# GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN RWANDA

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*Abstract:* This study was set to investigate the relationship between guidance and counseling services on the academic achievement of undergraduate students in the high learning institutions. The research will be guided by three specific objectives: to determine the factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners in the high learning institutions in Rwanda. To evaluate the relationship between techniques applied during counseling and students' Academic Achievement in the high learning institutions in Rwanda. To assess the challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners in the high learning institutions in Rwanda. This study was anchored by the theory of common factors theory. This study used correlational and descriptive design and applied both qualitative and quantitative data. The participants included the students who underwent counselling under Mount Kenya University in the department of counselling between the periods between 2022 to 2023. The study population included the 72 students who underwent counseling from which a sample size of 62 respondents calculated using the Slovenes formula, which is commonly used for calculating sample size in research. Purposive sampling technique was applied in selecting the students and staff to form the sample. The data collection instruments were the questionnaire. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interviews, with reliability and validity confirmed through pilot testing and expert reviews. Regression of coefficients was applied to calculate the relationship between the research variables. On the first objective, the results on the regression coefficient show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.299. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 4.406 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528, which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. Techniques applied during counselling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at MKUR, the coefficient of association results show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.086. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 5.733 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528, which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. The p-value was found to be 0.000, which is very significant.  The coefficient of association for Challenges hinder effective guidance and counselling of the learners at MKUR. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of -0.176. The associated t-statistic value was found to be -4.086 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528. The p-value was found to be 0.000, which is very significant. This implies that there was a positive and significant relationship between the variation in the students achievement which was caused by three components; Factors influenced you to want to seek for guidance and counselling services at MKUR, Techniques applied during counselling and Challenges hinder effective guidance and counselling of the learners at MKUR.

*Keywords:* Counseling, Career counseling, Guidance and Academic Achievement.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling form a crucial part of Rwandan education system and aid in shaping learners' behavior and instilling proper discipline. Counseling services in universities are essential for the psychological wellbeing of the students. Globally, counseling is increasingly gaining recognition as an aspect that is crucial for the retention and academic performance of university students. Psychological wellbeing for example, is credited with ability to solve problems, development of self- awareness as well as environmental mastery that enables individuals to cope with challenges experienced in life (Yu, et al., 2017). Counseling services are an important aspect in helping, developing and enhancing psychological resources that mediate in the wellbeing of people. Nelson-Jones (2015) construes that counseling is a service that involves helping people to improve functionality and maintain performance in different stages of their lives. The objective of modern education is the optimal development of the personality (emotional, social, moral, spiritual, academic, physical, intellectual, and professional) of the students. Guidance plays an important role in achieving this goal of education. The objective of modern education is the optimal development of the personality (emotional, social, moral, spiritual, academic, physical, intellectual, and professional) of the students. Guidance plays an important role in achieving this goal of education.

Counseling enables students to deal with daily challenges while at university. The services offered in form of psycho education benefit individual students or as a group. Consequently, many universities globally have invested in counseling services to help develop personal resources that can help students address various challenges, which interfere with their academic performance and retention (Lai-Yeung, 2014). On the academic front, students encounter numerous forms of learning that vary significantly from their secondary school learning. New learning, teaching and assessment challenge students. The students experience anxiety about course work and get disappointed by a drop in grades after the first set of exams. They may also experience excessive freedom, as most lecturers do not follow them closely (Niamh, 2018). The newfound freedom in the university is likely to pose a challenge in time management and therefore interfere with their studies (Abban, 2011). Other studies conducted in America, on retention rate reveals that at least one in three first year students do not make to graduation due to family problems, loneliness, academic struggles and financial difficulties Sue (2001). These are issues that are associated with mental health, and which could be addressed through counseling.

A related finding was observed in Canada where statistics on participation, graduation and dropout rate revealed that in a class of 2009-2010, 43% dropped out of the university Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD,2013). The survey results from the students who dropped out suggest that they were already struggling with meeting deadlines, academic performance and study behavior, drawbacks which forced them to quit in their first year, but which could have been handled through counseling. A study which was conducted by Egbo, (2013), citing data compiled by 2013 returned Graduate Recruitment Report and University Statistics reports that 25% of Chinese students attending Ivy League University in USA end up dropping out. The study discovered that while students exhibit high academic achievement in their home country, many found it difficult to adjust and adapt to the new environment citing problems like language barriers, difficulties in education system, financial difficulties, and poor social skills. This is despite the fact that counseling services are offered in these institutions.

In Australia, a study comprising 89 university students revealed that students experienced high levels of mental difficulties, which was attributed to developmental problems, the pressure of academics, and change of environment (McGillivray & Pidgeon, 2015). Such aspects can make students not perform optimally or defer their studies, making them not graduate according to the programme's stipulated time. Using a five years' market share and retention data 2005-2010, McGillivray & Pidgeon (2015) found that the average drop- out rate was within the range of 12 % but varied anywhere from as low as 9%. In 2013, the Australian national average drop-out rate for first-year students reached 14.85%. Specifically, at the University of Tasmania, nearly one in three students drop out. This drop-out is attributed to disadvantaged students, such as those first in their family to attend university, part-time students, and mature students juggling studies, work, and family, and are unable to find a balance (Burke, 2016).

## 1.1 Problem Statement

A significant number of college students experience varying levels of stress, anxiety, homesickness, and depression which may negatively impact their academic performance or personal functioning. However, many college students do not seek professional help from campus counselors. Recent research supports the effectiveness of counseling centers in reducing the effect of stress, anxiety, homesickness, and depression on the students' well-being. It is usually believed that, students who

join high learning institutions must thrive and excel in their academics as well as complete their studies within the planned time. However, students tend to encounter a number of difficulties that often interfere with their academic achievements and general performance. To counter this problem, high learning institutions world-over continue to put in place guidance and counseling services to help students struggling with self-defeating issues to live a holistic and independent life and make sound decisions that can lead to their academic success and general students' well-being. Counseling services therefore imbue students with the capacity to function adequately in different aspects of life by broadening their understanding of life space and skills to address life challenges.

Although most high learning institutions have invested heavily in guidance and counseling services, practical information on the effectiveness of services in enhancing academic achievements of the learning is very rare. Consequently, the students continue to drop out of the high learning institutions. Some students are even discontinued for the University due to low Some are discontinued due to low academic performance, while the academic performance of those that are left is wanting. Studies have proven that the primary goal of counseling services in universities is to assist students in developing good mental health, to facilitate in enhancing academic performance, and improve retention rates. Despite this understanding, few studies have examined the effectiveness of counseling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rates in Kenya's universities. Most of the studies in counselling focus on the challenges that affect guidance and counselling (Niamh (2018).

Other studies, especially in Kenya, have focused on some aspects of guidance counseling such as academic advising (Muola *et al.,* 2011) and transitional challenges in university (Wangeri *et al*., 2012), among others. Therefore, the problem underpinning this study is that globally, many universities have invested in counseling services aimed at developing personal resources that could help the students address diverse challenges that interfere with their education. Universities (being higher institutions) should focus on producing students who excel in academic performance and complete their studies within scheduled time. However, there is little knowledge about their effectiveness in facilitating academic performance and retention rates. Given that there is limited documented literature and empirical knowledge about the effectiveness of counseling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rate in Rwanda, this study investigated the effectiveness of psych education counseling services in improving academic performance and retention in universities in Rwanda. Niamh (2018) found that lack of adequate counseling materials was the most cited barrier to provision during counseling sessions. The study further indicates that materials necessary in counseling affect the interventions. However, the study does not explain how counseling materials affect intended counseling outcomes. This study was therefore set to determine the relationship between Guidance and Counseling Services, on the academic Achievement of learners at in the high learning institutions in Rwanda, with particular emphasis on Mount Kenya University Rwanda.

### 1.2 General Objective

The general objective of this research was to investigate the role of Guidance and Counseling Services on the Academic Achievement of undergraduate Students in High Learning Institutions in Rwanda with specific emphasis on Mount Kenya University Rwanda.

### 1.2.1 Specific Objective

i. To determine the factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners at MKUR

ii. To evaluate the techniques applied during counseling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at MKUR

iii. To assess the challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Literature

### 2.1.1 Common Factors Theory

Common factors theory proposes that different approaches and evidence-based practices in psychotherapy and counseling share common factors that account for much of the effectiveness of a psychological treatment. The Common Factors Theory proposes that different approaches and evidence- based practices in counseling share certain common factors that account for much of the effectiveness of psychological treatment. Laska et al., (2014). The client's characteristics, such

as inner strength, goal-directedness, and capacity for change, make the client the chief agent of change. Students who have these characteristics will accomplish their goals regardless of the (counselor's) counseling approach. Therapist's characteristics such as unconditional positive regard, ability to communicate and care, competence, counselor's ability to be integrated, and maturity, among other factors, contribute to a positive outcome in counseling. All these characteristics determine the effectiveness that a specific counselling approach may have.

## 2.2 Empirical Review

### 2.2.1 Factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners at MKUR.

There are a number of different factors that affect the likelihood of college students seeking professional help including social influences, cultural differences, stigmas, and gender. A holistic understanding of college students, their psychological disorders, and their reasons for seeking treatment need to be fully understood in order to effectively provide services. There are a number of different factors that impact the likelihood of college students seeking professional help including social influences, cultural differences, stigmas, and gender. A holistic understanding of college students, their psychological disorders, and their reasons for seeking treatment need to be fully understood in order to effectively provide services .These students have typically moved away from home and are experiencing a high level of independence. Without the presence of previous guidance, and often with the newer freedom expressed during college, new challenges and difficulties arise. Such new experiences and challenges can create situations that expose psychological disorders previously overlooked. Many university students are subject to increased responsibilities in their social, work, school, and home lives. Research supports the high prevalence rates of psychological disorders among college students and the effectiveness of counseling interventions (McLeod, 2013).

Most counseling sessions in universities are pegged on various variables, such as the theoretical orientation of the counselor and the processes of counseling. However, little regard is given to the counseling context, where the counseling takes place, which is a core element in the healing process. A study carried out in Australia by Sanders and Lehmann (2018) stressed the importance of modeling counseling rooms to enhance interplay between physical and spatial features such as paint colors, natural lighting, seat positioning, temperature, and clients' thoughts and feelings. These physical-spatial features have contributed to the healing process during counseling. There is still a need to work on triangular relationships that bring parents, decision-makers, and joint students together (Abdellatif, 2011). Communities such as schools, parents, local communities, and government agencies are recommended to carry out the planning and implementation of efficient and appropriate school counseling programs and activities.

Contrary to findings of a study conducted by Kolo et al., (2017), they found factors such as learners' attitudes and student-lecturers' interaction are the main factors that influence academic performance. The findings are therefore, suggesting the need for effective counseling in enhancing academic performance. Many students perform poorly because they lack the right attitude to study and do not have the right orientation from home and from the society (Essuman, 2007). This is because academic achievement can help students develop various life skills, which can be useful in their future personal lives and careers. However, Garg *et al.,* (2021) argued that a student's academic performance is not a complete parameter and does not fully reflect the real-world outcome or performance.

### 2.2.2: Techniques applied during counseling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at MKUR

Directive counselling technique seldom succeeds, as people do not wish to take up advice normally, no matter how good it might be. Williamson (2011) stated that this approach is good to address the problems relating to educational and vocational adjustment. This type of Counselling is a concept, where educational and vocational guidance relate to the personality dynamics and interpersonal relationship. This type of Counselling is more useful where the individual wants information and advice for choice of a career. In this type of approach, the counsellor plays an important role. With directive counseling (DC), the counsellor, after hearing the students' problems, decides what should be done and give advice and suggestion to him to resolve the problem. Guidance and counseling focus more on the individual, be it problems, meanings, experiences, behaviors, or goals (Murray M. (2014). In school settings, the counselor most trained to prevent, intervene, and restore student behavior is usually the school advisor (Stone & Dahir, 2016). Counselors support students directly in their academic life to foster, promote and enhance interpersonal competence and academic achievement (Shaterloo & Mohammadyari, 2011).

According to the research, which was published in the journal of counselling psychology, the effects of nondirective counselling on university students facing academic challenge were investigated. The research found that students who participated in nondirective counselling reported significant improvements in their academic performance, self-efficacy, and overall well-being. The supportive environment created by nondirective counselling allowed students to explore their feelings and thoughts, leading to enhanced motivation and academic engagement (Smith et al., 2023). Unique counselling techniques enhance students' academic achievement of learners and can potentially influence the students' concept by telling them how others judge his/her and how they rate himself in comparison with others.  Academic or Educational age, accomplishment quotient or achievement quotients are the most commonly used means to interpret the level of Academic Achievement of pupils in a specific given subject matter.

Another study investigated the influence of counselling in addressing difficulties among college students. The findings indicated that students who received counselling services, particularly nondirective approaches, experienced better academic outcomes compared to those who did not seek help. The study emphasized the importance of emotional support and personal exploration in fostering academic success (Johnson et al., 2023).

### 2.2.3: Challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR

In a study investigating coping strategies employed by students to address stress emanating from social, economic, and academic challenges in Zimbabwe, Peterson (2006), found out that counselling in university is severely compounded by students' challenges such as lack of school fees, inadequate stationery, and sexual harassment. Counsellors have consequently faced challenges in handling students' psychological problems due to students' issues taking a complex dimension. This study shows that some personal student issues are beyond counsellor's intervention and pose a challenge to the delivery of counselling services. According to Rogers 2011), guidance is a programme of activities which provides people with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in the present age of complex scientific and technological development. In other words, counseling is a transformative process of helping people to learn all that are to be learnt both in and outside the school.

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Egbo (2013) defines guidance and counseling as "a learning process in which a counselor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviors that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and socio personally." Inclusion guidance and counseling is aimed toward preventing the child from indulging in negative vices and helping the child to choose the right parts in life to be successful in the pursuit of future ambition. It is necessary that the counselor build the confidence of the child to trust him/her to be able to give him/her the rightful information needed in helping its client (students). This is so, because, client that trust counselors  normally open up with vital information to their counselors which may enable the client to introduce any other person with counseling need to the counselor. Counseling also help students in career choice to vying to their appropriate area that they are good at instead of following their peers in choosing a wrong career part. The education of a child needs constant mentoring hence guidance is inimical to their growth and development in a complex society that we are today.

Behavior change is an activity carried out by teachers in leading, guiding, directing, regulating, and (if necessary, under certain conditions) dealing with student behavior that interferes with the rights of others (Rogers, 2011). Behavior change is to help the student learn to choose the right behavior and be responsible for him although strict discipline is sometimes criticized for being too authoritarian (Morgan, 2007). Furthermore, inner-city parents believe that bad behaviour in children can be changed and prevented (Busey *et al*., 2006). The expected end product of this student behavior change project is the observations about changes in student behavior is a behavioral checklist. Observers noted the types of inappropriate behavior during the main event that most of the students were involved in during the interval (i.e., talking/noise, inactivity, off-task, non-compliance, verbal offenses). Finally, observers indicate who is involved in the disturbance (i.e., class, small

group, individual) to assess the extent of misbehavior in the classroom. Researchers train observers in assessment procedures so that they will rate behavior consistently. The audio recording signals observers as to when they will mark their observations on the checklist sheet. After recording scores for all students, observers analyzed the differences among students in their behavioral changes

Academic Achievement in general, refers to the degree or level of success of proficiency, attained in some specific area, concerning students' academic work. It is the overall measurement of the student's abilities, knowledge, and skills in terms of academic achievement which is emphasized by the subject or course of study (Ede & Igbokwe, 2018). Academic achievement is the most significant outcome of the results of formal education (Moore, 2019), and it is important in achieving higher education goal. The work of educational guidance and counseling is to allow a learner to change themselves together with their studies by improving their study perspective and getting rid of subject matter challenges. Aslam et al., (2021), stated that absence of guidance and counseling in schools makes learners' adaptation to be more difficult hence resulting to poor performance, misbehavior and dropout. Without proper guidance and counseling, several learners lose focus and get involved in bad habits like substance abuse, missing lessons, dropout and more; consequently, they do not have both focus and direction leading to failure in life

### 2.3. Conceptual Framework

**Independent Variable**                                                                                   **Dependent Variable**
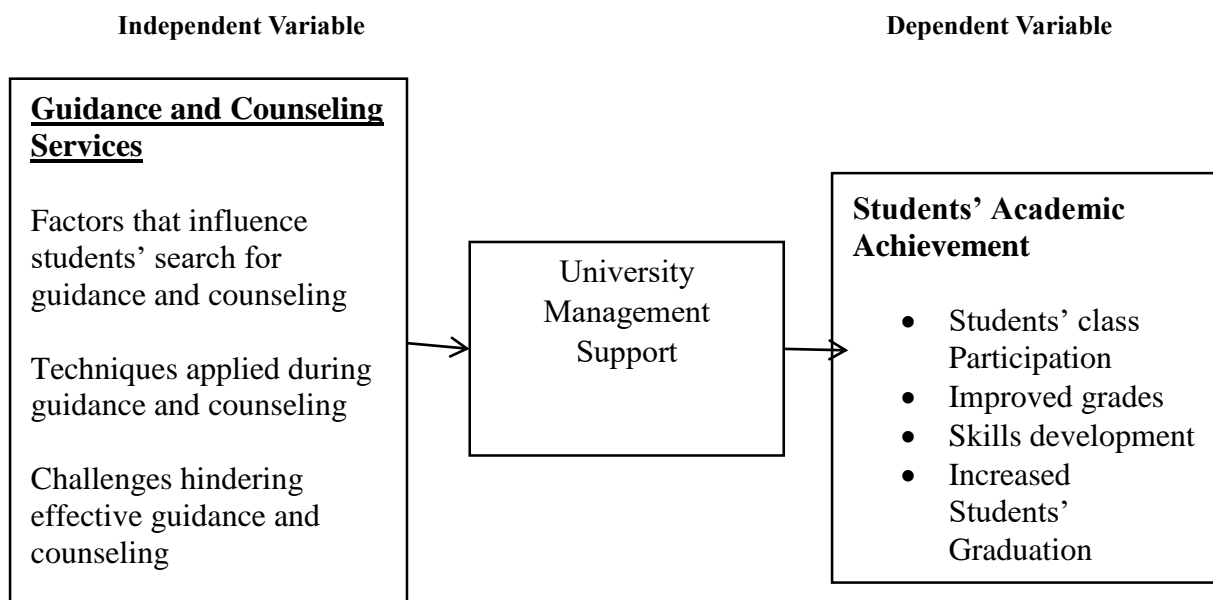


The conceptual framework presents the relationship between the research variable and they influence each other Nelson (2015). The independent variable is the cause and the dependent variable is the effect. These two variables have the power to influence each other either positively or negatively. However, there is an intervening variable, which fall in the middle of the independent and dependent variable. This demonstrates that counseling services with a major indicator of psychoeducation counseling, Factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling, Techniques applied during guidance and counseling and Challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling (independent variables) influences the academic achievement of the learners in terms of Students' class Participation, Improved class grades and Students' Graduation rates (dependent variables). The two-way interaction between the independent variables, university administration support to counseling and the counseling policy, which guides counseling services (intervening variables), results to the dependent variables. The interplay of these variables ensures effectiveness of counseling resulting to enhanced academic performance.

## III.   METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research design

This study design combines descriptive survey by collecting general information through administering questionnaire to a sample of respondents. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected in order to answer the questions formulated for this study. Finally, correlation design was used to assess the degree of relationship that exists between Guidance and Counseling Services and the Academic Achievement of undergraduate Students in High Learning Institutions in Rwanda

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### 3.2 Target population

The population in research refers to all items in a unit of inquiry (Kothari, 2011). For this research, the target population was 72 respondents comprising of the undergraduate students who undergoing guidance and counseling services at MKUR and lecturers. From this population, the research sample was drawn using the Slovin's formula for calculating samples.

### 3.3 Sample design

Sample design is the number of observations used for calculating estimates of a given population. It reduces the expenses and time by allowing researchers to estimate information about the whole population without having to survey each number of the population.

### 3.4 Sample size

This is the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2011) Therefore, the sample size of the population is selected by using the formula of Slovin's which is commonly used for calculating research samples as seen below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2}$$

Whereby n is the sample size, N is the population of the study and e is the sampling error (0.05)

Therefore;

$$n = \frac{72}{1 + 72(0.05)} = n = 62$$

The formula yields 62 individuals of the total sample of the undergraduate students who undergo guidance and counseling services at MKUR. This also includes some lecturers plus the University counselor who voluntarily offer guidance and counseling services to the undergraduate students in MKUR.

**Table 3.1: Research Population and Sample Size**

| Type of respondents | Population | Sample size |
|---|---|---|
| **Undergraduate Students** | 50 | 42 |
| **Lecturers** | 22 | 20 |
| Total | 72 | 62 |

Table 3:1 explains how the researcher came up with total population based on the different categories of the respondents who will take part in the research.

### 3.5 Sampling Technique

Keith (2009) highlighted that a sampling is not independent of the other elements in a research project, particularly its research purposes and questions. Purposive sampling technique was applied in selecting the students and staff to form the sample. Thus, a number of lecturers who voluntarily offer counseling plus the students who undergo counseling at MKUR was purposively targeted, as they possess the information necessary for fulfilling the purpose of the research, as they constitute a typical group of students who experience the counseling services at the University.

### 3.6 Data collection methods

Primary data is the first hand type of data that was collected from the respondents by use of questionnaires'. Data was collected using questioner tool as mentioned above, in relation to the applied Guidance and Counseling Services on the Academic Achievement of undergraduate Students in High Learning Institutions in Rwanda

### 3.7 Data collection instruments

The main study instrument was a self-administered questionnaire and the structured interview guide also used. All instruments was developed taking into consideration literature review and the objectives of the study. The Likert scale measurements of strongly-agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly-disagree levels was used (Likert, as cited in Babin & Svensson, 2012). An advantage of this type of item is that points can be assigned to the various responses, and thus measures of central tendency, variability, correlation, and the like was calculated Ary *et al.,* (2010).

The questionnaire will be used to collect quantitative data on Guidance and Counseling Services on the Academic Achievement of undergraduate Students in High Learning Institutions in Rwanda. A structured interview schedule contains specific questions in a fixed order, to be asked of all respondents (Ary *et al.,* 2010). Interviewees were probed regarding Guidance and Counseling Services on the Academic Achievement of undergraduate Students in High Learning Institutions in Rwanda. The information obtained helped to supplement data from questionnaire. Hence, triangulation techniques was used in obtaining primary and secondary data for the study.

### 3.8 Data analysis procedure

Data analysis involves reviewing the data while it is being collected and attempting to synthesize and make sense out of what is observed (Ary *et al.,* 2010)..For this study, data from the questionnaire was entered into SPSS database and analyzed using both descriptive statistics and correlation. The descriptive statistics to use are means and standard deviation while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for correlation analysis.

On the other hand, data from interviews was analyzed to expound the perception of the respondents with regard to guidance and counseling services to the academic achievement of the undergraduate students in MKUR. The research protocols to be used in quantitative data analysis will involve several matrices to display the data as they are useful to highlight consistency and differences among them. The finding was presented using a profile of mean and standard deviation. The quantitative data from interviews was analyzed with quantitative findings to enlighten some salient features of guidance and counseling services to the undergraduate students in MKUR and the results was used to address the research questions which where earlier developed for the study.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Table 1: Response Rate

| Response | Frequency | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| **No response** | 5 | 8.065% |
| **Responded** | 56 | 91.935% |
| Total | 62 | 100 |

Table 4.1 presents the results on the response rate of the students at MT Kenya University. The results show that the response was 91.935 percent. The interpretation was that a high number of students were willing to respond to the research questions or just participate in the study.

### Table 2: Gender

| Gender | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | 32 | 57.1 | 57.1 | 57.1 |
| | Female | 24 | 42.9 | 42.9 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 56 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.2 presents the results on the gender of the respondents. From the results it was observed that majority of the participants were males. The rest were females at 42.9 percent. This imply that the proportions of the respondents were high.

### Table 3: Age Group

| Age group | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 to 20   years | 9 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 16.1 |
| 21 to 23 years | 20 | 35.7 | 35.7 | 51.8 |
| 24 to 26 ears | 13 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 75.0 |
| 27 to 29 years | 9 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 91.1 |
| 30 and above years | 5 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 56 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.3 presents the results on the age groups of the study. The key age limits for the students were; 21 to 23 years, 20 or 35.7% and 24 to 26 years (13 or 23.2%. The implications here was that the common rage of the students were relatively young.

**Table 4: Education Level pursued at university**

| Education level | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Diploma | 15 | 26.8 | 26.8 | 39.3 |
| Bachelors | 18 | 32.1 | 32.1 | 71.4 |
| Masters | 12 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 92.9 |
| PHD | 4 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 56 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.4 presents the results on the education level pursued at the University of the Respondents. The results show that, diploma level were 15 or 26.8 %, bachelors  level were 18 or 32.1%, masters level were 12 or 21.4% and doctorate of philosophy level were 4 or 7.1%. Majority of students are the bachelor level followed by diploma then masters and finally Ph.D levels.

**Table 5: Semester of study**

| Semester of study | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year 1 semester 1 | 8 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 14.3 |
| Year 1 semester 2 | 6 | 10.7 | 10.7 | 25.0 |
| Year 2 semester 1 | 9 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 41.1 |
| Year 2 semester 2 | 8 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 55.4 |
| Year 3 semester 1 | 7 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 67.9 |
| Year 3 semester 2 | 5 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 76.8 |
| Year 4 semester 1 | 6 | 10.7 | 10.7 | 87.5 |
| Year 4 semester 2 | 7 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 56 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.5 presents the results on the semester of the study by the students. The results show that that there was a fairly uniform distribution of the students by the level of academic study per year. This is good since it help to give a uniform opinion across the board among the respondents in the study.

## 4.1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EACH OBJECTIVE

**1. Objective one was Factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners at MKUR**

**Table 6: Factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners at MKUR**

| Descriptive Statistics | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| How did you learn about the availability of Guidance and Counseling services in MKUR? | | |
| Through fellow students | 3.6071 | .77878 |
| Through lecturers | 3.5000 | .78625 |
| Announcement on social media groups | 3.5536 | .85109 |
| Through Orientation of new students | 3.4464 | .82945 |
| Through my parents | 3.4821 | .85261 |
| What factors influenced you to want to seek for guidance and counseling services at MKUR? | | |
| The University has a professional counselor who offers counseling to students | 3.4286 | .84975 |
| The counseling environment is very conducive for counseling | 3.4107 | .84803 |
| There is high confidentiality in the whole counseling practice | 3.4107 | .84803 |
| Parents encouraged me to seek guidance and counseling services | 3.4464 | .87219 |
| Lecturers normally encourage students to go for counseling services | 3.5000 | .78625 |
| University management normally encourage students to seek guidance and counseling services | 3.5536 | .85109 |
| Are the counseling services offered in MKUR relevant to your needs as a student? | 3.4464 | .82945 |

Through fellow students mean of 3.6071, Std. Deviation 0.77878, through lecturers mean of 3.5000 Std. Deviation 0.78625, Announcement on social media groups mean of 3.5536 Std. Deviation 0.85109, Through Orientation of new students mean of 3.4464, Std. Deviation 0.82945 and Through my parents mean of 3.4821 Std. Deviation 0.85261. The University has a professional counselor who offers counseling to students mean of 3.4286 Std. Deviation 0.84975, The counseling environment is very conducive for counseling mean of 3.4107 Std. Deviation 0.84803, There is high confidentiality in the whole counseling practice mean of 3.4107 Std. Deviation.84803, Parents encouraged me to seek guidance and counseling services mean of 3.4464, Std. Deviation 0.87219, Lecturers normally encourage students to go for counseling services mean of 3.5000 Std. Deviation 0.78625 and University management normally encourage students to seek guidance and counseling services mean of 3.5536, Std. Deviation 0.85109 and relevant to your needs as a student counseling services offered in MKUR mean 3.4464 standard deviation 0.82945. These results are supported by the findings of Atsuwe & Achebulu (2018), who note that there are multi factors that affect students achievement.

## 2. Objective two relationships between techniques applied during counseling and students' academic achievement at MKUR

**Table 7: The relationship between techniques applied during counseling and students' Academic Achievement at MKUR**

|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| Which techniques of counseling do you like the most during the counseling sessions? |  |  |
| Self-directed counseling | 4.2679 | 1.11992 |
| Group counseling | 4.2321 | 1.20591 |
| Peer counseling | 4.1964 | 1.21236 |
| Counselor – Students Counseling | 4.1964 | 1.21236 |
| Recorded counseling sessions from other counselees | 4.1607 | 1.21770 |
| How has such counseling sessions affected your general class participation and the grades you score in your CATs and Exams? |  |  |
| Below average performance | 2.2679 | .44685 |
| Average performance | 3.7321 | .44685 |
| Above average performance | 3.7500 | .43693 |
| Excellent Performance | 3.5000 | .78625 |
| Are there any reasons that may cause you to drop out of this University before your graduation? |  |  |
| Issues related to Tuition fees | 3.4464 | .82945 |
| Issues related to lack of guidance | 3.4821 | .85261 |
| Issues related to my part time Job | 4.1607 | 1.21770 |
| Issues related to poor relationship with peers | 3.3214 | .47125 |
| Issues related to MKUR lecturer/ management | 3.2679 | .44685 |
| Issues related to my relationships in my life | 3.6250 | .48850 |
| Issues back at home | 3.4107 | .78107 |

Techniques of counseling during the counseling session; "self-directed counseling" mean 4.2679 standard deviation 1.11992, "Group counseling" mean 4.2321 standard deviation 1.20591, "Peer counseling" mean 4.1964 standard deviation 1.21236, "Counselor – Students Counseling" mean 4.1964 standard deviation 1.21236 and "Recorded counseling sessions from other counselees" mean 4.1607 standard deviation 1.21770. On general class participation "Below average performance" mean 2.2679 and standard deviation .44685, "average performance" mean 3.7321 and standard deviation 0.44685, "above average performance" mean 3.7500 and standard deviation 0.43693 and "excellent performance" mean 3.5000, standard deviation 0.78625. Reasons that may cause you to drop out of this University ; "Issues related to Tuition fees" mean 3.4464 standard deviation 0.82945, "Issues related to lack of guidance" mean 3.4821 standard deviation 0.85261, "Issues related to my part time Job" mean 4.1607 standard deviation 1.21770, "Issues related to poor relationship with peers" mean 3.3214 standard deviation 0.47125, "Issues related to MKUR lecturer/ management" mean 3.2679 standard deviation 0.44685, "Issues related to my relationships in my life" mean 3.6250 standard deviation 0.48850 and "Issues back at home" mean 3.4107 standard deviation 0.78107. These results are supported by the findings of Muthui *et al.,* (2023); who note that there are relationships between techniques applied during counseling and students' academic achievement at MKUR.

**3. Objective three challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR**

**Table 8: Challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR**

| Descriptive Statistics | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| What obstacles do you encounter during the guidance and counseling sessions? | | |
| The counselor schedules do not match with class schedules | 3.4464 | .82945 |
| Language barrier in expressing my issues to the counselor | 3.4821 | .85261 |
| The time for counseling is not enough to exhaust all issues I have | 4.1607 | 1.21770 |
| My peers discourage me from seeking counseling | 3.3929 | .84592 |
| The counseling space is not very contusive for me to air out my issues to the counselor | 4.0179 | 1.25757 |
| The method used by the counselor does not serve me well | 3.8214 | 1.20766 |
| What do you think should be done differently to enhance counseling services at MKUR? | | |
| The counselor should change the method of counseling | 3.4464 | .93263 |
| The counseling environment should be improved | 3.3571 | .90310 |
| More time be offered to prolong the counseling sessions in order to address all issues exhaustively | 3.3929 | .90812 |
| The University should employ more than one counselor to work in shifts to cater for all day, evening and weekend students | 3.3929 | .86715 |
| More should be done to reach out to all students regarding the availability of counseling services in the University | 3.4464 | .93263 |

Table 8 presents the result on factors that Challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR, "The counselor schedules do not match with class schedules" mean 3.4464 standard deviation 0.82945" Language barrier in expressing my issues to the counselor mean 3.4821 standard deviation 0.85261. "The time for counseling is not enough to exhaust all issues I have" mean 4.1607 and standard deviation 1.21770. "My peers discourage me from seeking counseling" mean 3.3929 and standard deviation 0.84592. "The counseling space is not very contusive for me to air out my issues to the counselor" mean 4.0179 and standard deviation 1.25757. "The method used by the counselor does not serve me well" mean 3.8214 and standard deviation 1.20766. "The counselor should change the method of counseling" mean 3.4464 standard deviation 0.93263. "The counseling environment should be improved mean 3.3571 standard deviation .90310 "More time be offered to prolong the counseling sessions in order to address all issues exhaustively 3.3929 standard deviation .90812. "The University should employ more than one counselor to work in shifts to cater for all day, evening and weekend students" mean of 3.3929 and standard deviation of 0.86715 and "More should be done to reach out to all students regarding the availability of counseling services in the University" mean of 3.4464, standard deviation 0.93263. These results are supported by the findings of (Shaterloo & Mohammadyari, 2011), who note that there are numerous challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR.

**Table 9: Students' Academic Achievement**

| Descriptive Statistics | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| Increased Students' class Participation | 3.2679 | .44685 |
| Increased Improved class grades | 3.7321 | .44685 |
| Increased Students' Graduation | 3.7500 | .43693 |
| Increase in global university ranking | 3.5000 | .78625 |

Table 9 presents the results on the achievement of the students after undergoing guidance and counseling sections at the university. For the specific constructs indicated that, increased students' class participation  mean 3.2679  standard deviation 0.44685, increased improved class grades  mean 3.7321 standard deviation 0.44685, increased students' graduation  mean 3.7500 standard deviation 0.43693 and increase in global university ranking mean 3.5000 standard deviation 0.78625. These results are supported by the findings of Ahmad (2017), who note that there are numerous measurers of Academic Achievement. Similarly, academic achievement is the most significant outcome of the results of formal education (Moore, 2019), and it is important in achieving higher education goals

## 4.2: REGRESSION ANALYSIS

**Table 10: Model Summary**

| R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| **.514ᵃ** | .464 | .451 | .28662 | .264 | 19.416 | 1 | 54 | .000 |

Table 10 presents the results on the model summary for the regression fit. The results show that up to 51.4 % of the variation could be explained by the factors considered to affect guidance and counseling. The associated R Square   26.4 % and Adjusted R Square 25.1%

**Table 11: Analysis of variance**

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 1.595 | 1 | 1.595 | 19.416 | .000ᵇ |
| Residual | 4.436 | 54 | .082 | | |
| Total | 6.031 | 55 | | | |

Table 11 presents analysis of variance analysis of variance for the regression model. The results show that the F-test was 19.416. This show that the variable considered is statistically significant for the determination of attending guidance and counseling sections.

**Table 12: Regression Coefficient**

| Variable | Beta | Std. Error | t-statistics | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | 2.528 | 0.238 | 10.629 | 0.000 |
| Factors influenced you to want to seek for guidance and counseling services at MKUR | 0.299 | 0.068 | 4.406 | 0.000 |
| Techniques applied during counseling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at MKUR | 0.086 | 0.015 | 5.733 | 0.000 |
| Challenges hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR | -0.176 | 0.043 | -4.086 | 0.000 |

Table 12 presents the results on the regression coefficient and the, coefficient of association. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.299. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 4.406 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528 which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. The p-value was found to be 0.000 which is very significant.

Table 12 presents the results on the regression coefficient and the, coefficient of association for Techniques applied during counseling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at  MKUR. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.086. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 5.733 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528 which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. The p-value was found to be 0.000 which is very significant.

Table 12 presents the results on the regression coefficient and the, coefficient of association for Challenges hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of -0.176. The associated t-statistic value was found to be -4.086 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528 which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. The p-value was found to be 0.000 which is very significant.

## V.  SUMMARIES, CONCLUSTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1: SUMMARIES

This study was set to evaluate the relationship between guidance and counseling services on the academic achievement of undergraduate students in Rwanda. The study was guided by three research objectives. The objectives were; to determine the factors that influence students' search for guidance and counseling and how they affect the Academic Achievement of the learners at MKUR, to evaluate the relationship between techniques applied during counseling and students' Academic

Achievement at MKUR and to assess the challenges that hinder effective guidance and counseling of the learners at MKUR. The study found evidence, which supports all the three research objectives. Regression of coefficients was applied to calculate the relationship between the research variables. On the first objective, the results on the regression coefficient show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.299. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 4.406 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528, which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. Techniques applied during counselling and how they affect students' Academic Achievement at MKUR, the coefficient of association results showed that there was a significant association at a value of 0.086. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 5.733 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528, which indicate that other variables could be included to improve the model. The p-value was found to be 0.000, which is very significant. The coefficient of association for Challenges hinder effective guidance and counselling of the learners at MKUR. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of -0.176. The associated t-statistic value was found to be -4.086 with a p-value of 0.000. The intercept was found to be 2.528. The p-value was found to be 0.000, which is very significant. This implies that there was a positive and significant relationship between the variation in the students achievement which was caused by three components; Factors influenced you to want to seek for guidance and counselling services at MKUR, Techniques applied during counselling and Challenges hinder effective guidance and counselling of the learners at MKUR

## 5.2: CONCLUSION

Following the model summary for the regression fit, the results showed that; up to 51.4 % of the variation could be explained by the factors considered to affect guidance and counselling. The associated R Square 26.4 % and Adjusted R Square 25.1%. The analysis of variance for the regression model showed that the F-test was 19.416. This show that the variable considered is statistically significant for the determination of attending guidance and counselling sections. On the first objective, the results on the regression coefficient show that there was a significant association at a value of 0.299. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 4.406 with a p-value of 0.000. The second objective, techniques applied during counselling, the coefficient of association results showed that there was a significant association at a value of 0.086. The associated t-statistic value was found to be 5.733 with a p-value of 0.000. The final objective: The coefficient of association for Challenges hinder effective guidance and counselling of the learners at MKUR. The results show that there was a significant association at a value of -0.176. The associated t-statistic value was found to be -4.086 with a p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that guidance and counselling plays a significant role in promoting students' academic achievement in such a way that counsellors assist learners in identifying their unique strength and weaknesses, which can enhance their comprehension levels as well as build their emotional and psychological well-being. By do so, counselling services offer a safe space for student to express their concerns and are able to manage stress as well as develop copying mechanisms. Students often receive specialized support in exploring various career options and align them with the students' interests to excel academically and personally. Students who engaged in counselling were better equipped to handle the challenges that come along with high Education learning.

## 5.3: RECOMMENDATIONS

The counselor should change the method of counseling and the counseling environment should be improved. More time should be offered to prolong the counseling sessions in order to address all issues exhaustively.

The University should employ more than one counselor to work in shifts to cater for all day, evening and weekend students.

More should be done to reach out to all students regarding the availability of counseling services in the University.

## 5.4: AREA FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was focused at only one university in Rwanda. Other future studies should investigate the effect of counseling to the students to enhance the academic and health being of the students.

Further research be conducted on the counsellors competences and the students attitudes towards counselling in Rwanda

Importantly, further research be conducted on the role of management support and students needs for counselling

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