive traits belonged to the other major traits of the big five occasionally showed some extroversion indications. This is in agreement with findings by Wolf and Weissing (2010) which indicated that the Big Five Personality Traits had behavior plasticity that designated their absence of limitations and allowed them to stretch over boundaries.

Looking at the teacher counsellors in relation to resilience indicators, the sampled teacher counsellors with extroversion inclinations showed by their responses that they were able to recover fast when startled (35.3%). They also indicated that they were able to manage their anger easily (33.1%) and that they found most people they

interacted with to be likeable (28.7%). These findings are in agreement with what Thompson & Goodvin (2016) found in their study indicating that extroverts had positive underlying adjectives that gave them character strength that enabled them to overcome traumatic situations. The support traits that the extroverts in this study possessed as shown by their responses gave them the power to relate positively within the community. This contributed to their being resilient in times of difficulties.

In comparison to the extrovert teachers counsellors, the data collected from the introvert teacher counsellors showed that they were contemplative and reflective. They were also found to be reserved and deep thinkers. Introvert teachers got their resilience from their emotional stability that allowed them to remain calm even in tough situations. The positive adjectives that boosted the Extroverts also equipped them with a positive outlook towards life. Traits are a source of self-defense as they give one the inner drive to react in a specific way. Extrovert persons have a rich positivity that keeps them lively and cheerful and at the same time enables them to cheer up those who are around them as well (Saeed et al., 2018). They are charmingly social and they enjoy a charisma that enhances positive character strength (Larsen & Buss, 2010). They are capable of self-rejuvenation through the use of their supportive traits. Teacher counsellors who indicated that they were extroverts stood a chance to rise above the stressors that present in the school environment. By rising above the stressors they are able to deliver quality service to the learners. Their personality traits were found to be a great backing to their resilience and competent performance.

A number of studies have found results that are in agreement with the findings of this study. Ercan (2017) in a study carried out in Turkey showed that the supportive traits under extroversion had rich character strength that generated resilience. This is further supported by a research done by Ganu (2014) among medical workers in Kenya which proved that extroversion had the predisposition to character strengths that made it more appropriate for the development of resilience.

#### **4.4.2 Extroverts and Successful Counselling in school.**

The results of the analyzed data on extrovert teacher counsellors and successful counselling in school indicated that counselling done in the secondary schools in Kakamega County Kenya was generally carried out successfully despite the poor

support (23 %) received from the school administrations. The responses were positive for a great majority as indicated in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9 Extroversion Responses to Successful Counselling**

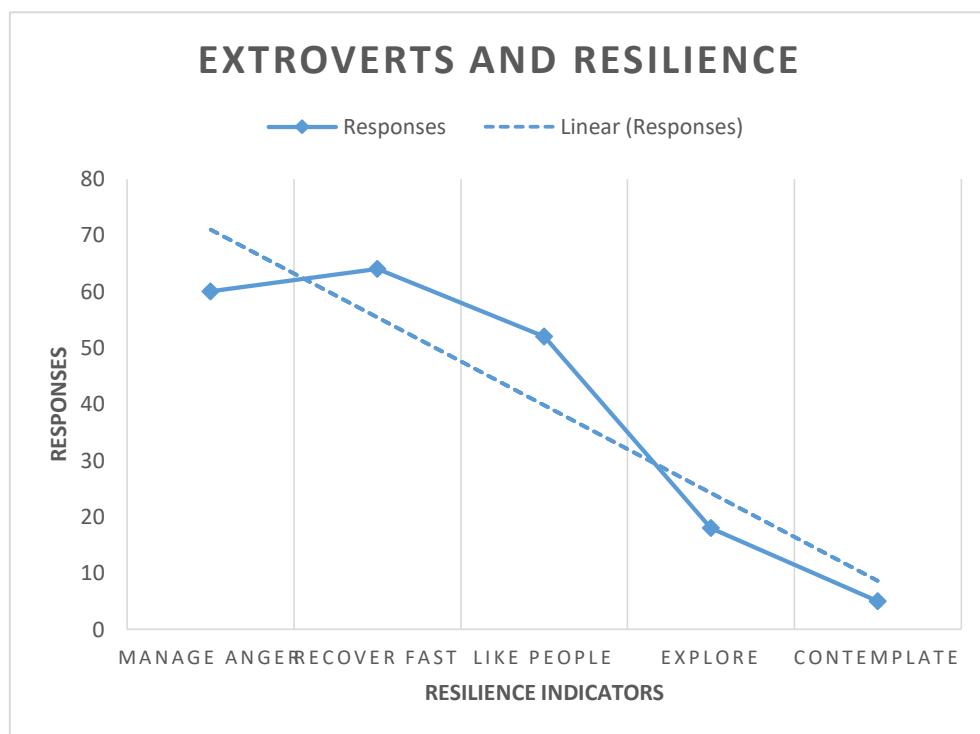
<b>Indicators for Counselling Success</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Tot</b>
<b>Counselling is highly valued by staff and students in my school</b>	16(42%)	15	5	2	1	39
<b>The administration strongly supports counseling in my school</b>	9(23%)	11	17	1	1	39
<b>We have many success stories in our counselling department.</b>	28(72%)	10	1	0	0	39
<b>Personality traits are significant for service delivery.</b>	37(95%)	2	0	0	0	39
<b>Stress resilience allows unrestricted counselling navigation</b>	33(85%)	3	2	0	1	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>--</b>

Source: Field data

The interviewed teacher counsellors indicated that the counselling in Kakamega County was done to their satisfaction. These were the same teacher counsellors who carried out the services that they were evaluating. They were responding in connection to what they experienced in their daily work. Majority of the extrovert teacher counsellors interviewed indicated that they had many inspiring success stories about the counselling in their departments (72%). Counselling is rated as successful on account of the counselled clients' positive changes and their coping with the counselling issues. The extrovert teacher counsellors agreed almost in totality (95 %) that personality traits were significant for counselling service delivery and (85%) that resilience allowed one to carry out counselling activities without restriction. These teacher counsellors with extrovert personality traits were satisfied with the

counselling done in the schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. This study interpreted this satisfaction to be due to the extroverts' dominant qualities of being very outgoing and aggressive that enabled them to pursue their intentions regardless of the school administrators' lack of support and the school community's disregard of counselling. This showed that an individual's personality traits were very key for the development of resilience and for competence at work.

A Pearson's correlation analysis carried out concerning the relation between extroversion and resilience obtained results that indicated that there was a relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience. The graph in Figure 4.9 shows the relation between extroversion and resilience.



**Figure 4.9 Extrovert Teacher Counselors and Resilience Indicators**

These findings that indicated that there was a relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience were in agreement with the findings by Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017) that linked extroversion to resilience. These researchers indicated in their discussions that extroversion complemented resilience and enhanced its development in the individuals who were extroverts. Extroverts have

many qualities that make them rise above adversity. For instance, their love for talking drives them to liking everybody who listened to them; their wish to be in the limelight makes them socialize indiscriminately. These qualities make them resilient. Darkwah (2014) also agrees with the result as seen in the study findings that indicated that extroverts were expressive and very aggressive thus able to rejuvenate in times of strain. Extroverts do not keep to themselves. They will unreservedly express their pleasure or dilemma making it easy for them to get over issues.

To realize this first objective which was to determine the relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, the study formulated hypothesis  $H_{01}$ . This hypothesis  $H_{01}$  stated that there is no statistical significant relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The correlation coefficient analysis done to test the direction and strength of the relationship between extroversion and resilience obtained the results of  $r = -0.505$ . This is indicated in table 4.10.

**Table 4.10 Correlation between Extroversion Personality Trait and Stress Resilience.**

		STRESS RESILIENCE
EXTROVERSION PERSONALITY TRAIT	Pearson's Correlation ( $r$ )	-0.505**
	Sig. (2-tailed) (p value)	0.000
	N	181

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4.6 result indicated that there was a negative correlation between extroversion trait and stress resilience. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at .05 significant level ( $p = .05$ ). The conclusion arrived at was that there was a relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience.

#### 4.5 Neuroticism Personality Trait and Stress Resilience among Teacher Counsellors in Secondary Schools

The items on the questionnaire that concerned this second objective inquired whether the participants possessed the underlying traits that supported neuroticism personality and how they influenced their resilience to stressful experiences. Neurotic persons are very cautious. The precaution kept them away from impulsiveness and played a big role in keeping their behavior in check. The data analysis results showed that they took their time to react and they controlled their anger. These neurotic persons were careful in their approach towards people and allowed enough time that enabled them to get to know and understand people before interacting with them. These results were similar to those by Rothman and Coetzer, (2003) which showed that neurotics were often hesitant to take strides in decision making. The neurotic teacher counsellors showed in the responses that they possessed character strength as was evident in the efforts made beneath their observable reactions. This character strength brought out the positive side of the persons with the neurotic personality trait. Among the 181 sampled teacher counsellors 24 were found to be neurotic basing on the responses as indicated in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11 Neurotics Response to Supportive Traits**

<b>Neuroticism Supporting Traits Indicators</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>D/K</b>	<b>TOT</b>
Easily nervous and find it hard to trust other people.	20 (83.3%)	3(12.5%)	1(4.2%)	0	0	24
Once set on something I pursue it through without entertaining distractions or interferences.	17 (70.8%)	5(20.8%)	2(8.3%)	0	0	24
Hardly venture into anything new until sure	12 (50%)	9(37.5%)	3(12.5%)	0	0	24
Prefer work that is within set rules.	22 (91.6%)	2(8.3%)	0	0	0	24
I tend to find fault with others.	24 (100%)	0	0	0	0	24
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>----</b>

Source: Field data

The respondents who indicated that they were neurotics showed that they possessed the supportive traits that upheld neuroticism. By their responses these teachers agreed by 95 responses that the neuroticism indicators applied VA (Very Accurately) to them. While 19 teachers settled for MA (Moderately Accurate) only 6 responded with IN (Inaccurate). These results indicated that the respondents with neuroticism as the major trait were precise about their supportive traits. They knew where they belonged. This finding is similar to what Darkwah (2014) found which stated that every individual eventually identified himself or herself with one of the big five personality traits. The individuals were aware of their character strengths and did not have the unexpected trait deviations linked to plasticity or stretching over boundaries into other major traits as Wolf and Weissing (2010) discovered in their research.

The data analysis found that all the neurotic teacher counsellors consented that they always found fault with other people (100%) whenever they interacted with them. This finding was parallel to the findings by Rentfrow et al. (2015) that showed that neurotics were apprehensive and interrogated everything that came from anybody they worked with. These results were further found to be in agreement with findings by Netter et al, (2020) that indicated that Neurotics were judgmental and suspicious. Persons who had neuroticism as their major trait questioned everything they were involved in before accepting it. They never trusted without scrutinizing. Lack of trust in all others meant lack of trust in self as well. The neurotic individual does not have self-confidence and needs to work hard to achieve it. Their lack of self-confidence is apparent in their perpetual fear and anxiety.

These same neurotic teacher counsellors were found to prefer hanging onto what they were familiar with. It was found that they treaded carefully on habitual inclinations where they followed a path already laid out by the institution's procedures. Similar findings were made by Rothman and Coetzer (2003) who ascertained that neurotics did not jump into action before confirming all the facts involved. They question and cross check everything said and done by others before accepting it. This habit of confirming everything reduced the chances of falling into mistakes although it was an indication that the individual was phobic and unsure of himself or herself. The data collected showed that the neurotic teacher counsellors preferred working within set rules (91.6%). Their inability to venture into anything new (50%) was an outcome of self-doubt. The neurotic individuals always feared that anything new would go wrong

if they tried it out. Such fearfulness drove the individuals into reclining in a safe zone and never daring to explore.

The neurotic teacher counsellors were found to be nervous and unable to trust others (83%). These are feelings that were caused by excessive phobia. This indicated that the individuals could become anxious over things they suspected may not turn out right. Barlow et al. (2014) concur with this finding concerning nervousness and preferring guidance, when they state that the neurotic are panicky and lack character strength. They also concur by indicating in their study results that neurotics are insecure. This was paralleled with this study's indication that the neurotics lacked trust and always did thorough checking before they ventured into anything. They are unsure of themselves therefore they seek to be guided by set rules. Preferring work that is within set rules (91.6%) has double implication. It could mean that the individual was obedient and comfortable with the rules or it could also signify that the same individual was naive and docile and preferred to be guided. Both were interpreted to be indicative of extreme fear.

The neurotic teacher counsellors responded by saying they had determination and were hardly distracted from their course of action (70.8%). This determination and remaining undistracted though positive were found to be indicative of self-centeredness. The neurotic persons are reluctant to get outside of themselves and mingle freely with others.

#### **4.5.1 Neuroticism and Resilience Indications**

The data analysis interpreted the responses acknowledging phobic tendencies, as being an identification of neurotic personality. All the supportive traits exhibited by neurotics were seen to have implications of phobia. The supportive traits indicated in the questionnaire – nervousness, lack of trust, fear of venturing into new areas, preferring to be guided by rules and finding fault with others at all times – were all lined with some degree of phobia. Rothman and Coetzer (2003) in their study also found neurotic persons to be phobic. Examining the relationship between neuroticism and resilience, the responses indicated that the neurotic teacher counsellors had traits that enhanced resilience. These responses were collected from all the 181 sampled teacher counsellors. Majority were found to have inclinations towards plasticity that caused the overlapping across trait boundaries. The response distribution of the

teacher counsellors with neuroticism personality trait and how they related to the resilience indicators was found to be as shown in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12 Neurotic Teachers' Responses to Resilience Indicators**

<b>Resilience Indicators</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Manage anger well</b>	81	45.51
<b>Recover fast from startles</b>	64	35.36
<b>Find people likeable</b>	33	18.23
<b>Explore new and different things</b>	2	1.10
<b>Contemplate carefully before acting</b>	1	0.55

**Source:** Field data

Neurotic persons have their strength hidden in the repercussions of their displayed traits (Tuteja & Sharma 2017). What a neurotic exposes often covers up the actual reaction. He or she will exhibit fear yet put in practice a lot of precaution. It is in the light of these revelations that the study interpreted the 45.51% of the neurotics to be able to manage their anger well. Although they are known for being temperamental and phobic (Netter et al., 2020) the results of the data analysis showed that 35.36% recovered fast from traumatic experiences and 18% found other people to be likeable. These are tendencies that linked the neurotic teacher counsellors to resilience.

The neurotic persons' precautions that kept them away from impulsiveness played a big role in keeping their behavior in check. The results showed that they took their time and controlled their anger. They were careful in their approach to people and took time that enabled them to learn to know and understand them. The analysis of the data collected took into account the character strength of the neurotic persons (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003) as was evident in the efforts made beneath their observable reactions. This character strength brought out the positive side of the persons with the neurotic personality trait.

#### 4.5.2 Neuroticism and Successful Counselling in School

The results of the analyzed data concerning Neuroticism and the success of counselling in the sampled secondary schools in Kakamega County showed that there was a lot more that needed to be done to make counselling successful. Only 13.8 % of the Neurotic teacher counsellors interviewed indicated that the counselling indicators provided in the questionnaires were Very Accurate (VA). Majority of the neurotic teacher counsellors (47.2%) marked the success indicators as being Inaccurate (IN), while quite a considerable percentage (29.2%) thought the indicators were only moderately accurate (MA). For the Neurotic teacher counsellors therefore, counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega county did not take place to their satisfaction. They did not consider it to be successful. The responses to the items that examined the success of counselling were as indicated in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13 Neuroticism Responses to Successful Counselling**

<b>Indicators for Counselling Success</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Tot</b>
					<b>K</b>	
Counselling's highly valued by staff and students in my school	2(8%)	8	10	3	1	24
The administration strongly supports counseling in my school	1(4%)	3	19	1	0	24
We have many success stories in our counselling department.	7(29%)	10	5	2	0	24
Personality traits are significant for counselling service delivery.	21(87%)	2	1	0	0	24
Stress resilience allows unrestricted counselling navigation	23(96%)	1	0	0	0	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>--</b>

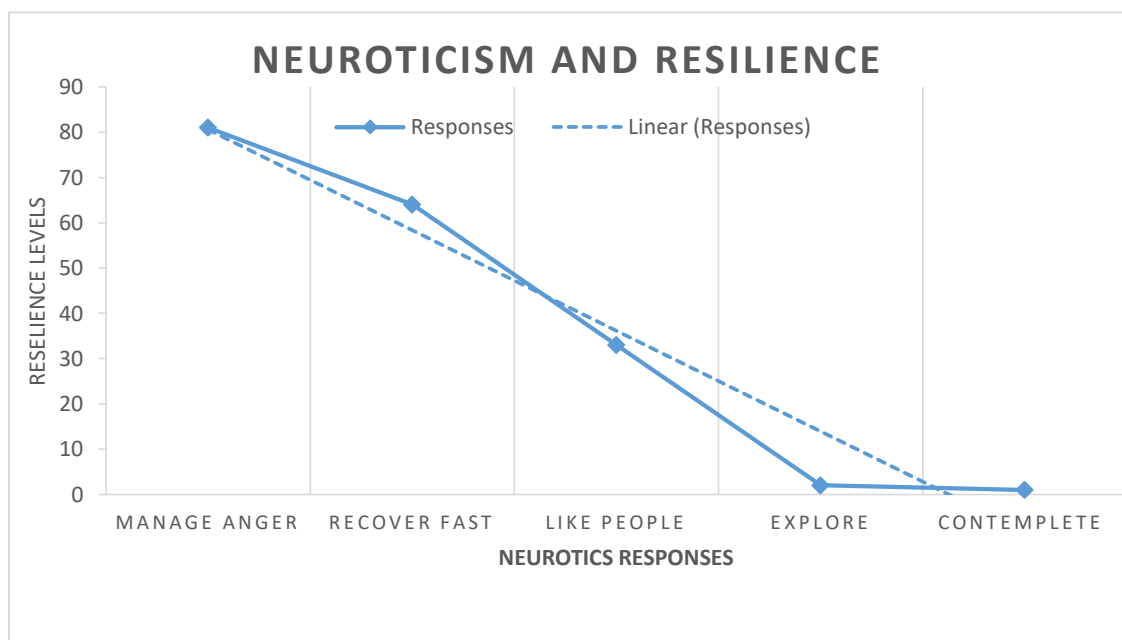
Source: Field data

The same counselling indicators were applauded by the extrovert teacher counsellors who generally thought that counselling was very successful in the secondary schools in Kakamega County. Only 2 (8%) out of the 24 neurotic teachers indicated that counselling was highly valued by both staff and students in their schools. They found the support of the schools' administration to be lacking because only one (4%) gave an indication of Very Accurate as the response for this indicator. Having inspiring

success stories in their counselling department was Moderately Accurate for majority of them as seen in these responses: VA, 7; MA, 10; IN, 5; N/A, 2; and DK, 0.

However these neurotic teacher counsellors unanimously agreed that personality traits were significant for counselling service delivery (87.5 %) and that stress resilience allowed unrestricted counselling navigation for the teacher counsellor (95.8 %). Their rejection of the indicators for successful counselling in schools was found to be suggestive of the unfriendly environment within which the teacher counsellors had to function. Thus the study interpreted the school environment to be a source of stress for the neurotic teacher counsellors. It was also found to be a major reason as to why having the right personality traits was significant for the success of counselling in secondary schools. Personality traits were found to add positive character strength that enhanced the teacher counsellors' resilience and enabled them to perform competently.

The graph in Figure 4.10 shows the relationship between neuroticism personality trait and resilience.



**Figure 4.10 Neurotic Trait and Resilience**

The responses shown in Figure 4.4 cover all the sampled 181 participants who showed the inclination towards neurotic tendencies. These were beyond the 24

respondents who were found to be totally neurotic. Some were found to belong to the other of the big five personalities but had traits that supported neuroticism. This was in agreement with Wolf and Weissing (2010) who indicated in their findings that the Big Five Personality Traits had behavior plasticity that caused their absence of limitations and allowed them to stretch over boundaries.

To realize the second objective which was to establish the relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress-resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, the study formulated the second hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> which said: There is no statistical significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. A Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis that was used to test the direction and strength of the relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience obtained the result,  $r = -0.368$ . This is indicated in table 4.14.

**Table 4.14 Correlation between Neuroticism Personality Trait and Stress Resilience.**

		STRESS RESILIENCE
NEUROTICISM PERSONALITY TRAIT	Pearson's Correlation	-0.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	181

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

From the results of the analysis presented in Table 4.10 it was evident that the neuroticism trait and stress resilience were weakly positive correlated ( $r = -0.368$ ). The obtained p value of 0.000 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at the significant level  $p = 0.05$ . The conclusion made was that there was a relationship between the neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

#### **4.6 Openness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience among Teacher Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

The third objective that guided the study on the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya was: -To determine the relationship between openness as a personality

trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. Data was collected in view of the teacher counsellors with supportive traits that indicated openness as their personality trait. From the 181 sampled teacher counsellors 45 were found to belong to Openness personality. They responded to the openness indicators with VA and MA at a high percentage of 67.1 % and 26.2 % respectively. Only a few indicated IN (6.6 %) as their response. These 45 teacher counsellors showed that they cared for others.

The research data collected led to the interpretation that those teacher counsellors who were compassionate and considerate to the people they worked with had openness as their major personality trait. These teacher counsellors were also trustworthy and peace loving. The data showed that they had qualities that made them cohesive and easily likeable. These teacher counsellors who were found to have openness personality trait indicated that the resilience indicators referred to them very accurately (VA). Among the teacher counsellors interviewed 42.5% indicated that they were able to recover very fast from events that were frightening. They were able to bounce back to normal within a short period after undergoing traumatic experience. The data results indicated that they were resilient.

Teacher counsellors with openness as their major traits however were found by the data analysis not to be keen on venturing into explorative activities 2 (1.10%). This study attributed this to their being compassionate and affectionate to all the people they interacted with (78%). This concern and care for others was seen to be a hindrance to their exploring and contemplating so as to help them avoid confrontation and drifting astray from compliance. The teacher counsellors with openness personality trait were found to have strong traits that enhanced their resilience and enabled them to work competently in the schools. The frequency of the responses was as indicated in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15 Openness Response to Supportive Traits**

<b>Openness Indicators</b>	<b>Supporting Traits</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>
I avoid involvements that are dishonest.		32(71%)	11	2	0	0	45
I'm forgiving and generally trusting.		29(64%)	13	3	0	0	45
I don't blame others but understand them		24(53%)	16	5	0	0	45
I'm comfortable with issues handled peacefully.		31(68%)	10	4	0	0	45
I am compassionate and affectionate to others.		35(78%)	9	1	0	0	45
<b>Total Responses</b>		<b>151</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>---</b>

**Source:** Field data

None of the 45 teacher counsellors with openness personality responded with N/A nor with DK. This showed that despite the plasticity and overflow over trait boundaries as explained by Wolf and Weissing (2010). An analysis of the data collected on the relationship between openness as a personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools showed that, 32 (71%) out of 45 teacher counsellors who had openness as their major trait were very forgiving and generally valued honesty in their interaction with others. These teacher counsellors with openness as their trait also recorded high frequencies in being understanding and compassionate towards others. The responses were 35(75%) out of 45. They were found to be peace loving as they responded with VA at a frequency of 31(68%) responses out of the 45 teachers. The study used these traits that contained humane as an interpretation of the respondents having openness as their personality trait.

#### **4.6.1 Openness and Resilience Indications**

This study sought to establish how openness personality trait impacted the development of resilience among teacher counsellors. The results of the data analysis were worked out from the general responses of all the 181 sampled teacher counsellors who displayed traits with openness inclinations. This was done because the big five personality traits have got plasticity that allowed them to have flexibility

of traits that stretched over the boundaries of the major traits (Wolf & Weissing, 2010). Openness is boosted by traits that guard the interrelation with others while enhancing resilience development. The distribution of the responses to the resilience indicators from those teacher counsellors who possessed the Openness Personality Trait was as shown in Table 4.16.

**Table 4.16 Openness Teachers’ Responses to Resilience Indicators**

<b>Resilience Indicators</b>	<b>frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage (181)</b>
Manage anger well	35	19.33
Recover fast from startles	77	42.54
Find people likeable	65	35.91
Explore new and different things	2	1.10
Contemplate carefully before acting	2	1.10

**Source:** Field data

Of all the teacher counsellors with inclinations towards openness, 35 (19.33%) indicated that they were able to manage anger very easily. Those who showed that they recovered fast from being startled were 77 (42.54 %). Among the 181 respondents 65 (35.91 %) found most people to be likeable. Only 2 (1.10 %) respondents were found to be explorative and another 2 (1.10%) were found to be contemplative. Teacher counsellors with openness were found to be honest, compassionate and forgiving. The teacher counsellors with this trait appeared to be keener on their relating with others than they were on exploration and contemplation. This was in agreement with the findings by Brown and Taylor, (2015) that stated that Openness people were boosted by the traits of virtue that guarded their interrelation with others and enhanced their resilience development. Teacher counsellors with Openness were also found to be understanding, reliable and comforting. These characteristics are positive and will cultivate coalition rather than antagonism amongst colleagues. Coalition minimizes stressors and paves way for resilience development.

The research data collected led to the interpretation that those teacher counsellors who were compassionate and considerate to the people they worked with had openness as their major personality trait. These teacher counsellors were also trustworthy and peace loving. The data showed that they had qualities that made them cohesive and easily likeable. These teacher counsellors who were found to have openness

personality trait indicated that the resilience indicators referred to them very accurately (VA). Among the teacher counsellors interviewed 42.5% indicated that they were able to recover very fast from events that were frightening. They were able to bounce back to normal within a short period after undergoing traumatic experience. The data results indicated that they were resilient.

#### 4.6.2 Openness and Successful Counselling in School

The results of the analyzed data collected from the participants with openness, showed that counselling was done successfully in the sampled secondary schools. This indicated that the teacher counsellors who were the providers of the counselling services in those schools were satisfied with the outcome. They were the professionals in that particular discipline. Their responses to the indicators were as shown in Table 4.17.

**Table 4.17 Openness Responses to Successful Counselling**

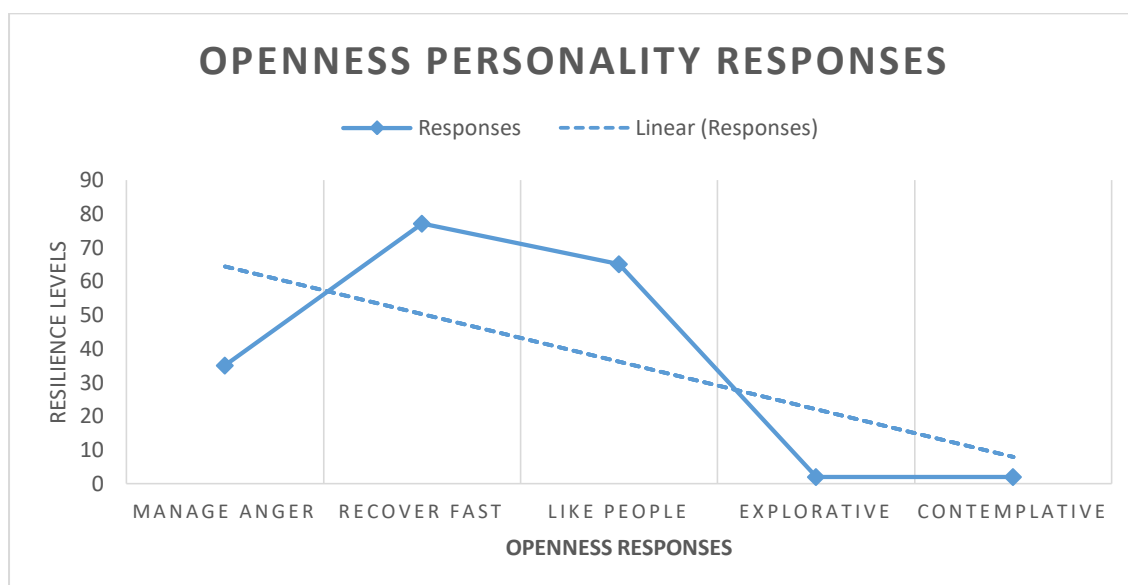
<b>Indicators for Counselling Success</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N/</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Tot</b>
		<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>K</b>	
Counselling's highly valued by staff and students in my school	27(60%)	15	3	0	0	45
The administration strongly supports counseling in my school	13(28%)	20	11	1	0	45
We have many success stories in our counselling department.	33(73%)	11	1	0	0	45
Personality traits are significant for counselling service delivery.	39(86%)	6	0	0	0	45
Stress resilience allows unrestricted counselling navigation	33(73%)	9	3	0	0	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>--</b>

Source: Field data

Out of the 181 teacher counsellors sampled 145 (64.4 %) indicated that the counselling indicators provided in the questionnaires applied Very Accurately (VA) to them. A considerable number, 61 (27%) of the teachers with openness personality consented that the indicators of successful counselling were Moderately Accurate

(MA). Only 18 (8%) of the interviewed teacher counsellors with Openness personality trait marked the success indicators as being Inaccurate (IN). While just one thought they were N/A none indicated DK.

The graph in Figure 4.11 shows the relationship between Openness personality trait and resilience.



**Figure 4.11 Openness Trait and Resilience.**

Teacher counsellors with openness as their major traits however were found by the data analysis not to be keen on venturing into explorative activities 2 (1.10%). This study attributed this to their being compassionate and affectionate to all the people they interacted with (78%). This concern and care for others was seen to be a hindrance to their exploring and contemplating so as to help them avoid confrontation and drifting astray from compliance. The teacher counsellors with openness personality trait were found to have strong traits that enhanced their resilience and enabled them to work competently in the schools.

To realize the third objective which was to determine the relationship between openness as a personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya the third hypothesis  $H_{03}$ : which stated that there is no statistical significant relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, was tested. This was to establish the direction and strength of the

relationship between the two variables. The results obtained showed that there was a correlation coefficient of  $r = -0.175$ . The p value was 0.000. This results indicated a weak negative correlation. This is showed in table 4.18.

**Table 4.18 Correlation between Openness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience.**

		STRESS RESILIENCE
OPENNESS PERSONALITY TRAIT	Pearson's Correlation	-0.175*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.019
	N	181

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation coefficient found led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at the significant level of  $p=0.05$ . It was concluded that there was a relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience.

#### **4.7 Agreeableness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience among Teacher Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

The fourth objective of this study was: to establish the relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. Teacher counsellors who were found to be altruistic and empathetic towards others were interpreted to mean they possessed the agreeableness personality trait. These teachers' responses inclined them towards doing things that make others happy (88.46%). They avoided situations that make people feel hurt (75%). They generally had kindness towards others. The responses collected were as indicated in Table 4.19.

**Table 4.19 Agreeableness Response to the Supportive Traits**

<b>Agreeableness Traits</b>	<b>Supporting VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>
I enjoy doing things that make others happy	46 (88.46%)	4	2	0	0	52
I am considerate and kind to almost everyone.	42(81.61%)	7	3	0	0	52
I like to cooperate with others.	40 (76.2%)	12	0	0	0	52
I detest situations that make people feel hurt.	39 (75%)	11	2	0	0	52
I can easily give up a chance I value if I think someone else needs it more.	32 (61.54%)	15	5	0	0	52
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>----</b>

Source: Field data

The findings that showed that the Agreeable persons detested hurting others are in agreement with what Tuteja and Sharma, (2017) found in their work that stated that Agreeable persons took great precaution against hurting or offending those people with whom they interacted. These teacher counsellors were found from the data collected to be able to make great sacrifices for the sake of others (61.54%). They indicated that they enjoyed doing the things that made others happy (88.46%). More than half of them showed that they were kind and considerate to others (81.61%). Agreeable people concerned themselves with the comfort of others. Their behavior was controlled by ensuring the wellbeing of the others. This selflessness minimized friction during interactions and attracted less stressors. It helped in the generation of resilience.

#### **4.7.1 Agreeableness and Resilience Indications**

The teacher counsellors with agreeableness as their major personality trait were found to strongly agree with the resilience indicators. They indicated that they managed anger well (26.5%). They also agreed that they recovered fast after being frightened (37%), and they agreed that they worked well with people (34.80%) because they

found the people they interacted with to be likeable. In respect to the plasticity of the big five personality traits and their tendency to stretch over boundaries (Wolf & Weissing, 2010), the relationship to resilience was examined by inclusion of all the teacher counsellors among the sampled 181, who showed that they possessed agreeable inclinations. The frequency of the responses of the teacher counsellors with agreeableness personality trait to the resilience indicators was as presented in Table 4.20.

**Table 4.20 Agreeable Teacher Counsellors' Resilience Responses**

<b>Resilience Indicators</b>	<b>frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Manage anger well	48	26.51%
Recover fast from startles	67	37.01%
Find people likeable	63	34.80%
Explore new and different things	2	1.10%
Contemplate carefully before acting	1	0.55%

Source: Field data

These agreeable teachers were found to be accommodating. It was found that they did not get into controversies or friction with the other people at the place of work. This was evident from their ability to overcome anger which was shown to be 26.51%. It was further found that they liked the people they worked with (34.80%). They also recovered fast from startles (37.01%). These findings are in line with the findings by Fletcher and Sarkar, (2013) who reported that Agreeable persons had respectable and upright work ethics that endeared them to other workers. These researchers found agreeable persons to be forgiving and appreciative of all the other people at the workplace.

These positive characteristics of appreciation and forgiveness were found to generate resilience in the teacher counsellors with agreeableness. Rentfrow et al., (2015) in their study found similar results when they concluded that the agreeableness persons' characteristic ability to adapt and to always remain positive even in difficult situations came from their habitual bonding with others and their good social interaction. Thus,

there is positive relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience as indicated by the data collected in this study.

#### 4.7.2 Agreeableness and Successful Counselling in school

Data collected from the agreeable teacher counsellors in regard to the success of counselling in secondary schools indicated that a lot of success was realized in the specified work stations. They indicated that they had many success stories about the counselling achievements in their departments. Success stories are a pointer to mutual satisfaction. In the school situations referred to, it meant that the clients were satisfied with the therapy they received and the counsellors were also satisfied with their performance. Table 4.21 shows the frequencies of the teacher counsellors' consent to successful counselling.

**Table 4.21 Agreeableness and Successful Counselling in School**

<b>Indicators for Counselling Success</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>TOT</b>
Counselling's highly valued by staff and students in my school	29(56%)	17	4	2	0	52
The administration strongly supports counseling in my school	15(29%)	25	11	1	0	52
We have many success stories in our counselling department.	28(54%)	23	1	0	0	52
Personality traits are significant for counselling service delivery.	42(81%)	10	0	0	0	52
Stress resilience allows unrestricted counselling navigation	37(71%)	13	1	0	1	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>--</b>

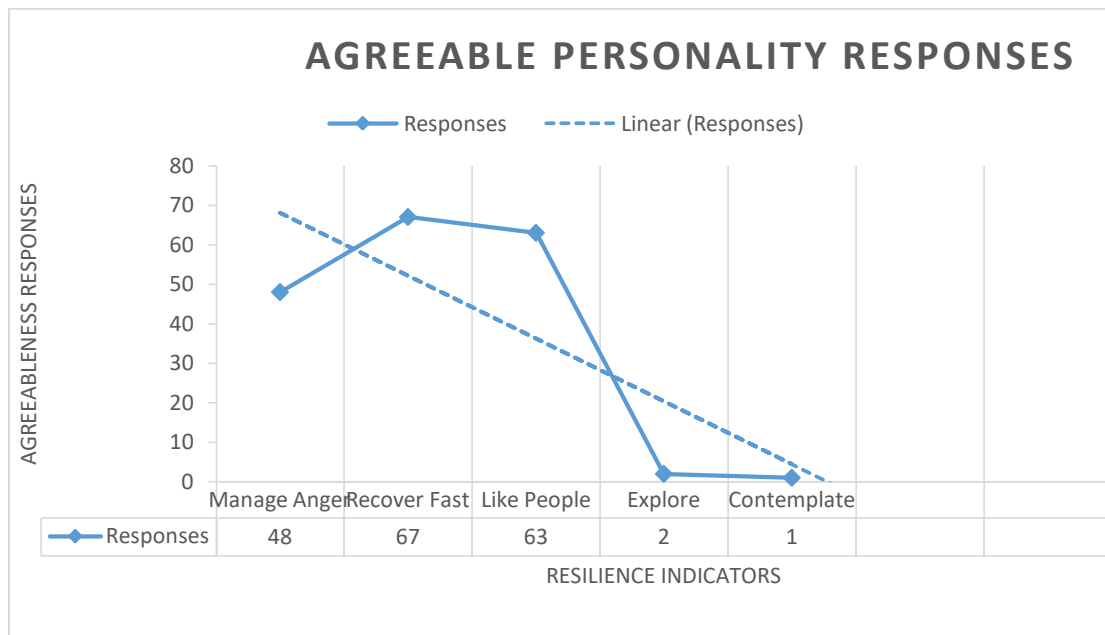
Source: Field data

Data collected indicated that the Agreeableness teacher counsellors consented that personality traits were significant for counselling service delivery by 81%. They appreciated the fact that one's personality controlled his or her work performance as it determined the worker's competence. This agrees with what De Terte, (2014) found in a study on the resilience of workers in high-risk occupations, indicating that personality dictated the individual's behavior and ordered their trend of action. The teacher counsellors with agreeableness personality also showed through the collected data that stress resilience allowed unrestricted counselling navigation (71%). Once the counsellor was able to manage stress, then they had the freedom to explore various avenues and connect widely with others in the profession on the global platform, to better their own individual performance.

The teacher counsellors with agreeableness personality trait indicated by the data collected and analyzed, that counselling was supported by the schools' administrations. The teacher counsellors who responded with Very Accurate (VA) were 15 and those who responded with Moderately Accurate (MA) were 25 in number. Those who said it was Inaccurate (IN) were only 11 whereas one indicated Not Applicable (N/A). Persons with Agreeableness as their major personality trait were found to dread controversy. They made all attempts to realize conformity. They always avoided making others feel offended.

This is in agreement with what Kelley and Pransky, (2014) found in their study which showed that agreeable people preferred harmony with others. The positive results about the success of counselling in secondary schools as revealed through data analysis was interpreted in this research as being an outcome of the Agreeable teachers' inability to judge others unfavorably. They rarely found fault with anyone. The sampled Agreeable teacher counsellors showed that they enjoyed doing things that made others feel happy (88.46%) and that they were always considerate and kind to everyone (81.61%). This showed that they were not able to hold others accountable even if counselling may not have been remarkably valued by the staff and the students in the secondary school they worked in. Agreeable persons find positivity even in its mildest presence in other people's actions because they always wanted to make everybody feel appreciated and happy.

The graph in Figure 4.12 indicates the correlation between Agreeable personality trait and resilience.



**Figure 4.12 Agreeableness Teacher Counsellors and Resilience.**

Teacher counsellors with Agreeableness as their major personality trait have their supportive traits as their weapon against stress. They were found to have goodness in their way of relating to others. This finding agrees with what Kelley and Pransky (2014) found that indicated that agreeable persons were pleasant and easy to work with because they were committed to avoid hurting others.

To realize the fourth objective which was to establish the relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, the study formulated the fourth hypothesis  $H_{04}$ : There is no statistical significant relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. A Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis that was used to test the direction and strength of the relationship between agreeableness personality and stress resilience obtained results of  $r = -0.374$ . This is indicated in table 4.22.

**Table 4.22 Correlation between Agreeableness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience.**

		STRESS RESILIENCE
AGREEABLENESS PERSONALITY TRAIT	Pearson's Correlation	-0.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	181

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation coefficient obtained indicated a weak negative correlation between the two variables. Therefore at the significant level of  $p = .05$  the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there was indeed a relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience. These results were found to be in agreement with the findings of Praveen and Shrestha (2017) who showed that agreeable people had quality traits that were humane and pleasurable. The qualities they displayed enhanced the progression of resilience because they placed the agreeable individuals in an environment of friendliness that made hardships tolerable and negligible.

#### **4.8 Conscientiousness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience among Teacher Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

The fifth objective of this study was: - to investigate the relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study tools sought to measure whether the respondents' had the underlying traits that supported Conscientiousness as a major trait and whether they were resilient. Of all the 181 sampled teacher counsellors, only 21 had the supportive traits that indicated conscientiousness without the plasticity and stretching over boundaries that Wolf and Weissing (2010) discussed in their research findings. These 21 teacher counsellors were identified by their responses to the questionnaire items which were as indicated in Table 4.23

**Table 4.23 Conscientiousness Supportive Traits Responses**

<b>Conscientiousness</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>TOT</b>
<b>Supporting Traits</b>						
I carry out my job with thoroughness.	18 (85.71%)	3 (14.29%)	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
I am a reliable worker who is ready to learn new ideas.	19 (90.48%)	2 (9.52%)	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
I persevere until my task is completed.	21 (100%)	0	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
I am inventive and I do things efficiently.	20 (95.23%)	1 (4.76%)	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
I make plans and follow through with them.	16 (76.19%)	5 (23.81%)	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>----</b>

**Source:** Field data

The 21 participants found to be Conscientious among the 181 sampled teacher counsellors, showed a lot of consistency in their responses. They unwaveringly responded with Very Accurate (VA) and Moderately Accurate (MA) without any straying into IN, N/A or DK. This steadiness found in their responses was interpreted as self-belief and confidence. The conscientious teacher counsellors showed that they were diligent and committed to their work (85.71%). The 21 teacher counsellors showed that all the underlying traits listed in the questionnaire accurately described the qualities they possessed. The data analysis results showed that the teacher counsellors with conscientiousness personality exhibited total determination at work (100%). They were able to persevere until they completed their tasks. They indicated that they were inventive and efficient (95.2%). These teachers were found to be thorough in their work (85.7%). The results also showed that the conscientious teacher counsellors planned ahead and kept to the plans they made (76.2%). These findings are in agreement to the findings by Fletcher and Sarkar, (2013) that showed conscientious people to be determined and always focused on attaining what they set

out to do. The findings also agree with Manteo’s (2015) results that stated that the conscientious people had thoroughness and determination that gave them efficiency at work. The responses of the 21 conscientious teacher counsellors to the supportive traits listed in the questionnaire pointed them out as having positive character that generated the achievement of intended goals.

#### 4.8.1 Conscientiousness and Resilience Indications

The data analysis found that the conscientious teacher counsellors had positive inclinations towards the resilience indicators in the questionnaire. It was also found that the other teacher counsellors had qualities attributed to conscientiousness even though they belonged to the other big five personality traits. The distribution of responses according to the data collected from all the sampled teacher counsellors concerning resilience indications was as shown in Table 4.24.

**Table 4.24** Conscientious Teacher Counsellors’ Resilience Responses

Resilience Indicators	Frequencies	Percentage
Manage anger well	48	26.52
Recover fast from startles	65	35.91
Find people likeable	63	34.81
Explore new and different things	3	1.76
Contemplate carefully before acting	2	1.10

**Source:** Field data

The teacher counsellors found to have conscientious as their major trait showed that they managed their anger well (26.52%). They were found to be able to recover fast from anger and to take control of the prevailing situations that caused the anger. Those who were found to recover fast after being disturbed or traumatized were 65 (35.91%) teacher counsellors and those found to like the people they interacted with were 63 (34.81%) teachers. These qualities were found to be enablers for resilience development. The teachers found to have conscientious supportive traits indicated that they were neither contemplative nor explorative. The study attributed these findings to the conscientious teacher counsellors’ strength in planning and strictly adhering to the

plans made (76.19%). The planning and adherence gave these conscientious teacher counsellors a dependable direction to which they were committed. The commitment minimized the need for exploration and contemplation and eliminated additional or contrary ideas. Conscientious persons' supportive qualities enabled them to rejuvenate whenever they experienced atrocities and this made them resilient.

#### 4.8.2 Conscientiousness and Successful Counselling in school

The results of the data collected in this study showed that teacher counsellors with conscientious as their main personality trait considered counselling to be very successful in secondary schools. The findings of this study showed that all the 21 teacher counsellors with supportive traits that were exclusively linked to conscientiousness agreed that the indicators of successful counselling were accurately applicable to them. The response frequencies were as indicated in Table 4.25.

**Table 4.25 Conscientiousness and Successful Counselling in School**

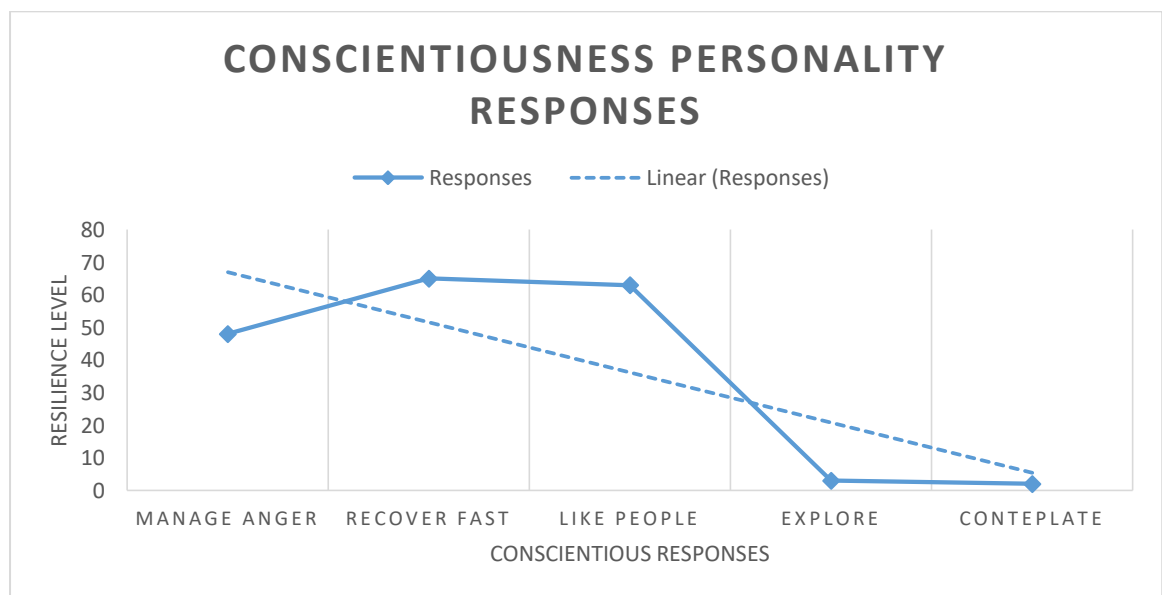
<b>Indicators for Counselling Success</b>	<b>VA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Tot</b>
Counselling's highly valued by staff and students	7(33%)	14(67%)	0	0	0	21
The administration strongly supports counseling	12(57%)	9(43%)	0	0	0	21
There're success stories in our counselling department.	20(95%)	1 (5%)	0	0	0	21
Personality traits are significant for counselling service delivery.	21(100%)	0	0	0	0	21
Stress resilience allows counselling navigation	21(100%)	0	0	0	0	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>--</b>

**Source:** Field data

The teacher counsellors with conscientious personality trait agreed 100% that the indicators for successful counselling in secondary school applied Very Accurately (VA) and Moderately Accurate (MA) to their schools. The results indicated that counselling was highly valued by staff and students in these schools 33% (VA) and 67% (MA). The results showed that 57% indicated VA while 43% indicated MA for the administration strongly supporting counseling in the schools. The data results

indicated that the conscientious teacher counsellors agreed 100% that they had many success stories of counselling in their departments. They agreed unanimously that personality traits were very significant for counselling service delivery (100%) and that stress resilience allowed for unrestricted counselling navigation, (100%). The conscientious teacher counsellors' responses to successful school counselling was interpreted by the study as being attributed to their positive personality traits.

The graph in Figure 4.13 indicates the relationship between Conscientious personality trait and resilience.



**Figure 4.13 Conscientiousness Trait and Resilience.**

The study interpreted the interviewed teacher counsellors' thoroughness and reliability at work, (85.7%) to mean that they possessed the conscientiousness personality trait. The interpretation was strengthened by further finding that the same group of teacher counsellors had efficiency (95.2%) and persistence (100%) in the way they did their work. The teachers also showed that they worked well within the plans that they always made before embarking on any task. Conscientious teacher counsellors planned their activities well in advance and they honored their plans by following them without fail (75.5%).

To realize the fifth objective which was to establish the relationship between Conscientiousness personality trait and stress-resilience among the teacher

counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya, the study formulated the fifth hypothesis  $H_{05}$ : There is no statistical significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis that was used to test the direction and strength of the relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience obtained the result,  $r = 0.000$ . This is indicated in table 4.26.

**Table 4.26 Correlation between Conscientiousness Personality Trait and Stress Resilience.**

		STRESS RESILIENCE
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS PERSONALITY TRAIT	Pearson's Correlation	0.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.975
	N	181

Evident in the Pearson's correlation analysis carried out in this study and showed in Table 4.26, the results ( $r = -0.000$ ) were interpreted to mean that the correlation was neutral. From these findings it was agreed that it was in order to accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there was no statistical significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County. These findings showed that the conscientious personality traits did not generate resilience. However persons with conscientiousness as their main personality were very rich in positive character to the extent that they in themselves were able to repel stress and carry out their responsibilities to positive fruition. These results were found to conform to the findings of Miller and Harrington (2011) who indicated that conscientious persons strong positive characteristics. Their strong character made them resilient without necessarily having to create any additional resilience strategies at all. Most of their involvements were loaded with resilience.

#### **4.9 Reliability Test**

In order to evaluate the statistical significance of the relationships between personality traits and stress resilience, hypothesis testing was conducted. Each null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$  to  $H_{05}$ ) proposed that there was no significant relationship between a specific personality trait and stress resilience. The study utilized the coefficient known as

Cronbach Alpha while examining the level of understanding of the research items in the questionnaire and their correlation with each other. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), a reliability coefficient of Cronbach Alpha closer to one (1) indicates good reliability for the study instrument. The Cronbach Alpha value of  $a = 0.70$  or higher indicates that the gathered data could be regarded as reliable with relatively good internal consistency for generalization to reflect views among participants or the targeted population. This view was similar to that of Zinbarg, et al., (2005). Also, George and Mallery (2003) recommended the Cronbach Alpha value of  $a = 0.70$  or higher as the minimum acceptable value required to assess reliability. In this study, the researcher relied on Cronbach Alpha as the best to inform on how to measure the internal consistency of the study variables.

This study was informed by a dependent variable (stress resilience) and an independent variables (personality traits). The independent variable serves as key indicator for the dimensions of personality traits. These were identified as (1) extroversion, (2) neuroticism, (3) openness, (4) agreeableness, and (5) conscientiousness while the response variable was given as stress resilience. The overall and segmented outputs were reported in Table 4.27.

**Table 4.27 Overall Reliability Test Findings**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.891	0.892	35

Source: (Research Data, 2023)

The overall Cronbach's Alpha was 0.892. This indicated a good level of internal consistency for this study instrument. From Table 4.2, thirty-five items were retained since none of these items could improve the Alpha value if deleted. Thus, 35 items were used in the subsequent analyses for this study.

**Table 4.28 Segmented Reliability Test Findings**

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Comments
Extroversion	5	0.823	Accepted
Neuroticism	5	0.872	Accepted
Openness	5	0.700	Accepted
Agreeableness	5	0.756	Accepted
Conscientiousness	5	0.820	Accepted
Stress Resilience	10	0.842	Accepted

Source: (Research Data, 2023)

The data collected for this study concerned the big five personality traits and how they contributed to the development of stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools who were the participants from whom the information was gathered. The data was collected in view of the study objectives and research hypotheses, and was analyzed using Pearson's Correlation. The study results were presented in the order in which the study objectives were arranged in this study. The correlation coefficients for Pearson were computed to quantify relationship between each personality trait and stress resilience.

If the correlation coefficient for any personality trait and stress resilience was found to be significantly different from  $r = 0.000$  (typically assessed using a significance level like  $p < 0.05$ ), then the null hypothesis was rejected. This rejection indicated that there was indeed a statistically significant relationship between that personality trait and stress resilience among teacher counsellors. Based on the correlation coefficients and their associated p-values, conclusions can be drawn about whether each personality trait contributed significantly to stress resilience among teacher counsellors. For instance, if the correlation analysis showed a significant positive correlation between extroversion and stress resilience (rejecting  $H_{01}$ ), it suggests that higher levels of extroversion were associated with higher levels of stress resilience among teacher counsellors. The qualitative data was analyzed through predictive analysis where participants' responses to the items in the tool were used as a projection to their traits and resilience rates.

In this study, inferential tests were used with specification to the Pearson's correlation to facilitate deeper insightful gain into the associations of the dimensions

of personality and stress resilience and to capture validity by assessing the strength and direction of the correlation. The Pearson coefficient of  $r \pm 1.00$  suggested a perfect correlation;  $r \pm 1.00$  implied a highly predictable and consistent relationship. The Pearson coefficient from  $r=0.80$  to  $r=0.99$  suggested very strong correlation indicating high consistency and predictability in the relationship between a personality trait and stress resilience among teacher counsellors. The Pearson coefficient from  $r=0.60$  to  $r=0.79$  was strong correlation indicator of a substantial relationship where changes in a personality trait are accompanied by significant changes in stress resilience among teacher counsellors.

The Pearson coefficient from  $r=0.40$  to  $r=0.59$  captured moderate correlation for discernible but less pronounced relationship between a personality trait and stress resilience among teacher counsellors, suggesting that changes in one variable are moderately predictive of changes in the other variable. The Pearson coefficient from  $r=0.20$  to  $r=0.39$  signaled weak correlation, an indicator of a slight relationship between variables, where changes in one variable may only slightly influence changes in the other variable. The Pearson coefficient from  $r=0.000$  to  $r=0.19$  was an indicator for a very weak correlation suggesting little to no relationship between variables which meant that changes in one variable did not reliably predict changes in the other variable. These correlation analyses were essential for capturing validity by quantifying the strength of relationships between variables according to recognized scales, thereby providing empirical evidence to support or refute hypotheses regarding personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors.

This research study did not seek to control intervening variables since no drastic changes in the core relationships might be identified in a correlation study. However, it is worth noting that it would certainly improve the robustness and interpretability of the findings. It would clarify whether and to what extent personality traits independently contributed to stress resilience in teacher counsellors, thereby enhancing the overall quality.

#### **4.10 Validity Tests Finding on Factor Analysis**

To ascertain the validity of statistical assumptions in the inferential statistics, factor analysis of research responses was checked to guarantee the data utilized was satisfactory to carry out inferential analyses. This study explored to understand

underlying factors that explained the patterns of relationships within assets of observed variables. As such, factor analysis was used to summarize the information contained in a number of original variables into a smaller number of factors without losing much information.

According to Ather and Balasundaram (2009), the consequence of this was that the freshly generated variables must characterize the essential concepts that underlie the actual variables factor. In factor analysis, factor loadings provide evidence of how much a factor explained variables during factor analysis. Samuels (2016) stated the general rule of the thumb applied for acceptable factor loading to be 0.40 or above. Child (2006) and Stevens (2012) also noted that only factors with a factor loading above 0.40 should be retained for further study. Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) agreed that research scholars should utilize factor loading exceeding 0.40 to satisfy the criterion. This threshold of minimum/lowest level of 0.40 or 40% was accepted for this study. In Table 4.29 the results of factor analysis showed that factor loadings were above 40% for all the variables. This informed the basis for acceptance of all the items used.

**Table 4.29 Summary of Factor Analysis Findings**

Variables	Quantity	Loadings	Comment
Extroversion	5	0.588	Accepted
Neuroticism	5	0.662	Accepted
Openness	5	0.451	Accepted
Agreeableness	5	0.514	Accepted
Conscientiousness	5	0.414	Accepted
Stress Resilience	10	0.539	Accepted

**Source: (Research Data, 2024)**

#### **4.11 Inferential Statistics**

This section discusses inferential statistics including Pearson correlation, and diagnostics tests.

##### **4.11.1 Correlation Findings**

The findings from the correlation tests done on the data teacher counsellors that showed that the personality traits were less than  $r = -0.000$ . The correlation test findings are as indicated in Table 4.30.

**Table 4.30 Summary of Correlation Analysis Findings**

		STRESS	RESILIENCE
EXTROVERSION	Pearson	-0.505**	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
NEUROTIC	Pearson	0.368**	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
AGREEABLE	Pearson	-0.374**	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	Pearson	0.002	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.975	
OPENESS	Pearson	-0.175*	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.019	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the research data collected a Pearson’s correlation analysis was carried out in excel concerning the relation between extroversion and resilience and the obtained result was  $r = -0.505$ . This indicated that there was a moderate negative correlation between extroversion trait and stress resilience. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at  $p = .05$  significant level and to the conclusion that there was a relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience. Pearson’s correlation analysis done on the data collected, found that the correlation between neurotic personality trait and stress resilience was  $r = 0.368$ . From this Correlation

value, it was evident that the neuroticism trait and stress resilience were weakly positive correlated. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and to the conclusion that there is a relationship between the neuroticism personality trait and the level of stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Pearson's correlation analysis was carried out and the results were found to be  $r = -0.176$ , indicating a very weak negative correlation between openness personality trait and stress resilience. Therefore, at the significant level of  $p = .05$  the null hypothesis was rejected. It was concluded that there is a relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience.

Based on the correlation matrix on the relationship between agreeableness trait and stress resilience the results indicated that the correlation coefficient was  $r = -0.374$  which indicated a weak negative correlation. In a Pearson's correlation analysis carried out in this study, the correlation of zero (0.000) was attained for the conscientiousness personality trait. This meant that the correlation was neutral and thus that there was no significant relationship between the conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience. From this findings it was agreed that it was in order to accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there was no statistical significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County. These results were found to conform to the findings from the data collected concerning conscientiousness supportive traits. These findings showed that the conscientious persons were very rich in positive character to the extent that they in themselves were able to repel stress and carry out their responsibilities to positive fruition. Their strong character made them resilient without necessarily having to create any additional resilience strategies at all.

#### 4.11.2 Hypotheses Findings

Table 4.31 illustrates the summary of the study hypotheses that were confirmed using inferential statistics.

**Table 4.31 Summary of the Hypotheses Test Findings**

<b>Null Hypothesis</b>	<b>Method and Criteria</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>H<sub>01</sub>:</b> There was no significant relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools within Kakamega County	Pearson Test r = -0.505 (P=0.000 < 0.05)	Rejected H <sub>01</sub>
<b>H<sub>02</sub>:</b> There was no significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools within Kakamega County	Pearson Test r = -0.368 (P=0.000 < 0.05)	Rejected H <sub>02</sub>
<b>H<sub>03</sub>:</b> There was no statistically significant relationship between openness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counselors in secondary schools within Kakamega County.	Pearson Test r = -0.176 (P=0.019 < 0.05)	Rejected H <sub>03</sub>
<b>H<sub>04</sub>:</b> There is no statistically significant relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools within Kakamega County.	Pearson Test r = -0.374 (P=0.000 < 0.05)	Rejected H <sub>04</sub>
<b>H<sub>05</sub>:</b> There is no statistically significant relationship between conscientiousness personality trait and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools within Kakamega County.	Pearson Test r = 0.000 (P=0.975 > 0.05)	Do not Reject H <sub>05</sub>

**Source: (Research Data, 2023)**

From the above overall findings on the dimensions of personal traits, and stress resilience, some empirical inferences can be made. First, these findings that indicated that there was a relationship between extroversion personality trait and stress resilience were in agreement with the findings by Martinez-Marti and Ruch (2017)

that linked extroversion to resilience. These researchers indicated in their discussions that extroversion complemented resilience and enhanced its development in the individuals who were extroverts. Extroverts have many qualities that make them rise above adversity. For instance, their love for talking drives them to liking everybody who listened to them; their wish to be in the limelight makes them socialize indiscriminately. These qualities make them resilient. Darkwah (2014) also agrees with the result as seen in the study findings that indicated that extroverts were expressive and very aggressive thus able to rejuvenate in times of strain. Extroverts do not keep to themselves. They will unreservedly express their pleasure or dilemma making it easy for them to get over issues.

In comparison to the extrovert teachers counsellors, the data collected from the introvert teacher counsellors showed that they were contemplative and reflective. They were also found to be reserved and deep thinkers. Introvert teachers got their resilience from their emotional stability that allowed them to remain calm even in tough situations. The positive adjectives that boosted the Extroverts also equipped them with a positive outlook towards life. Traits are a source of self-defense as they give one the inner drive to react in a specific way. Extrovert persons have a rich positivity that keeps them lively and cheerful and at the same time enables them to cheer up those who are around them as well (Saeed et al., 2018). They are charmingly social and they enjoy a charisma that enhances positive character strength (Larsen & Buss, 2010). They are capable of self-rejuvenation through the use of their supportive traits.

Teacher counsellors who indicated that they were extroverts stood a chance to rise above the stressors that present in the school environment. By rising above the stressors they are able to deliver quality service to the learners. Their personality traits were found to be a great backing to their resilience and competent performance. A number of studies have found results that are in agreement with the findings of this study. Ercan (2017) in a study carried out in Turkey showed that the supportive traits under extroversion had rich character strength that generated resilience. This is further supported by a research done by Ganu (2014) among medical workers in Kenya which proved that extroversion had the predisposition to character strengths that made it more appropriate for the development of resilience.

Secondly, the disparity between the neurotics' responses and those of the other major traits was attributed to the neurotics' nature of seeking perfection. They were found to be difficult to satisfy. They have also been found by other researchers to question and critic everything they are involved in (Barlow et al., 2014). Neurotics are fault-finders and often settled only for their own individual ways of doing things owing to their phobia and suspicion. These findings from the neurotic teacher counsellors that showed that counselling was poorly done in secondary schools in Kakamega County were understood as a pointer to the indifference of the school communities towards the significance of school counselling. This is backed by the fact that neurotic persons displayed characteristics that often camouflage positive consequential traits that were a source of hidden strength (Silsil, 2011). Their being critical is revealed in their dissatisfaction with other people's input.

Third, for the openness personality teacher counsellors therefore, counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County was done satisfactorily. These indicators of successful counselling were likewise positively indicated by the extrovert teacher counsellors who generally thought that counselling was very successful in the secondary schools in Kakamega County. Data results however indicate that the neurotic teacher counsellors posted very negative sentiments about the school counselling. These differences were attributed to the force in the underlying traits of the different big five personalities. Each of the five have their own supportive traits that are sources of varying influences. They drive the individual's attitude and character towards the direction that yields varied reactions. The big five personality traits are greatly influenced by their underlying traits.

Fourth, there was indeed a relationship between agreeableness personality trait and stress resilience. These results were found to be in agreement with the findings of Praveen and Shrestha (2017) who showed that agreeable people had quality traits that were humane and pleasurable. The qualities they displayed enhanced the progression of resilience because they placed the agreeable individuals in an environment of friendliness that made hardships tolerable and contenting. The findings about the positivity in the people with conscientiousness was in agreement with the findings by Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) who found that conscientious people continuously gained self-improvement because they persistently worked with thoroughness. A person who has conscientious traits will automatically rejuvenate whenever the circumstances

become adverse. While Conscientiousness may be a trait that attracts envy, all the BFPTs have got some positivity that will place the individual in a favorable position to improve him or herself for better service delivery. Every individual needs to understand and value their personality strength in order to improve their service delivery within varied environments.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, the conclusions drawn from the study findings and the recommendations made after considering the results of the study. Presented also, are suggestions that were made for further research. The summarized findings were arrived at after analyzing data collected based on the objectives of the study. It is from the summaries that the conclusions were made and the recommendations resulted from the conclusions. Suggestions for further research came from questions that were generated through the findings of this study and that require investigation. The statistic results attained indicated that all the BFPT (except conscientiousness) were negatively correlated to resilience. The null hypotheses of the study for extroversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and openness traits were rejected at the significance level of  $p=.05$  while for conscientiousness the level of significance was accepted at  $p=0.000$ .

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

In the effort to establish the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among the teacher counsellors in secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya this study came up with study findings based on the objectives that were summarized as follows:

1. Findings from the demographic data showed that the teacher counsellors in Kakamega County, Kenya had the quality education and relevant counselling training that made them suitable for the positions they held in the schools. The demographic data gathered from the respondents indicated that 97.23% of the total number sampled had either a masters or a bachelor's degree. Data results further showed that the respondents had generally taken the initiative to undergo counselling training to improve their service skills. Many of the teacher counsellors had counselling in their first degree, yet more of them (61.87%) took additional courses in counselling to add value to their performance. Others took master's courses (22.65%) and others diploma courses (7.18%) in counselling.

The teacher counsellors were found to have personal drive to enroll for trainings to improve them-selves. This finding was in line with what was revealed in the Teachers Service Commission document, (TSC handbook 2021) that indicated the rise in numbers of teachers upgrading their academic status. These efforts by the teacher counsellors to upgrade their counselling skills was an implication of the individual's self-confidence, their devotion to work and their determination to render quality services to the learners.

The data collected on the demographic characteristics of the teacher counsellors further showed that the teachers were entrusted with various responsibilities. This indicated their ability to deliver. Those who indicated they were teachers on duty were 99.44% whereas 54.43% indicated that they were class teachers. Others were games teachers(40.6%) or house masters/mistresses(38.4%). This was interpreted in the study as an indication of the teacher counsellors' reliability and fidelity at their places of work. It improved the attitude of the other members of the institutions towards the individual teacher counsellors and also the attitude of the individual teacher counsellor towards themselves.

This positive attitude was bound to foster high self-esteem. Resilience is generated by positive attitude (Thompson & Goodvin, 2016) and high self-esteem. This study found the teacher counsellors to be fit for their tasks as therapists to the learners by their qualifications and responsibilities. Personality traits are a guide to a person's reactions to prevailing situations (Chai, 2015). Since traits can be adopted and enhanced (Woolfolk, 2010), teacher counsellors are able to identify and learn such traits as will improve their resilience.

The demographic information collected from the teacher counsellors offered an insight to the type of individuals the participants were. The findings from the data analysis showed that they had character positivity that generated resilience. These results also revealed inner personal strength amongst the

teacher counsellors as was seen in their aggressiveness to improve self and in their commitment to additional responsibilities.

2. The data collected in relation to the objectives of the study indicated that the teacher counsellors were resilient and that their individual character strength was drawn from their personality traits. The results of all the big five personality traits analyzed, showed that there was great relationship between personality traits and stress resilience. The statistic results attained through Pearson correlation indicated that personality traits were correlated to resilience. They played a significant role in determining the individual's reactions to workplace calamities. Manteo (2015) stated that the way the individual reacted to any given situation depended on their personality. It is ones personality traits that propelled them to rise above difficulties or to sink beneath them. The findings about the big five personality traits showed that:-

- (i) Extroversion personality trait was negatively correlated to stress resilience according to the statistical analysis done. It had a co-efficiency correlation of -0.5047 and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected at the significant level of .05. Teachers who had extroversion as their major personality trait did not allow their troubles to weigh them down or cause them to withdraw from others. The extrovert teachers were found to be very social and outgoing (87.17%). Their social attitude was found to be the force that led them into seeking other people's company with intent to share about their dilemmas and challenges and to seek solutions to their problems. Extroverts were also found to be talkative and energetic (82.05%). By being talkative and energetic they were able to deflate the magnitude of their challenges and make them bearable. These findings are similar to findings by Saeed et al., (2018) that stated that extroverts can convince and mobilize others. They are able to create synergy and solve problems by including others. Extroverts showed that they were assertive and could use their ideas to influence the others for their personal gain. Extrovert teacher counsellors it was found were bound to be achievers as long as they employed their

positive traits to attain resilience in the face of work place difficulties.

- (ii) Neurotic personality trait had a weak positive correlation coefficient with stress resilience ( $r = 0.368$ ). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Results from the data collected from the teachers who had the neurotic personality trait showed that neuroticism contributed to the teacher counsellors' resilience despite having negative underlying supportive traits. The data indicated that neurotic teachers avoided trusting anything until they verified the authenticity involved (83.31%). For this reason they were able to keep off from unanticipated trouble and to maintain tranquility. A total of 17 (70.86%) of the neurotic teachers showed that they had determination and were able to pursue their goals without entertaining any distractions. A study by Rothman and Coetzer, (2003) stated that neurotics were even-paced and were not easily persuaded to change their views. This supports this study's findings about the neurotic's relentlessness that kept them away from falling victim to distraction and that made them maintain their suspicion of unverified issues. This determination yielded achievements and minimized combat at the place of work.

Neurotic teacher counsellors were found to prefer working within set rules (91.64%). This was interpreted as an indication of obedience and conformity. It allowed them to work comfortably under instruction. Teacher counsellors with neuroticism personality trait showed that they possessed supportive traits that greatly inspired their resilience development by repercussion. All the negative secondary traits of neuroticism bore positive character that strengthened the teacher counsellors' self-value. These teacher counsellors turned out to have precaution, self-determination and conformity. Findings by Van Aarde et al. (2017) are in agreement with these findings as they too found the neurotics to be careful and hardworking due to their perpetual phobia.

- (iii) Openness personality trait was found to have a negative correlation with stress resilience. According to the statistical results of the data

analyzed openness had a correlation coefficient of  $r = -0.176$ . The null hypothesis was rejected at  $p = .05$  level of significance. The teachers who showed that they had openness as their major trait indicated by 78% that they were loving and forgiving towards the people they interacted with. Through their responses they indicated that they were compassionate and had a lot of affection towards the others. This group of teacher counsellors was found to be trustworthy and they themselves trusted others. The analyzed data results also showed that the teachers were very understanding (53%). Their character traits eliminated antagonism and instead bonded them to others. This inspired the growth of resilience. 64% of these teacher counsellors indicated that they were forgiving and honest. Their honesty made them value trust for others and enabled them to forgive. Teacher counsellors with openness personality had secondary traits that were rich in positive character and that generated resilience. These teachers displayed altruism towards others and encouraged harmony within the work environment.

(iv) The agreeableness personality trait had negative correlation with stress resilience as established by the statistical results of the data analysis. The data collected gave  $r = -0.374$  correlation coefficient and rejected the null hypothesis at  $p = .05$  significance level. The teacher counsellors with agreeable personality possessed secondary traits that inclined them towards helping others. This was indicated by 88.46% of the teacher counsellors. These teacher counsellors enjoyed doing things that made others happy. They indicated by 61.54% that they were able to go out of their way to make sacrifices for the sake of others. Data results indicated that these teachers were able to easily give up a chance they valued if they thought someone else needed it more than them. Such selflessness led to harmony that minimized stressors and encouraged positive strength within the individuals. Agreeable personality trait impacted the development of resilience positively.

(v) Conscientiousness as a major personality trait was found to have a neutral relationship with resilience. A correlation coefficient of  $r =$

0.000 was found. The null hypothesis was accepted at  $p= 0.000$  level of significance. The teacher counsellors in this category of the big five personality traits were found by 85.71% to be thorough and reliable in their work. They also indicated by 100% the agreement that they were able to persevere in whatever they purposed to carry out until they achieved their goal. These teachers also placed high value on efficiency (90.48%). Their thoroughness and perseverance was found to place them above most stressors since these qualities made them competent and successful. They did not require the generation of any extra resilience to enable them to combat stress.

Conscientious teacher counsellors were also found to be inventive and open minded in the sense that they were ready to learn new concepts (Southwick et al., 2005). In their willingness to learn new concepts these teachers with conscientiousness were able to adapt to new environments and pick up new strategies of solving problems. This enabled them to deter stress. The teacher counsellors with conscientiousness as a personality trait also indicated by 76.19% that they worked within the plans they made. Planning before taking action contributed to the teachers being thorough and in their thoroughness they evaded mistakes and reduced stressors. Basing on data concerning supportive traits, the conscientious teachers were found to be able to avoid making slips and evaded attracting stressors. Teacher counsellors with conscientious personality trait are strongly positive in character and continuously improved their positivity with every experience realized. They successfully attained and maintained resilience. These findings are similar to findings by Caschi et al., (2016) who stated that conscientious persons were plan oriented and patient while pursuing goal achievement.

In general, the results of the analyzed data indicated that an individual's personality traits impacted the individual's development of resilience. However, each of the big five personality traits – Extroversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness – had a different level at which it influenced the development of resilience.

3. The resilience indicators in the study's questionnaire were found to positively reflect the sampled teacher counsellors' situations at the workplace. All the five traits responded with high frequencies to the indicators. Using two of the most significant indicators: - quickly getting over and recovering from being startled or disturbed; and finding most of the people met to be likeable – it was found that all the five traits responded positively to these indicators. Openness teachers were highest with 77% and 65% respectively while neurotics were lowest with 33% and 25% respectively. The others ranged between 65% and 52% for both indicators.
4. Counselling in secondary schools in Kakamega County Kenya was found to have been carried out in a satisfactorily successful manner. A big number of the sampled teachers expressed their satisfaction with the counselling that was carried out in the secondary schools despite the indication that there was low support from the school administrations. Conscientious teachers agreed to the success by 95% of their responses and even the neurotics agreed by 24%. The sampled teachers also agreed by the majority that personality traits contributed to the success of counselling in school. The conscientious teachers responded by 100%, the extroverts by 95%, the neurotics by 86%, the openness teachers by 86% and the agreeable by 81%.

The teacher counsellors in Kakamega County can achieve successful service delivery as school therapists by relying on their personality traits to build stress resilience. The study findings indicated that the teacher counsellors who had strong character traits were able to use their positive traits to come up with strategies that improved their counselling skills. They accomplished their counselling goals and attained the satisfactory counselling results for the learners in secondary schools.

### **5.3 Conclusions of the study**

This study about the relationship between personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in Kakamega County, Kenya came up with results that have led to a number of conclusions. The following are the conclusions that were made based on the objectives:

1. An individual's personality traits played a big role in determining his or her level of resilience especially in places of high interaction like the place of work. The teacher counsellors should first identify which big five personality trait they belong to as their major personality trait then they should exploit all their positive supportive traits and use them to the maximum for the achievement of successful counselling in the secondary schools. One's personality dictated one's reaction towards all the emerging situations in one's life. In this case where the study was about teacher counsellors, any situation that arose from counteracting negative attitudes or from overwhelming responsibilities in school, would be resolved only by using the positive traits that one possessed. People faced their challenges differently according to their character strength that emanated from their personality traits. It is important that the individual identifies the relevant positive traits and utilizes them to counteract the challenges encountered. Traits can be learnt and adapted. The teacher counsellors with their varying personalities and their varying challenges should be ready to adapt to new situations and excel in their performance.
2. Counselling is a very important aspect of the secondary school activities and should not be relegated to second place among the core businesses of the learning institutions. It is through counselling that the learners develop coping strategies and overcome the life pressures stirred by peers or social trends that temporarily derail them in their youth. Counselling supported academic achievements because it helped the learner to discover his or her potentials and manage their weaknesses early enough. Through counselling the youth gets to accept and appreciate himself or herself. This goes a long way to establish the total individual capable of significant societal contribution. Secondary school counselling requires more support from the schools' administrations. Such support from the school administrations will strengthen the teacher counsellors and enhance their counselling performance. This way they gain self-confidence and make a difference in the learners' ways of life by impacting their general world view through counselling. The teacher counsellors are able to generate a better student output from secondary schools. The administration's support of counselling is what is required in order to improve

the value attached to counselling by the staff and students in the secondary schools. If the correct support and value is accorded from within the institutions themselves, then the teacher counsellors will be respected and they will gain self-esteem. This will inspire more teacher counsellors to seek higher training in counselling and encourage retention of the PhD holder counsellors in the secondary schools.

3. Counsellor-client relationship is essential for the client's healing that the counselling process targets. Counselling entails a lot of sharing and opening up. A free flow of these sharing and opening up require mutual acquaintance between the persons involved. The client is better placed if he or she knows the facts about the therapist he or she is visiting. The therapist also needs to know the client well. This knowledge of the other beyond the name and title will ease the counselling session and enable them to create good rapport. The teacher counsellors' demographic information should not be taken for granted for it has a role to play in the success of the service offered.
4. A counsellor's command of respect in the society in which he or she works is very vital. The respect is an honor that is earned from both the counsellors' profiles as seen in their engagements and achievements and from the recipients as shown in their behavior and values. The same profile determines whether the counsellor's words will be appreciated or rejected. The teacher counsellors' other responsibilities in school, also added value to their command of respect within their communities and to their reliability.
5. The big five personality traits are a representation of all the traits that an individual can possibly possess. The distribution of the sampled teachers across the big five personality traits indicated evenness. All the big five personality traits are correlated to resilience. This shows that everybody has their specific personality and that everybody can rely on their personality to generate resilience in the face of any atrocities. Resilience causes ease of work and can lead to competent counselling service delivery for all workers. Competence leads to self-confidence and improves self-esteem. This brings about workplace comfort that eliminates stressors while enhancing the workers' resilience. Personality traits have innate character strengths that can be relied on to improve individual productivity. Individuals need to attach

great value to their underlying traits. They should bring them out strongly and utilize them in their service production and for self-advancement.

Although each of the big five personality traits has its own level of susceptibility to stress and its own level of resilience, the supportive traits are elastic and stretch across the five traits. For example 'persistence' as a support trait can be noticed in all the big five traits. However in each trait, it plays a different role and has varied intensity. This means that though extroversion is the best linked to resilience while neuroticism is the least linked to resilience there is room for adjustment and improvement for all. Traits can be learnt, they can be enhanced and they can be changed so there are no limits to anybody's improvement.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the study**

Personality traits greatly influence the individual's resilience. Positive character and behavior strength that is required for competent performance in service delivery depends so much on personality. In order to improve counselling in secondary schools in Kenya, the following recommendations were made based on the objectives:

1. It is important that every individual strives to know their personality because your personality is your identity. The value you attach to your personality will enhance your self-belief and self-esteem. Traits can be learnt, changed or improved. This gives a chance for everybody to first be aware of the traits they possess then modify them according to necessity and finally apply them strategically to fulfill needs like quality work performance.
2. School counselling is very significant because it helps the learner to organize himself or herself for better academic achievements and prepares the youth to face the world outside school with confidence and self-value. Of greater significance is that school counselling can improve the learners' personality and prepare him or her to face life with stress resilience. School counselling should be given a significant platform in all secondary schools. Policies and programs for counselling should be put in place and be disseminated with clarity to all the members of the school community.
3. Counselling as a profession needs to be grown. At present counselling is annexed beneath other professions like teaching, medical, military or welfare

services. This has given the impression that counselling is a secondary requirement and not very significant. Counselling should be given a stand-alone position like other professions because the success of many aspects of life such as character formation, academic achievement, social interaction, personal well-being and psychological tranquility is anchored on successful counselling. Counselling shapes one's personality traits and personality dictates the individual's achievements in life.

Teacher counsellors who teach and counsel students simultaneously should be relieved of teaching and be set up for counselling services alone in school. Medical doctors, religious leaders, social workers should not double as by-the-way counsellors offering partial services. Instead there should be professional counsellors assigned to serve clients exclusively and adequately.

4. Training for counsellors needs to be a thorough preparation for thorough professionalism that is depended upon to correctly direct the growth of individual personality traits and individual resilience. The courses need to be intense and relevant to enable the trainees to understand human psychology adequately enough to apply it during their service provision. The services of a trained counsellor should be engaged where required and be accorded the necessary space because counselling is tailoring of the individual for appropriate fitting into society.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

The research findings of this study indicate that there is a relationship between personality traits and stress resilience. The study also found that the big five personality traits are rich in character strength that can be utilized for competent performance at work. However there is room for further investigations to establish more facts about personality traits and how they can be channeled into better use for human gains.

1. There is need for a research to establish how suitable each of the big five personality traits is for counselling and how it can help the counsellor to perform better.

2. There is need for a research to show how extroversion supersedes or compares with introversion for individual workers' generation of resilience at the place of work.
3. There is need for a research to bring out the strength in neuroticism and show its positivity and how it compares favorably with the rest of the big five traits.
4. There is need for a research to show how personality traits can be used to determine people's suitability for job vacancies during recruitment or for the individual's self-placement into an occupation.
5. There is need for a research on other aspects of the individual that can enhance the attainment of stress resilience and empower teacher counsellors in secondary schools

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: Introductory Letter / Consent Form.

Okubo Monica  
Po Box.....  
.....

Dear Participant,

#### **Re: Letter of Introduction**

I am a post graduate student pursuing a PhD in Guidance and Counselling in Laikipia University. I am conducting a research on *“Personality traits and stress resilience among teacher counsellors in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya”*. The research is a requirement for the attainment of the degree. The results of the research are intended to help improve the counselling services in secondary schools.

Your participation in the research is purely voluntary and will be highly appreciated. Kindly read the questions carefully before answering. The information you give will be treated with high confidentiality.

Kindly sign below to confirm your consent to participate in the research.

Thank you.

Monica Okubo,

**PhD student- Laikipia University**

#### **Consent**

I hereby confirm my free willingness to participate in the research.

Respondent's signature: ..... Date: .....

## **APPENDIX B: Questionnaire for teacher counsellors**

My name is Monica Okubo. I am undertaking my PhD studies in guidance and counseling from Laikipia University. I am requesting for your assistance in filling-in this questionnaire to enable me collect research data. The questionnaire is intended to gather information from teacher counsellors from sampled secondary schools in Kakamega County Kenya. By accurately completing all the questions in the questionnaire you will have been of great help. Please do not include your name or any other identification on the questionnaire. This will help to uphold anonymity of the data collected. All your responses will be treated with stringent confidentiality.

Thanks in advance, for your willingness to cooperate.

**This questionnaire has four sections and has both open and closed ended questions.**

**Section A** seeks to collect *Demographic Data*. The information will give the researcher insight into the respondent's **background**. (*Please tick as is appropriate*)

1. Kindly indicate your gender
  - a) Male [ ]
  - b) Female [ ]
2. What is your Age bracket?
  - a) Below 25 years [ ]
  - b) 25 -34 years [ ]
  - c) 35 -44 years [ ]
  - d) 45 years and above [ ]
3. Which is your highest level of education?
  - a) Diploma [ ]
  - b) Bachelor's Degree [ ]
  - c) Master's Degree [ ]
  - d) PhD. [ ]
4. Tick against any additional responsibilities you hold in school.
  - a) Class Teacher [ ]
  - b) House Master/Mistress [ ]
  - c) Games Teacher [ ]
  - d) Timetable Master/Mistress [ ]

- e) Teacher on Duty [ ]
- f) Others [ ] Specify \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your highest level of training as a counsellor?

- a) Certificate in counseling [ ]
- b) Diploma in counseling [ ]
- c) Degree in counseling [ ]
- d) Masters in counseling [ ]
- e) PhD. in counseling [ ]
- f) Others [ ] Specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B:** seeks information on the respondent’s *Personality traits* in relation to the **Big Five Personality Traits.**

Describe yourself with sincerity as you genuinely are now, to give an honest and truthful description of yourself. Do not allow your description to be influenced by wishes or expectations.

Indicate for each statement whether it is **1.** Don’t Know (DK), **2.** Not Applicable (NA), **3.** Inaccurate (IN), **4.** Moderately Accurate (MA) or **5.**Very Accurate (VA); as a true description of yourself.

S/N	DESCRIPTION	VERY ACCURATE (VA)	ACCURATE (MA)	MODERATELY	INACCURATE (IN)	(N/A) NOT APPLICABLE	DON'T KNOW (DK)
<b>1. a) Extroversion personality trait</b>							
6.	I am very talkative and can easily convince others.						
7.	I am full of energy and inventiveness.						
8.	I like to impress others and to be in the limelight but I fear failure.						

9.	I am assertive and explorative.					
10.	I am very friendly, outgoing and sociable.					
<b>b) Introversion personality trait</b>						
11.	I like to contemplate and reflect on ideas.					
12.	I am emotionally stable and self-satisfied and can remain calm in tense situations.					
13.	I am creative and a deep thinker.					
14.	I feel I do not need to impress anybody because often I feel I know what I am doing.					
15.	I see myself as someone who is reserved.					
<b>2. Neuroticism personality trait</b>						
16.	I easily get nervous and I find it hard to trust others.					
17.	Once I am set on doing something I pursue it through without entertaining any distractions					
18.	I hardly venture into anything new until I am sure about it.					
19.	I prefer work that is within set rules.					
20.	I tend to find fault with others.					
<b>3. Openness personality trait</b>						
21.	I avoid involvements that are dishonest.					
22.	I have a forgiving nature and I am generally trusting.					

23.	I do not blame others but always try to understand their situations.					
24.	I am comfortable where issues are handled with peacefulness.					
25.	I am compassionate and affectionate to the people I interact with.					
<b>4. Agreeableness personality trait</b>						
26.	I enjoy doing things that make others happy					
27.	I am considerate and kind to almost everyone.					
28.	I like to cooperate with others.					
29.	I detest situations that make people feel hurt.					
30.	I can easily give up a chance I value if I think someone else needs it more.					
<b>5. Conscientiousness personality trait</b>						
31.	I carry out my job with thoroughness.					
32.	I am a reliable worker who is ready to learn new ideas.					
33.	I persevere until my task is completed.					
34.	I am inventive and I do things efficiently.					
35.	I make plans and follow through with them.					

**Section C** Seeks information on *Stress Resilience*. It will establish the **individual's capacity of stress resilience**.

Indicate by a tick whether the description given below indicates a true description of you: -  
 1. Don't Know (DK), 2. Not Applicable (NA), 3. Inaccurate (IN), 4. Moderately Accurate (MA) or 5. Very Accurate (VA).

S/N	DESCRIPTION	VERY ACCURATE (VA)	ACCURATE (MA)	MODERATELY ACCURATE	INACCURATE (IN)	NOT APPLICABLE (N/A)	DON'T KNOW (DK)
36.	I am very free and liberal with my friends.						
37.	I quickly get over and recover fast from being startled						
38.	I enjoy dealing with new and unusual situations.						
39.	I usually succeed in making a favorable impression on people.						
40.	I am regarded as a very energetic person.						
41.	I like to take different paths to familiar places.						
42.	I find most of the people I meet to be likeable.						
43.	I usually think carefully about something before acting.						
44.	I like to involve myself in doing new						

	and different things.					
45.	I get over my anger at someone reasonably quickly.					

**Section D.** Seeks information that portrays the **effectiveness of counseling** in the **secondary schools.**

Indicate for each statement whether it is true indication of your school's situation: -1. Don't Know (DK), 2. Not Applicable (NA), 3. Inaccurate (IN), 4. Moderately Accurate (MA) or 5. Very Accurate (VA).

SN	DESCRIPTION	VERY ACCURATE (VA)	ACCURATE (MA)	MODERATELY ACCURATE (MA)	INACCURATE (IN)	NOT APPLICABLE (N/A)	DON'T KNOW (DK)
46.	Counselling is highly valued by both staff and students in my school						
47.	The school administration strongly supports counseling in the school						
48.	We have many inspiring success stories as a counselling department.						
49.	Personality traits are very significant for counselling service delivery.						
50.	Stress resilience allows for unrestricted navigation of counselling activities.						

### APPENDIX C: Krejcie & Morgan Sample Size Table

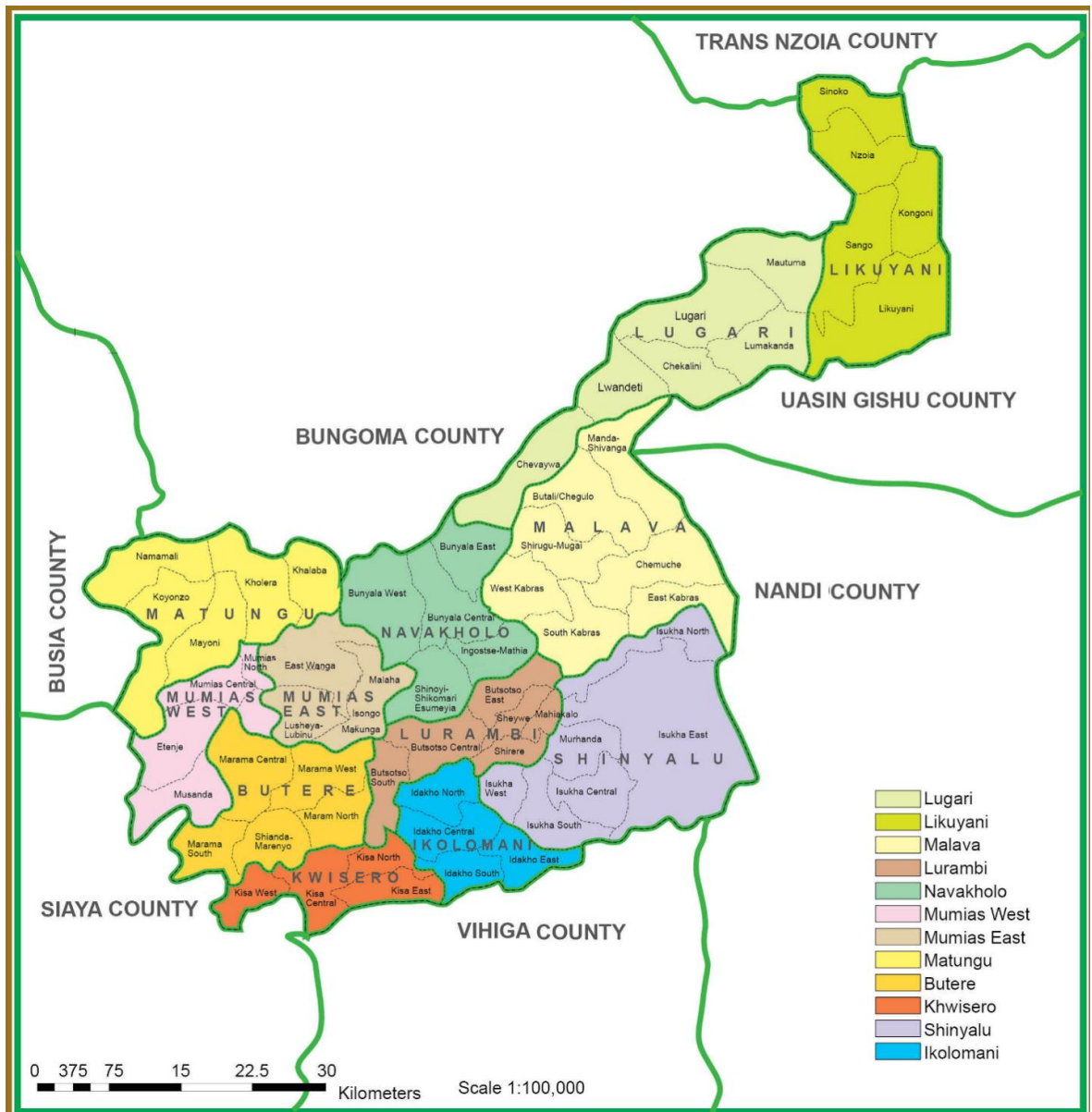
<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970


Krejcie Table for Determining Sample Size for a Fixed Population.

**APPENDIX D: Kakamega County Map**



**Kakamega County and its bordering counties.**

## APPENDIX E: Letter from Laikipia University

**LAIKIPIA**  **UNIVERSITY**

P.O. Box 1100-20300,  
NYAHURURU,  
KENYA

TEL: +254-(0) 20 2671779, 20-2671771;  
Cell: +254 0729285902, 0729281902  
bpgs@laikipia.ac.ke; [www.laikipia.ac.ke](http://www.laikipia.ac.ke)

**OFFICE OF DIRECTOR  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

REF: LDG32/1409/12  
26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

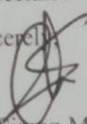
**RE: OKUBO MONICA – REG. LDG32/1409/12**

The above mentioned is a Postgraduate student of Laikipia University undertaking a **Doctor of Philosophy** (Guidance and Counselling) degree under the Department of Psychology Counselling & Educational Foundations, School of Education.

Her Research Proposal entitled “**PERSONALITY TRAITS AND STRESS RESILIENCE AMONG TEACHER COUNSELLORS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA**” has been **Examined and Accepted** by the Board of Graduate School.

She is hereby authorized to conduct her research. Any assistance accorded to her will highly be appreciated.

Sincerely,



  
Mr. Simon Muchendu

**For: Director**


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*Vision: A University for Valued Transformation of Society*  
*Mission: To serve students and society through research, education, scholarship, training, innovation, outreach and consultancy*

Laikipia University is Certified to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO/IEC 27001:2013




**APPENDIX F: NACOSTI Research Permit**



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation


**Ref No: 832338**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

**Date of Issue: 07/November/2022**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**




**This is to Certify that Ms. Monica Kingonda Okubo of Laikipia University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kakamega on the topic: PERSONALITY TRAITS AND STRESS RESILIENCE AMONG TEACHER COUNSELLORS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY KENYA for the period ending : 07/November/2023.**


**License No: NACOSTIP/22/21564**

**832338**  
**Applicant Identification Number**

**Director General**  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION**



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