EFFECTIVENESS OF COUNSELLING SERVICES ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION RATE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

JANE GATHONI NYUTU
C82/11137/2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY) OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

AUGUST, 2020

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original research work and has not been submitted in this form or any other for the award of any other degree in this or any other university.

Signature..... Date..10/9/2020

Jane Gathoni Nyutu

C82/11137/08

Supervisors

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

Signature ..... Date..10/9/2020

Dr. Merecia Ann Sirera, PhD

Department of Psychology

Kenyatta University

Signature..... Date..10/9/2020

Dr.Wilfridah Olaly, PhD

Department of Psychology

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents Mr Andrew Kamwaro Ngunu, Mrs Elizabeth Wangari Kamwaro, Mr Stephen Gicharu and Mrs Alice Wambui Gicharu for being a profound inspiration. I also dedicate this thesis to my lovely husband, Prof. Simon Nyutu Gicharu and our children Kevin, Elizabeth, and Nelson. This thesis is also dedicated to my grandson Nathaniel for believing in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to pay my regards to my supervisors' Dr Merecia Ann Sirera and Dr Wilfridah Olaly. My gratitude goes to Dr Beatrice Kathungu, Dr Muchiri Karega, Dr Christine Wasanga, Dr Phelista Musili, Dr Eunice Githae, Dr Rev Davis Gatua, Dr Robert Kipnusu and Dr Agnes Nthangi. Thanks to Ms Rose Makumi, Ms Judy Mwangi and Risper Mwathi for their support.

I thank Dr Mokua Maroko for SPSS data analysis and Dr Rev Regina Nduati for proofreading this study. My gratitude to Dr Geoffrey Ngige, Ms Edith Ndwiga, Ms Elisheba Nyaroo, Otieno Herbat, Dr Sheila Ruo, and Ms Wambui Kibe, all of who helped me in data collection. Am grateful to Dr Peter Waweru, Ms Christina Njuguna, Ms Catherine Muturi and Ms Immaculate Njiru for their moral support and encouragement throughout this study.

I cannot forget my extended family members, especially Ms Lillian Kasanga, for their moral support. My appreciation to my colleagues, friends, and those others who are not mentioned here for the support each one of them gave towards the completion of this study. Finally, my exceptional gratitude to my husband Prof Simon Gicharu, for financial assistance and our children Kevin Gicharu, Elizabeth Wambui, Nelson Kamwaro and Nathaniel Nyutu for their moral support toward the completion of this study. To you all, God bless you, richly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION----------**II**
DEDICATION---------- **III**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ----------**IV**
TABLE OF CONTENTS----------**V**
LIST OF TABLES----------**IX**
LIST OF FIGURES ----------**X**
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS----------**XI**
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS ---------- **XII**
ABSTRACT---------- **XIV**
CHAPTER ONE ---------- **1**
INTRODUCTION ---------- **1**
1.1 Background to the Study ---------- 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem ---------- 9
1.3 Purpose of the Study----------11
1.4 Research Objectives ----------11
1.5 Research Questions ----------11
1.6 Hypotheses of the Study ----------12
1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study----------12
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study ----------13
1.8.1 Scope of the Study ----------13
1.8.2 Limitations of the Study----------13
1.9 Assumptions of the Study----------14
CHAPTER TWO ----------**16**
LITERATURE REVIEW----------**16**
2.1 Introduction ----------16
2.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study ----------16
2.3 Review of Related Literature----------20
2.3.1 Counselling Status in Universities ----------20
2.3.2 Counselling and Retention Rates----------23

2.3.3 Academic Performance and Counselling Services in Universities ---- 29
2.3.4 Challenges Experienced in offering Counselling services in Universities ---- 35
2.4 Summary of Reviewed Literature and Theoretical Framework ---- 38
2.5 Conceptual Framework ---- 39
CHAPTER THREE ---- 42
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ---- 42
3.1 Introduction ---- 42
3.2 Research Design ---- 42
3.3 Location of the Study ---- 43
3.4 Target Population ---- 44
3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size ---- 46
3.6 Research Instruments ---- 48
3.7 Pilot Study ---- 48
3.7.1 Students' Questionnaire ---- 49
3.7.2 Counsellors' Questionnaire ---- 50
3.7.3 University Counsellors' Interview Guide ---- 50
3.8 Validity and Reliability ---- 51
3.8.1 Validity ---- 51
3.8.2 Reliability ---- 52
3.9 Data Collection Procedures ---- 53
3.10 Data Analysis ---- 56
3.11 Data Management and Ethical Consideration ---- 59
CHAPTER FOUR ---- 60
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ---- 60
4.1 Introduction ---- 60
4.2 Demographic Information ---- 61
4.2.1 Gender of Participants ---- 61
4.2.2 Age of Participants ---- 62
4.2.3 Marital Status of Participants ---- 65
4.2.4 Counsellors' Experience ---- 66
4.2.5 Counsellors' Level of Training ---- 67

4.3 Findings of Study as per Objectives ---- 69
4.3.1 Status of Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya ---- 69
4.3.2 Influence of Counselling Services on Students' Retention ---- 75
4.3.3 Effectiveness of Counselling Services and Students' Academic Performance ---- 90
4.3.4 Counselling Challenges Experienced in Universities in Kenya ---- 100
CHAPTER FIVE ---- 108
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ---- 108
5.1 Introduction ---- 108
5.2 Summary of the Findings ---- 108
5.2.1 Status of Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya ---- 108
5.2.2 The extent to which Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya influences Students' Retention Rate ---- 109
5.2.3 Effectiveness of Counselling Services in Enhancing Students' Academic Performance in Universities in Kenya ---- 110
5.2.4 Challenges Experienced in Offering Counselling in Universities in Kenya ---- 111
5.3 Conclusions ---- 111
5.4 Recommendations of the Study ---- 112
5.5 Implications of the Findings of this Study ---- 113
5.5.1 Implications for Methodology ---- 113
5.5.2 Implications for Policy and Practice ---- 114
5.5.3 Implications for Theories ---- 115
5.5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies ---- 117
REFERENCES ---- 118
APPENDICES ---- 127
APPENDIX A1: Students' Questionnaire ---- 127
APPENDIX A2: Counsellors' Questionnaire ---- 129
APPENDIX A3: University Counsellors' Interview Guide ---- 131
APPENDIX A4: Students' Focus Group Discussion Guide ---- 134
APPENDIX A5: KREJCIE and Morgan Sample Size Determinant Table ---- 137
APPENDIX A6: Respondents' Informed Consent Form ---- 138
APPENDIX A7: Counselling Activities for Experimental Group ---- 140

APPENDIX A8: Kenyatta University Graduate School Research Authorization ------- 141
APPENDIX A9: Approval of Research Proposal ---------- 142
APPENDIX A10: Research Clearance Permit ---------- 143
APPENDIX A11: Research Authorization ---------- 144
APPENDIX A12: Research Authorization from County Commissioner, Kiambu County---------- 146
APPENDIX A13: Research Authorization from County Director of Education, Kiambu County ---------- 148
APPENDIX A14: Research Authorization from Regional Coordinator of Education, Nairobi Region---------- 149
APPENDIX A15: Authority to Collect Data at the University of Nairobi---------- 150
APPENDIX A16: Authority to Collect Data at Kenyatta University---------- 151

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Target Population of the 2017 Intake 45
Table 3.2: Accessible Population of the 2017 Intake 45
Table 3.3: Sample Size of the Participants from the 2017 Intake 47
Table 4.1: Distribution of Gender across Student Participants 61
Table 4.2: Distribution of Gender across Counsellor Participants 62
Table 4.3: Age of Student Participants 63
Table 4.4: Age of Counsellor Participants 64
Table 4.5: Marital Status of Student Participants 65
Table 4.6: Marital Status of Counsellor Participants 66
Table 4.7: Counsellors' Years of Experience in Counselling 66
Table 4.8: Counsellors' Level of Training 68
Table 4.9: Experiment Group Participants' Response to Counselling Status 70
Table 4.10: Indicators of Students' Retention in University Before Psycho-Education (Pre-Test) 76
Table 4.11: Indicators of Students' Retention in University After Psycho-Education (Post-Test) 79
Table 4.12: Anova for Counselling Services and Retention Rate 88
Table 4.13: Student Group and Academic Performance 92
Table 4.14: Anova for Counselling Services and Academic Performance 93
Table 4.15: Counselling Challenges 101

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Common Factors Theory Grencavage and Norcross (1990)..... 18
Figure 1.2: Self Determination Theory (Ryan, & Deci, 2000) 19
Figure 1.3: Influence of Counselling Services on Academic Performance and Retention Rate in Universities of Kenya 40
Figure 3.1: Data Collection Procedure..... 54
Figure 3.2: Diagrammatical Representation of The Study Design 58
Figure 4.1: Status of Counselling in Kenyan Universities..... 71
Figure 4.2: Retention Rate of Participantsin The Control Group before Psycho-Education (Pre-Test) 81
Figure 4.3: Retention Rate of Participants in the Experiment Group before Psycho-Education (Pre-Test) 82
Figure 4.4: Retention Rate of Participants in the Control Group after Psycho-Education (Post-Test)..... 83
Figure 4.5: Retention Rate of Participants in the Experiment Group after Psycho-Education (Post-Test)..... 84

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
GOK	Government of Kenya
GPA	Grade Point Average
HELB	Higher Education Loans Board
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KMPDB	Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Board
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KUERC	Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee
KUCCPS	Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCES	National Centre for Education Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SPSS-20	Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 20
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
VCT	Voluntary counselling and Testing

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic performance	Improved aggregate performance from previous semester.
Academic improvement	A positive performance index between first semester Grade Point Average (GPA) and second semester GPA. Higher performance in second semester than first semester.
Client	A first year undergraduate university student undergoing counselling sessions with the university counsellor in the study.
Counselling status	The physical design and set-up of the counselling room.
Counsellor	A full-time, part time or an intern university member of staff (excluding peer counsellors) who professionally uses psychological techniques to help students both those participating in the study and the rest in order to overcome psychological problems while at university.
Counselling Services	This refers to psychoeducation that consist study skills, stress management, attitude, motivation, social relationships, substance use and abuse, financial management, career planning, and building lasting habits.
Counselling services	Psychological input and support such as individual and group counselling process offered to university students that relieve their psychological problems making them improve their academic performance and enhance retention rate.

	Psychoeducation is also part of counselling and in this study, counselling services refers to psychoeducation.
Mental Health	A state of psychological wellbeing where a person is functioning satisfactorily in terms of psychological, emotional, social and physical wellbeing**.**
Psycho-education	Passing information to students on how to handle issues and conditions that are likely to affect academic performance and interest in completing a course at university. The topics taught include study skills, stress management, attitude, motivation, social relationships, substance use and abuse, financial management, career planning and building lasting habits.
Retention rate	Ability to continue pursuing a university degree in the same university without transferring to another course, discontinuing from studies, or transferring to another institution.
Unimproved Academic Performance	A negative performance index between first semester Grade Point Average (GPA) and second semester GPA. Lowered/unchanged performance in second semester from first semester

ABSTRACT

Counselling is an essential pillar in student support services. However, there is a shortage of empirical data on the effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rate in all universities in Kenya. The study focused on establishing the effectiveness of counselling services in improving academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya by employing the common factor and self-determination theories. The study used a quasi-experimental design and phenomenological design. The target population was 514 first-year undergraduate students taking bachelors of medicine and surgery programme and 6 counsellors in two public universities in Kenya. The accessible sample population was 140 students. Purposive sampling was used to select the two public universities for the study. Simple Random sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 104 students. All the 6 counsellors were incorporated in the study as respondents. Data was collected using observation, questionnaires, and focus group discussions. The independent variable in this study was counselling services, while the dependent variables were academic performance and retention rate. Validity was ensured by comparing the first semester results with results of the second semester to counter the testing threat. The reliability of the instruments ranged from Alpha indexes 0.76 to 0.91. The researcher trained four research assistants who helped in administering the research instruments to the participants. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics, namely frequencies, percentages and inferential statistics (2-way ANOVA) with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-20). Hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The qualitative data was analysed thematically according to the objectives of the study. The study found that the status of counselling services in the two selected universities was favourable with adequate counselling rooms, adequate basic facilities, appropriate location and accessibility to counselling services. There were statistically significant differences between the experimental group and control group means as determined by a two-way ANOVA ($F(1,99) = 4.470$, $p = .037$), revealing that counselling services significantly influences students' retention rate. Counselling equipped students with knowledge and skills that helped them deal with developmental issues that often interfered with their studies hence higher retention rate. On academic performance, the study revealed that students who seek counselling services perform academically better than those who do not as determined by a two-way ANOVA ($F(1,96) = 4.441$, $p = .038$). Counselling facilitated the acquisition of problem-solving and study skills, including time management that enabled the students to do well in their studies. Despite the availability of counselling services, not many students benefit from the service due to challenges such as high student enrolment against thin counselling staff and negative attitude towards seeking counselling help due to peer influence. Based on the findings, the study recommends that psycho-education be integrated as a mainstream programme in counselling services; more students should be enrolled in the psycho-education programme.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Counselling services in universities are essential for the psychological wellbeing of the students. Globally, counselling 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, Shek, & Zhu, 2017). Counselling services are an important aspect in helping, developing and enhancing psychological resources that mediate in the wellbeing of people (McLeod, 2013). Nelson-Jones (2015) construes that counselling is a service that involves helping people to improve functionality and maintain performance in different stages of their lives.

Counselling enables students to deal with daily challenges while at university. The services offered in form of psychoeducation benefit individual students or as a group. Consequently, many universities globally have invested in counselling services to help develop personal resources that can help students address various challenges, which interfere with their academic performance and retention. On the academic front, students encounter numerous forms of learning that vary significantly from their secondary school learning. Students are challenged by new learning, teaching and assessment. 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.

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 (Rednond, Quin, Devitt, & Archbold, 2011). These are issues that are associated with mental health, and which could be addressed through counselling.

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 (OECD 2013). The survey results from the students who dropped out suggest that they were already struggling with meeting deadlines, academic performance and study behaviour, drawbacks which forced them to quit in their first year, but which could have been handled through counselling.

In China, FlorCruz (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 and Pidgeon (ibid) 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).

In South Africa, Macgregor (2007) reports that 40% of South African students drop out of the university in their first year of study due to financial difficulties and family ignorance. He further found out that, on average, only 15-20% of students complete their degrees in the allotted time, with the remaining taking more time to complete.

The Commission for Higher Education (CHE) (2015) in South Africa reported that about 50-60% of students in institutions of higher learning drop out during their first year. This high drop-out was attributed to poor career choices, domestic problems, pregnancy, poverty, partying, and societal factors.

In East Africa, though there is a scarcity of documented empirical research and other scholarly literature, Ndege (2010) found out that challenges facing students in the

university are eminent. For instance, in Uganda, studies have shown that a high number of students suffer from psychosocial challenges, especially among first-year undergraduate students (Ovuga, Boardman, and Wasserman (2006).

In general, life in university exposes students to transitional challenges in personal autonomy, social relationships, and compatibility among roommates, feeding habits, and adjustments to academic programmes, all of which could affect their performance and stay at university (Wangeri, Kimani & Mutweleli, 2012). All these challenges affect students' mental health and could lead to low academic achievement and low retention rate.

A study conducted by Capital Campus (2014) pointed out that the student dropout rate in universities in Kenya is a fact that should attract the attention of the education authorities and the government. The study enumerated several reasons for them: lack of access to university fees and other financial requirements, poor performance in examinations where the students fail to cope with the classroom stuff, or lack of strength and focus to keep studying the course and therefore drop out. Peer pressure, pregnancy, and crime are other reasons for dropping out. There are cases where students go to parties from Mondays to Sundays and end up having no time to study. Njoroge, Wange'ri and Gichure, (2016) found out that the dropout rate in Kenyan universities stood at 37% due to inadequate faculty and peer support. This issue was also brought out in the study conducted by Ndege (2010), who stipulated that students' high rate of dropout in Kenyan universities requires attention.

Consequently, many universities worldwide have invested in counselling services as a crucial strategy in helping students develop personal resources that address various challenges that interfere with students' academic performance and retention

rate. Counselling services refer to the input and support, such as individual and group counselling processes that end up in positive student characteristics and behaviour change in the student, thereby enhancing academic performance and retention rate. Egan and Reese (2018) spice that effective counselling involves personal contact of two individuals where one is a counsellor, and the other is a client(s). Mutual relationship, corrective counsellor characteristics such as competence, maturity, empathy, warmth, and genuineness, among others, are associated with a positive outcome. The counsellor helps clients gain personal insights concerning planning their lives, careers, autonomy, and wise decisions (Ryan, Lynch, Vansteenkiste, and Deci, 2011).

Indeed, counselling provides a platform through which individuals could learn to function optimally in different aspects of their lives. Therefore, some of these challenges could be addressed through effective counselling. Earlier studies have demonstrated the employment of counselling to address challenges faced by students at the university. For instance, in Britain, counselling centres address academic, social-cultural as well as developmental issues that act as a barrier towards students' academic achievement, cultural adaptation, and retention rates (OECD, 2011). In Brazil, counselling centres help students to select careers, based on aptitude and interest and not on familiarity or perceived status of the career (Hutz-Midgett, & Hutz, 2012). A different study was carried out relating to academic achievement and admission policy on students' retention rate in Nigerian Federal universities, and it comprised 66,441 undergraduate students. It concluded that counselling centres in these universities have reversed student dropout rates and made Nigerian universities have the highest retention rate in Africa (Agboola, Adeyemi, & Ogbodo, 2014).

In universities in Kenya, counselling services have been established to help students adjust to life to accomplish their expected academic goals and to complete their courses in time (Wango, 2015). Counselling centres in Kenya were started back in 1999 in various parts of the country (Kimemia and Okech, 2012). There was little regard to counsellors' training, which confused most Kenyans about the meaning and forms of counselling since it was done by many people who were not trained (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). The issues faced by students in various schools and colleges in Kenya were increasing. These included pressure to excel in academics, increased availability of drugs, student strikes and unrests, sexual assault, school fires, school dropouts, and poor grades, all of which prompted the need to train professional counsellors (Ajowi & Simatwa 2010).

In 2002, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Heritage and Sports gave birth to the Kenya National Youth Policy (KNYP), which gave sturdy recommendations of the importance of having youth counselling in schools and institutions of higher learning. This body emphasized on free counselling services and peer counselling to students (Kimemia & Oketch 2012). It is against this background that universities in Kenya established counselling centres whose mandate is to provide students with counseling services. The services are expected to be a major support system towards students' academic performance and retention rate in a bid to enhance the completion rate.

Although universities have invested heavily in student counselling (Ndege, 2010), empirical information on the effectiveness of the service in enhancing academic performance and retention rate has evidenced failure. The studies have demonstrated that many students are still dropping out of the universities before completing their courses due

to discontinuation, among other issues, while others are transferring from one university to another. The challenge of dropping out is especially facing the first-year students in the universities.

Adjustment of students into the university can be difficult. Students joining the university for the first time experience many transitional challenges. (Wange' ri et. al, 2012). They are required to adapt to a new environment and learning styles that are different from what they were used to during their previous years in high school. It is challenging not only in terms of academic performance but also as it is the stage in a students' life where they are most likely to experience emotional, financial, and social problems. For instance, exploring new boundaries and testing new freedoms offered by a university context may lead to excitement, possible homesickness, and frequent calls at home, which could affect their academic performance. In hostel life, roommate problems may arise where students are not compatible (Omonijo, Anyaegbunam, Nnedum, Chine, & Rotimi, 2015), which could lead to negative thoughts about university life.

Counselling services offered to university students ought to help them deal with day-to-day challenges faced in and outside the university and which could interfere with their learning. This counselling would enable them to focus on their studies, hence good academic performance and retention to enable them to complete studies as per their programmes. In other words, counselling is a principled relationship characterized by applying one or more psychological theories and a recognized set of communication skills, modified by experience, intuition, and other interpersonal factors to clients' intimate concerns (Feltham, & Dryden, 2006). Counselling is also guided by various elements,

including counsellors' ability to pay undivided attention to the client, communicate the client's progress during counselling, observe healthy boundaries, keep confidentiality, and avoid judging the client, among others (Nelson-Jones 2015). The preceding concept of counselling constitutes the core value of psychoeducation counselling.

Psychoeducation counselling is passing information to students on how to handle issues and conditions that are likely to affect academic performance and retention. Counselling equips students with skills and abilities to be able to excel in university life. The students should be trained on study skills, stress management, attitude, motivation, social relationships, substance use and abuse, financial management, career planning, and building lasting habits. These elements help students to mitigate daily challenges, which may derail academic performance and retention in university.

The psychoeducation training should be based particularly on the Common Factors Theory (Lisa Grencavage and John Norcross, 1990) and Self Determination Theory by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci, 2000) to help the students effectively cope with their academic performance and retention challenges (Koseoglu, 2013). In essence, if psychoeducation is well used in universities, the retention rate and academic performance could be enhanced. Perhaps the psychoeducation provided in the counselling process could increase their rapporteur to enhance their ability to address the challenges associated with academic performance and retention rates in the universities.

There is a general scarcity of empirical studies on counselling services in the universities world over (Ndege, 2010) and, more particularly, on the role of psychoeducation in counselling, especially in developing countries. This is even

though all counselling approaches are hinged on enhancing the psychological resources of individuals to enhance functionality. For example, many students are vulnerable to university drop out due to their inability to solve problems. Equipping them with problem solving skills. A key aspect in counselling can only be achieved through psychoeducation. Cummings and Cummings (2014) assert that lack of information, particularly shortly after diagnosis, is a significant unmet need and offers one of the most explicit opportunities for intervention. Therefore, this study needed to investigate the counselling services offered in universities and especially the psycho-education, counselling, which is one of the broad categories of counselling. This study investigated the effectiveness of the counselling services in universities in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Students who join Universities should excel in academics and complete their studies within scheduled time. The students, however, face many challenges that could interfere with their performance and retention rates. To counter this problem, universities worldwide have put in place counselling services. The counselling services should imbue students with the capacity to function adequately in different aspects of life by broadening their understanding of life spaces and skills to address life challenges. Although universities have invested heavily in student counselling services, practical information on the effectiveness of the service in enhancing academic performance and retention rate is scarce. Furthermore, the students continue to drop out of the universities; others withdraw. 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 counselling 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 counselling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rates in Kenya's universities. Most of these studies in counselling services have focused on factors posing challenges to these aspects from different perspectives. The studies have concentrated on food insecurity (Payne-Sturges et al., 2017), resilience (Pidgeon et al., 2014), and students drop out (McGillivary & Pidgeon, 2015). Other studies, especially in Kenya, have focused on some aspects of guidance counselling 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 counselling 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 counselling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rate in Kenya, this study investigated the effectiveness of psychoeducation counselling services in improving academic performance and retention in universities in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing students' academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya with a view to inform education practice.

1.4 Research Objectives

The following specific objectives guided this study

i. To ascertain the status of counselling services in universities in Kenya.
ii. To establish effective ways of using counselling services to enhance retention rate of students in universities in Kenya.
iii. To establish the effect of counselling services in enhancing students' academic performance in universities in Kenya.
iv. To find out the challenges experienced in offering counselling in universities in Kenya.
v. To identify strategies that can be put in place to enhance counselling services in universities in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was informed by the following research questions:

i. What is the status of counselling services in universities in Kenya?
ii. What challenges are experienced in offering counselling in universities in Kenya?
iii. What strategies can be put in place to enhance counselling services in universities in Kenya?

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

H_{01}: There is no statistically significant relationship between counselling services and the retention rates of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya.

H_{02}: There is no statistically significant relationship between counselling services and academic performance of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya.

1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study

Many Kenyan universities have institutionalized counselling services to enhance students' psychological well-being to improve academic performance and retention rates. However, effective counselling services can positively influence academic achievement and completion rates.

Findings from this study may significantly contribute to offering a theoretical and practical implication in the effectiveness of university counselling services in Kenya. On theoretical impact, the study largely might contribute to new knowledge towards the advancement of counselling services in universities in Kenya. Practically, the results of this study might offer an intervention strategy to boost the students' uptake of counselling services. Findings from this study can be utilized in identifying the most suitable psycho-education intervention strategy that might increase academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya hence benefiting the students.

This study's results envisage benefiting university administration in the formulation of students' policies aimed at improving students' performance and increasing their retention

rates. Likewise, the students will benefit from these policies as the consumers of the counselling service, thereby performing well academically and completing their studies in time.

Similarly, this study's results will be beneficial to counselling service centres where the information could be integrated into training peer counsellors and enhancing therapeutic procedures for practicing counsellors. This study has an experimental component of the instrument, which was subjected to empirical testing and standardization, which might help in other similar researches. Finally, this study will add to the already existing literature in the field of counselling.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted under the following scope and limitations.

1.8.1 Scope of the Study

This study's main focus was to investigate the effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kenya. The study focused on two aspects, academic performance and retention rate. The research was carried out among first-year undergraduate students from the school of medicine. A psycho-education programme was developed and experimented as an intervention strategy to help students gain skills, attitudes, and values to enhance their academic performance and avoid dropping out of the university.

1.8.2 Limitations of the Study

This study mainly employed a quasi-experimental design. This empirical design is often used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on its target population without a

random assignment. The experimental design uses manipulation of the independent variable or control of the study setting, but rarely has randomization (Creswell and Creswell 2018). The implication is that some variables in the study could be difficult to be manipulated in this design. Generalization of this study results, therefore, should be done with caution.

The study was also limited to two universities in Kenya, even though many universities are chartered to operate in Kenya. This limitation brings concern upon the generalizability of findings of this study, and therefore these results need to be applied with caution.

The study was conducted in higher education and particularly in universities. Counselling services are required in all levels of education. Due to time and financial constraints on the part of the researcher, the study focused on university students' academic performance and retention rate. Consequently, the generalization of the results of this study in other levels of education should be done cautiously.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

This study was conducted under the following assumptions:

i. Effectiveness counselling services would improve retention rate and students' academic performance.
ii. When psychoeducation counselling services is done effectivenessly it enhances academic performance and retention rate of students in universities.
iii. Counselling services in Kenyan universities are facing various challenges that affect their effectiveness in enhancing academic performance and improving retention rates.

iv. There exists effectiveness strategies that could be employed to curb challenges facing counselling services in universities in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related literature on counselling services offered to university students. The review is presented in four forms: theories underpinning counselling, objectives of the study under the following sub-headings: counselling in universities, retention rate, academic performance and factors that hinder effectiveness counselling in universities; summary of the reviewed literature and theoretical and conceptual framework. This study aimed at establishing how effectiveness counselling could enhance academic performance and retention rate among undergraduate students' in universities in Kenya.

2.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Common Factors Theory by Lisa Grencavage and John Norcross majorly informed this study (Grencavage, & Norcross, 1990). Still, the Self- Determination Theory by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (Ryan, & Deci, 2000), also supported the study.

The Common Factors Theory proposes that different approaches and evidence-based practices in counselling share certain common factors that account for much of the effectiveness of psychological treatment. Grencavage and Norcross (1990) classify the theory into four main elements: client's characteristics, therapist's characteristics, the process of change, and counselling context. 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 (counsellor's) counselling approach. Therapist's characteristics such as unconditional positive regard, ability to communicate and care, competence, counsellor's ability to be integrated, and maturity, among other factors, contribute to a positive outcome in counselling. All these characteristics determine the effectiveness that a specific counselling approach may have.

The counselling context includes the treatment setting (where), the intensity of treatment (how much), the modality through which counselling is delivered (what kind), and the format in which this modality is transmitted (with whom). In a counselling session, the provision of new learning experiences is not therapeutic unless the client feels the session to be taking place in a healing context. Client changes can emerge from an empowering collaborative interpersonal context. Given their importance, university counsellors may need to use the principles of common factors theory to inform their practice.

The common factors theory of counselling mainly explains the principles that facilitate healing from a counselling perspective. Counselling is primarily relational, where a counsellor works collaboratively with the client. In addition, from an ethical perspective, clients seek or participate in counselling services voluntarily. Therefore, the role of a personal agency of clients in making counselling services effective is critical.

The common factors theory is graphically presenred as shown in Figure1.1

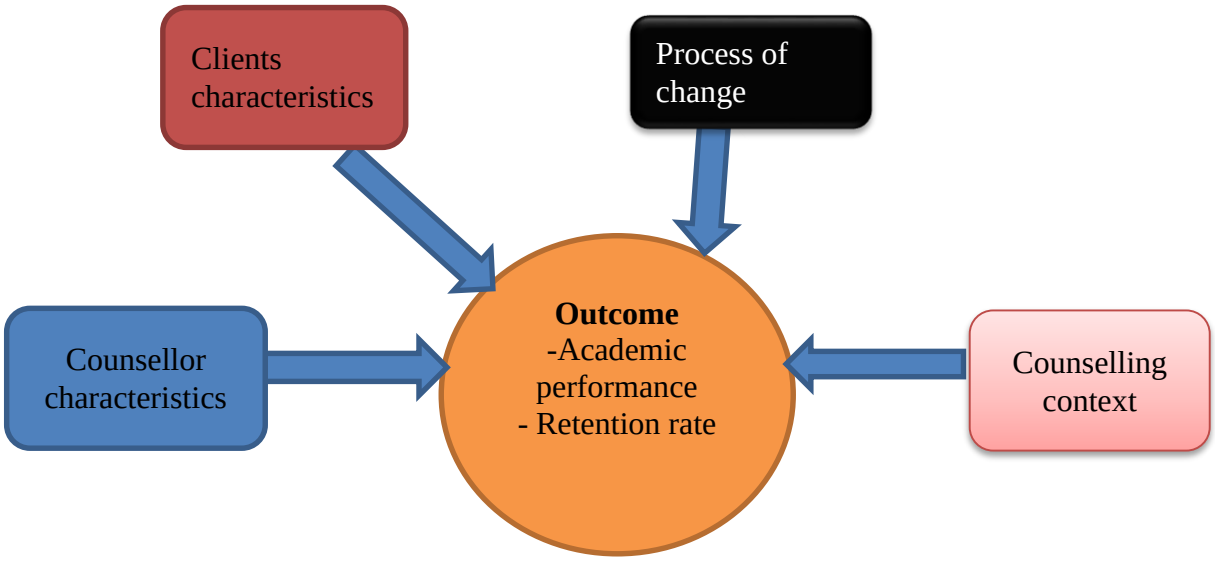

Figure 1.1: Common Factors Theory Grencavage and Norcross (1990)

To ensure a relationship of variables not fully supported by the common factors theory, Self-Determination Theory (Ryan, & Deci, 2000) was also employed to underpin this study. The Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) centres on the belief that human nature shows persistent positive features that enhance inherent growth tendencies through repeated effort, urgency, and commitment in their lives. According to this theory, three innate principles influence students' optimal function and growth in their academic pursuits. These are competence, relatedness, and autonomy.

The principle of competence empowers students to seek to control the outcome or goals of an experience in academic achievement and completion of their studies by putting more effort and being focused. Relatedness is a principle that motivates students to interact, network, and give care to each other. Autonomy, on the other hand, encourages students to

be agents of their own lives and to act in harmony with their integrated self, leading to academic excellence.

Students' psychological needs (autonomy, competence relatedness) create a link between effectiveness counselling and counselling outcomes. If counselling services can meet students' psychological needs, then institutions will realize counselling outcomes.

This theory is graphically presented in Figure 1.2 as follows.

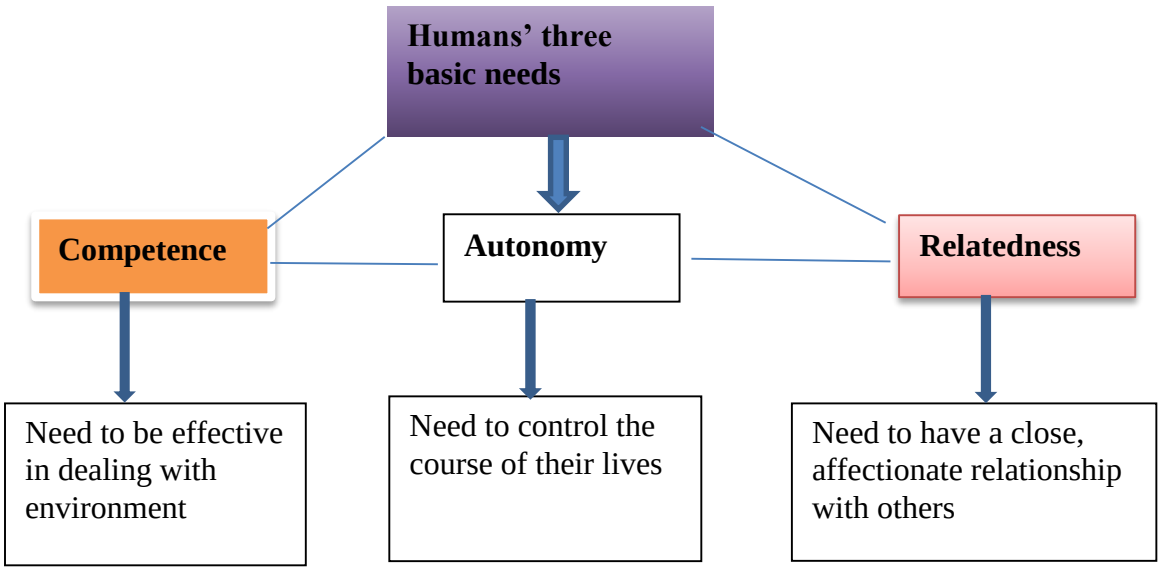

Figure 1.2: Self determination theory (Ryan, & Deci, 2000)

In this study, The Common Factors Theory (Grencavage, & Norcross, 1990) and the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan, & Deci, 2000) were used to complement each other in that they posit important characteristics that both counsellors and students are supposed to possess. Additionally, the theories inform the process of effective counselling for positive outcomes. Students who feel that they can achieve their academic goals and can overcome

their day to day challenges may end up performing better academically and are a source of inspiration to other students.

When students excel in their academic performance, they can gain competence, build self-mastery in various skills, thereby enabling them to continue excelling in their academic life. This, in turn, attracts positive feedback from their lecturers, parents, and peers, thus motivating them to work hard. They are self-determined in that they are motivated, confident, focused, and accept failure. They do not blame other people, such as faculty, parents, and friends, for their own mistakes and personal shortcomings. This high determination improves academic performance and retention rate.

The two theories informed the study on the process of effective counselling and helped in the integration of this study variables. While the common factor theory informed the research on the critical characteristics of counselling outcome, the self-determination theory informed the study on the fundamental principles of personal agency in the healing process, which are an integral element in counselling. Collectively, the two approaches facilitated in focusing the study on the key variables which enabled their measurement.

2.3 Review of Related Literature

Related literature is reviewed based on the study objectives as follows.

2.3.1 Counselling Status in Universities

Most counselling sessions in universities are pegged on various variables, such as the theoretical orientation of the counsellor and the processes of counselling. However, little regard is given to the counselling context, where the counselling takes place, which is a

core element in the healing process. In a study carried out in the USA on the effectiveness of physical environment on counselling, Pressly and Heesacker (2001) identified that common architectural characteristic of space including accessories, color, furniture, and room design, lighting, smell, sound, texture, and thermal conditions affect counselling outcomes in the healing process during counselling.

A study carried out in Australia by Sanders and Lehmann (2018) stressed the importance of modelling counselling rooms to enhance an 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 counselling.

Carpman and Grant (2016) affirm that clients' design-related needs are essential in enhancing the psycho-social, emotional and physical needs of clients. They suggest that accessories in a counselling room such as plants and objects like sculptures provide mental stimulation to clients, making the counselling room comfortable and appealing to counsellors, thereby revealing a counsellor's character and personality. A room facility where clients visit

In a study done in China, Liu, Ji, Chen, and Ye (2014) found that colors in a counselling room have spectrum effectiveness that triggers physiological processes in both the counsellor and the client to particular colors. For instance, light has been known to determine a client's perception of color, texture, and form (Ching, 2015). Furniture and room design, especially positioning of furniture in a counselling room and the distance between furniture, create mutual understanding between the counsellor and the clients,

bearing in mind their gender (Pressly and Heesacker, 2001). Therefore, although not directly influencing the counselling outcome, they are crucial for creating a conducive environment for counselling. As highlighted in the opening paragraph, these are aspects of counselling that are least reflected upon. This study sought to establish the status of facilities from which counseling services was undertaken.

Lighting in a counselling room affects a client's perception of his awareness of aspects of space, such as physical and emotional (Mirjam et al., 2017). Lighting also affects a counsellor's productivity in that a counsellor will have a positive perception during counselling and will have less boredom when lighting is adequate in a room (Liu et al., 2014). Therefore, counselling is likely to be more successful if a counselling room has soft lighting or natural lighting. For example, Erlichman and Carpman and Grant (2016) found that unpleasant smell and sounds trigger unhappy memories among clients while pleasant smells and sounds in a counselling room enhance healing.

Additionally, Pressley and Heesacker (2001) found that unpleasant odours such as bad breath and an intense perfume make clients and counsellors negatively evaluate each other unconsciously during the counseling process. Therefore, smells in a counselling room determine automatically how the counsellor and client assess each other. These are overshadowed factors, yet they contribute to the outcome of counselling. This study sought to establish the status of facilities from which counseling services was undertaken.

Designing a counselling room, calls for considerations on the quality and dimensions of sound because they affect counselling. Sanders and Lehmann (2018) found that slow and quiet music, such as water sounds, can actively calm emotional clients. Additionally,

effectiveness counselling can thus be influenced by the type of sound in the counselling room as these sounds may keep external noises from interfering with the counselling process. Textures like walls, ceilings, floors, furniture, soft or hard surfaces create illusionary or real emotions that evoke past memories through associations (Ching, 2015). Soft texture in counselling room absorbs sound and boosts feelings of privacy in clients (Pressely, & Heesacker, 2001). However, there is limited empirical data to explain whether these aspects are considered crucial in university counseling. The above mentioned was a gap that this study sought to address.

Arguably, all these factors are essential in facilitating counselling. The Common Factors Theory underscores the importance of context in effecting desired counselling outcomes. Thus, the context is a moderating factor that communicates to both counsellors and clients the importance of counselling services in restoring psychological well-being, which plays a crucial role in academic performance and retention rate.

The literature reviewed herein has demonstrated scarcity in counselling services researches in Kenyan universities and how it affects students' academic performance and retention. This study, therefore, endeavored to investigate the status of counselling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rates in universities.

2.3.2 Counselling and Retention Rates

The counselling program in universities is intended to help students complete their studies on time. University students are relatively free from parental and university supervision and are therefore expected to manage their study time well to increase their completion rate. In USA, National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES) (NCES, 2011) found that

72% of university students who begin seeking a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution complete their degree four years later (NCES, 2011). Transfer rates in American universities are very high, with 60% of all bachelor's degrees being awarded to students who began their studies in different institutions.

Counselling focuses on helping the students adapt to different situations hence helping to reduce transfers or delayed completion. Odes, Michelson, Locke, Oslon, and Lee (2009) in a study carried out in the USA, among 10,009 first-year university students, and which examined the relationship between counselling experience, student retention, academic performance and transfer during 2004 found out that counselling experience was significantly associated with student retention. The counselled students' retention rate was higher compared to the non-counselled students. Counselling, therefore, might help university students to complete their degree on time.

In a related study in the USA to determine factors that control students' retention rate, Lau (2003) found that administrators, faculty, and students' characteristics establish student retention in institutions. They provide students with funding by linking needy students to sponsors, scholarships, and foundations that support education, providing enough academic support through effectiveness counselling.

The above supposition is in line with the Common Factors Theory that informs this study. The empirical studies reviewed were conducted in developed countries, and this means there is a scarcity of such studies in developing countries, including Kenya (Ndege, 2010). It is crucial not to undervalue the need to ascertain the effectiveness of counseling

in enhancing university students' retention rate. This is because universities have employed full-time counselors who should be accountable for the services rendered.

In Australia, universities have therefore invested heavily in programmes aimed at improving student retention. For instance, Griffith University recorded 78.8% retention, where 22.2% of its students transferred to other universities or changed their courses of study in the university (Griffith: Quality, Planning and Statistics, 2015). Griffith (2015) asserts that there was an academic difficulty experienced following weak academic entry scores, students making the wrong choice of subjects, not gaining admission in the university of preference, loss of interest in their programme of study, and reduced time management skills based on workload demands. All these are common causes for students to drop out.

In a related study on the interaction between dropout, graduation rates, and quality ratings in universities, Sneyers and Witte (2017) postulated that to maintain student retention in universities will entail improving student counselling programmes, supporting students not to drop out, incorporating more staff and admitting academically qualified students. Accordingly, these added facilities such as more staffing to ensure that the students get attention at an individual level, which may not be the case in many developing countries like Kenya. In essence, many Universities do not benefit from added qualities to support counselling services in many developing countries like Kenya. For example, in Kenya, universities experience a shortage of staff, and the service providers have to cope with a large student body (Ndege,2010).

This denies university staff the opportunity to pay close attention to the individual needs of the students. It was, therefore, interesting to ascertain how counselling would moderate retention rate. In a study on college students' achievement and retention, Han, Farruggia, and Moss (2017) found that student's feelings of belongingness determine their retention in college. Similar findings were advanced by Lotkowski, Robbins, and Noeth (2004), who found that non-academic factors such as academic self-confidence, achievement, motivation, goal commitment, social support, and involvement contribute to retention. The authors suggested that such factors should be principal components in college retention programmes.

Implicitly, not all students who begin their undergraduate studies as full-time degree students finish their studies within the standard time. Many factors contribute to dropout rates among students at the universities. Griffith Quality, Planning and Statistics, (2015) observe that some factors affecting students include: dropout rate due to students experiencing personal difficulties such as health, family, finances, work, and challenges in making friends. They suggest that such cases need addressing through effectiveness counselling affect students.

In a related study in Australia focusing on factors influencing university students' satisfaction, dropout, and academic performance, Li and Carroll (2017) suggest that students from disadvantaged backgrounds admitted to university due to the equity policy were found to be lagging behind other students in completing university education. The implication is that students face a lot of challenges, which negatively impact their psychosocial well-being, affecting their retention at the university. Surprisingly, there is

limited empirical knowledge of how universities' counseling assists students in addressing challenges that could contribute to their dropout and whether the services are effective. The above assertions made this study viable.

Student dropout from universities in Britain had a 13% increase from 2011 to 2012 (OECD, 2011). Although the statistics do not provide information on the factors that contributed to the rise in dropout rates, it is possible to argue that academic, socio-cultural, and developmental issues may be a barrier to students' academic achievement and cultural adaptation and retention rate. A student fearing failure in different subjects may hate life at the university and instead opt to drop out or defer studies. Similarly, students who are unable to regulate and control their sexual lives end up in insecure relations that disrupt their education, consequently leading to delayed completion.

Likewise, failing university exams will make the student retake the failed course units or even repeat an academic year and still risk discontinuation. There are also cases of students enrolling in areas that have no direct link with their preferred careers, and therefore they end up dropping out midway. For instance, a study in Brazil found out that students dropped out of university, and others changed courses because they were placed to do courses that were not originally of their interest (Lehman, 2014).

Researchers have also linked student's retention to factors beyond their ability. For example, Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, and Nora (1996) found that students drop out of university because of reasons outside institutional control. These include lack of finances, change of career goals, negative attitude towards the institution, college's failure to have a conducive environment to their learning and educational needs, and failure to

cope with academic rigours of their course requirements. They also lack the motivation to do well in their studies because of their inability to appreciate the importance of education and lack of appropriate mentors in college as well as being overwhelmed by the transition from high schools to university. The above assertion picks from a study in the United Kingdom by Bennett (2003). He attributes low retention rates to factors such as failing to attend class, illness, adjustment problems, and lack of finances.

Although these are personal factors, they contribute to the disharmony that makes it difficult for them to complete their studies in time. Notably, however, through counselling services, all these can be addressed. Several studies conducted demonstrate the power of counselling services in helping students manage personal and interpersonal issues, thereby improving performance in their studies (Kyalo, & Chumba, 2011).

In South Africa, the dropout rate is 15 % suggesting that 85% of students complete studies at the programmed time, according to Letseka and Malle (2008). In Mozambique, Zavele et al. (2017) found that the students' academic characteristics determine retention rates at Eduardo Mondlane University (as reflected in their graduation rates). Also, institutional aspects such as efficiency and accountability in updating students' records and having their detailed profiles within the university database enhanced their timely graduation. The authors advocate for more rigorous procedures in which the time to complete studies is a factor to consider. Though the survey informs on the factors that contribute to the dropout rates, there is little reflection on counselling services and how the services' application would enhance students' psychological well-being to influence retention.

Findings in Nigeria indicate a dropout rate of 7.27%, making Nigeria's university retention rate the highest in Africa (Agboola, Adeyemi, & Ogbodo, 2014). These researchers attributed this to the availability of counselling services and increased student uptake of these services. In Kenya, the University of Nairobi registered a dropout rate of 17% (Cloete, Bailey, & Pillay, 2011), which is comparatively higher than universities in South Africa. Even so, counselling services have been established in almost all universities to help the students address their psychological needs.

There is evidence that the employment of counselling services aids in enhancing retention rates with some success. However, although Kenyan universities administrations have embraced and instituted counselling, there have been limited studies that link the service with retention rates. Many factors that influence retention appear to be associated with psychosocial issues. The extent to which the counselling services have been effective in shaping academic performance and retention rate at the universities was a concern of this study.

2.3.3 Academic Performance and Counselling Services in Universities

Academic performance among students in university has been a focus of considerable research. Much of these studies attribute poor performance to financial issues, emotional adjustment, grade frustration, student grief, aspects of college experience, and institutional environment. This study examines how effective counselling could be used to enhance academic performance.

A study in the USA by Odes et al. (2009) established that the relationship between counselling experience and the academic outcome was statistically significant. However,

counselling experience was not related to academic performance when controlling for pre-college academic performance (high school GPA, and verbal and math SAT scores). The implication is that it is more of intellectual ability than psychological resources that are crucial in academic performance. Contrary to findings of a study conducted by Kolo, Binti, Jafaar, and Ahmad (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 counselling in enhancing academic performance.

In a longitudinal study in the USA investigating the role of skills learning support on first-generation university students' self-regulation, motivation, and academic achievement which involved 876 students, Wibrowski, Mathews, and Kitsantas (2016) found that students enrolled in skills learning counselling programme had higher academic performance than students not enrolled in the programme. The study, however, does not state clearly if the academic support services mainly focused on counselling.

Besides, there was a combination of services offered to support the students' academic performance. Therefore, although counselling falls in support service within the university settings, there was a need to establish the efficacy of counselling on academic achievement. The reason is that counselling has been described as a process that enables the clients to understand their world and develop skills and knowledge to address day-to-day issues (McLeod, 2013). The focus of student life in the university is expected to be academic. Therefore, there was a need to establish in what ways counselling enhances academic performance.

In a study investigating the decline in student resilience in university students in the USA, Gray (2015) found that students are increasingly considering poor grades as a reason to complain other than to study more. They end up bringing issues meant for counseling their lecturers. In a related study in Australia on resilience attributes among university students, it was found that there is decreasing resilience among students studying in universities across the world (McGillivray, & Pidgeon, 2015). However, the studies do not explain the strategies that were put in place to help the students appreciate counselling services.

Broadbent (2017) compared online and blended university learners' self-regulated learning strategies and their subsequent academic performance in Australia. The author postulated that time management skills gave correct predictions on grades realized after exams, demonstrating the influence that time management has on students' academic performance. In a related study in Saudi Arabia, Aliwagait, Shahzad, and Alim (2014), while investigating the impact of social media on academic achievement, found that students' poor time management skills negatively affected their studies in poor academic performance. It is through counselling that students learn to manage their time well while in college. Therefore, the mastery of time management skills can be enhanced through effective psycho-education counselling services. In India, first-year students who went through time management counselling showed a significant increase in their average marks (Renuka, Devaki, Madhavan, & Saikumar, 2013).

A similar study in Malaysia by Thuryrajah, Ahmed, and Jeyakumar (2017) found that counselling interventions in four universities led to direct student academic improvement due to proper time management. Although most universities in Kenya have

counselling services, studies that link counselling services to effective time management are scarce. Kenya university students expose culture that significantly differs from the Asian perspective. Hence time being a cultural concept (Nunez and Cooperrider, 2013) may be interpreted differently from one culture to the other.

They posit that time concepts such as duration and sequence belong to the realm of high-level cognition, which is mediated by language and culture. The implication is that the idea of time and time management practices among university students in Kenya may significantly differ from those from Asian cultures. Therefore, it was essential to establish if counselling from a Kenyan perspective would inspire a similar outcome. Besides, the main focus of counselling services in universities in Kenya remains unclear. There was therefore need to empirically establish the effectiveness of counselling on academic performance.

A related study in the USA focused on how psychosocial factors affect students' success in community colleges (Fong et al. 2017). It established that in college, psychosocial factors (self-perceptions, self-regulation, anxiety, attributions, and motivation) play a meaningful role in determining students' persistence and academic success. Counselling services can effectively intervene in motivating students to perform better when the factors influencing their performance are known, such as psychosocial, cognitive, and demographic issues.

A study investigating the relationship between undergraduate student counselling and successful degree completion in U.K., Connell, Barkham, and Clark (2008) found that after counselling, students feel better, deal with their problems, and as a result, improve their

academic performance. This study aimed to find out how effective counselling could enhance academic performance.

A similar study in Nigeria on the influence of psychosocial factors on students' academic performance among college students, Kolo et al. (2017) found that among psychosocial factors that predict academic achievement, attitude and interaction emerged as the most reliable predictors of academic performance, unlike students' self-efficacy. These studies collectively point out that students benefit from counselling services and can gain a positive attitude and improve interaction in the university. As a result, their academic performance improves. However, the studies remain limited in explaining the effectiveness of counselling services in address psychosocial issues to affect desired academic performance. The current study sought to establish if counselling could facilitate the development of personal resources to empower students with skills and knowledge to address the psychosocial issues that interfere with students' academic performance.

Earlier studies reported a lack of specific focus on the core business at the university, which is academic performance.

In South Africa, much of the research in counselling in universities has been based on how counselling can boost academic performance, identifying students at risk of dropping out due to poor performance and improving study techniques. For instance, in a study on psychosocial factors and academic performance among African women students at a predominantly white university in South Africa,

Malefo (2000) found that psychosocial issues based on students' historical background determined their academic performance. These psychosocial issues include social

relationships, and they play a key role in students' academic performance while in class and that counselling can address them. The current study explored the effectiveness of counselling on academic achievement regardless of psychosocial issues based on students' historical background.

In another study in Ethiopia, Mersha, Bishaw, and Tegegne (2013) found that personal issues and previous academic backgrounds impact students' academic performance. The study noted that students improved their academic performance after counselling intervention that targeted their private issues. This study looked at the effectiveness of the active psychoeducation programme on academic achievement, unlike general counselling.

In Kenya, a study was conducted in Egerton university involving 357 students, 40 students peer counsellors, 2 student counsellors and 1 dean of students on selected factors influencing social and academic adjustment of undergraduate students at Egerton University. Kyalo and Chumba (2011) found that counselling students on the management of interpersonal relationships and positive attitudes toward academic programmes promote academic adjustment. Management of interpersonal relationships and positive attitude toward academic programs are a part of psychoeducation. Therefore, they cannot provide a broader understanding of how counselling can enhance academic performance and so this study was conceptualized to establish how effectiveness counselling can improve academic performance.

Another study was carried out among 9 college administrators and 391 students on the influence of drug abuse on students' academic performance in public universities in Uasin-Gishu County in Kenya. Tuwei (2014) concluded that addiction to drug and alcohol use

leads to lower academic achievement, increased truancy, and expulsion from school. Empirical studies conducted have demonstrated scarcity on the effective use of psychoeducational services in universities. Therefore, this study was concerned with these issues and aimed at investigating the effectiveness of psychoeducation counselling in enhancing academic performance and retention rate.

2.3.4 Challenges Experienced in offering Counselling services in Universities

Counselling centres in universities are facing challenges as they encounter changing and unstable social and financial environment. Thus, they are increasingly undertaking a lesser degree affecting their academic performance and retention rate. Vogel, Wester, and Larson, (2007) carried out a study investigating psychological factors that inhibit seeking help among university students and found that despite the availability of opportunity of seeking counselling help in university counselling centres, a small percentage of students utilize these services due to fear of being discovered by other students. However, the study does not explain the main factors that limit students from seeking these services.

Globally, students' have individual characteristics that are likely to contribute to psycho-social malfunctioning which has been cited as one of the critical factors determining effective counselling in universities as found out in a study that investigated 186 Non-English speaking students' attitudes and perceptions of plagiarism in New Zealand (Marshall, & Garry, 2006). The study also found that students' characteristics are a significant factor in determining their academic performance and retention rates. Findings from this study have highlighted university counsellors' uncertainties over role definition.

Sears (2002) argues that role definition is the most significant challenge facing counsellors in higher learning institutions.

In a related study in the USA, Watson (2006) found that clients' characteristics can hinder counselling outcomes despite the counsellors' interventions and effort. For instance, clients whose personal traits like long pauses and silences during sessions create a barrier in communication in determining how the counselling proceeds.

In a study in Portugal on factors influencing the implementation of screening and brief interventions for alcohol use in primary care practices, Frederico, Inês, Kathryn, Leo, and Niamh (2018) found that lack of adequate counselling materials was the most cited barrier to provision during counselling sessions. This study indicates that materials necessary in counselling affect the interventions. However, the study does not explain how counselling materials affect intended counselling outcomes. The current study sought to determine if challenges exist that may influence the effectiveness of counselling on students' academic performance and retention.

In Canada, a study investigating why university students seek counselling found that most students present reasons such as relationship concerns, anxiety, distress, grief, depression, academic and career issues (Cairns, Massfeller, & Deeth, 2010). The above study does not address the aspect of psycho-education counselling, which equips students with skills and abilities such as positive attitude and problem-solving skills to help them gain knowledge and learn how to cope with issues affecting them. Such skills and abilities will enhance academic performance and retention rates.

Studies carried out in Africa on challenges facing counselling in universities emphasize psychological and cultural issues (a typical modern phenomenon caused by rapid urbanization and modernity). The result is a loss of identity, increased use of drugs, and a casual approach to sex and sexuality. In a related study, Whyte (2014) found that adequate counsellors who worked as teams experienced fewer episodes of burnout than those who were few and worked as individuals. Implications of this study are that counselling requires enough counsellors who will handle less workload, thereby working in optimal hours and, as a result, burnout.

In a study investigating coping strategies employed by students to address stress emanating from social, economic, and academic challenges in Zimbabwe, Soda and Bondai (2015) 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. However, the current study sought to explain challenges not associated with students' personal issues such as increased student enrolment, inadequate counselling materials, and inadequate staff.

In a related study in Zimbabwe, Musika, and Bukaliya (2015) report in their study, which involved 100 university students on the effectiveness of counselling on students. They concluded that inadequate counselling services compounded by inadequate counselling

skills and poor counsellor characteristics curtail students' motivation to seek counselling services.

In Kenya, Meru County, Kirimi (2011) identified that negative student attitude towards seeking counselling help has led to decreased usage of counselling services. A study investigating the determinants of effective guidance and counselling programmes in Kericho County, Ruto, Manduku, and Kosgey (2017) found that a lack of facilities and materials affects counselling services delivery.

This finding concluded that the counselling process is not effective in changing the behaviour of students who seek the services. The mentioned studies identify low self-esteem, negative attitude, and cultural affiliation as restraining factors in the delivery of effective counselling in universities, whereas other factors were not considered. A negative attitude may be attributed as a factor of not seeking counselling help. Therefore, students continue to register poor academic grades and fail to graduate within the stipulated period.

The reviewed literature did not touch on the challenges affecting students in Kenyan universities, among them: a shortage of enough counselling materials, lack of enough counselling staff, increased student enrolment, the influence of peers to seek counselling help. Therefore, this study endeavoured to bridge this gap.

2.4 Summary of Reviewed Literature and Theoretical Framework

The reviewed literature concentrated on the status of counselling services in universities, the effectiveness of counselling services on students' academic performance, counselling

services and retention rate, and the challenges facing counselling services in the universities.

The literature revealed that uptake of counselling services in universities is low, but there was a scarcity of information about why the students do not attend the services. Another gap in literature was that the status of counselling services in universities was mostly reviewed in developed countries. At the same time, there was a scarcity of empirical studies in developing countries' context. The issue of academic performance was also reviewed. It was still not clear about the effectiveness of the services offered by the universities in developing countries, Kenya included, in the students' academic performance.

Additionally, there was a lot of literature about the challenges facing counselling services in universities world over. Still, the literature reviewed did not present challenges facing counselling services in the Kenyan university context. In effect, this study investigated the effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rates in the universities in Kenya.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework presents interactions between effectiveness counselling services, academic performance, and retention rate in universities.

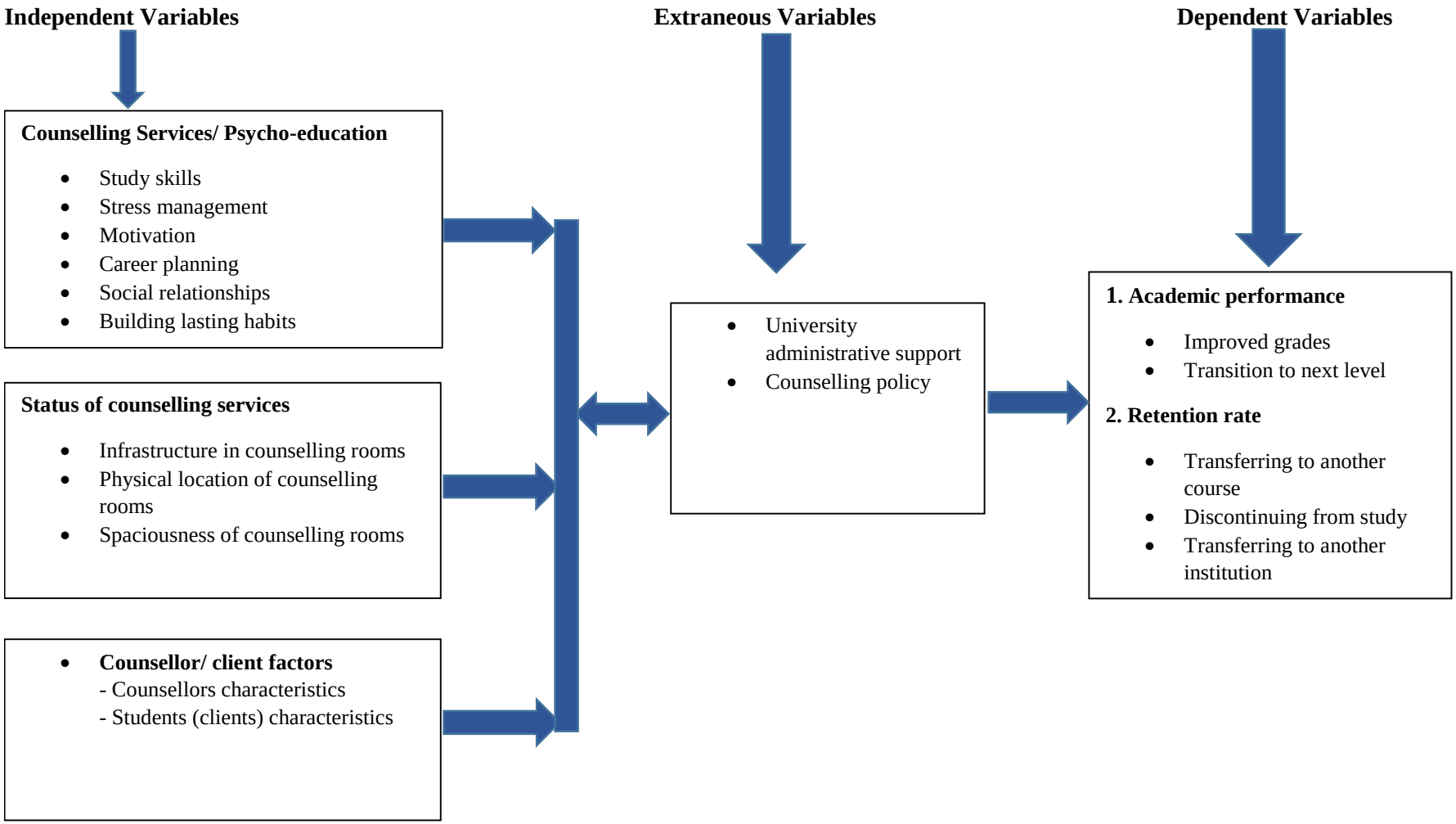

Figure 1.3: Influence of Counselling Services on academic performance and Retention Rate in Universities of Kenya

Source: Self generated

Figure 1.3 demonstrates that counselling services with a major indicator of psychoeducation counselling, status of counselling and factors of counselling (independent variables) influences the academic performance and retention rate (dependent variables). The two way interraction between the independent variables, university administration support to counselling and the counselling policy which guides counselling services (intervening variables) results to the dependent variables. The interplay of these variables ensures effectiveness of counselling resulting to enhanced academic performance and retention rate of the students in the universities.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was used in investigating the effectiveness of counselling services in order to enhance academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya. It deals with research design, the study variables, site of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation. It also presents data management and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study investigated the effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya. For the purpose of the study, both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. For collection of general information and accurate comparison, quasi-experimental design was employed for quantitative data. The quasi experimental design uses an experimental group and a control group with both groups taking a pre-test and a post-test whereby the experimental group receive treatment (Creswell, & Creswell, 2018). The participants were randomly assigned to either the control or to the experimental group. The design suited this study since psychoeducation counselling as a treatment was used to determine if it influenced academic performance and retention rate among undergraduate students in university.

For the collection of general information and accurate comparison, a quasi-experimental design was employed for quantitative data. The quasi-experimental design uses an

experimental group and a control group with both groups taking a pre-test and a post-test whereby the experimental group receives treatment (Creswell, & Creswell, 2018). The participants were randomly assigned to either the control or to the experimental group. The design suited this study since psychoeducation counselling as a treatment was used to determine if it influenced academic performance and retention rate among undergraduate students in the university.

In a study that uses human subjects, it is not easy to fully control some variables, which might be of interest to the study through experiments. To achieve this, it is always important to consider other designs to collect complimentary data. For this study, qualitative data was collected with the help of a phenomenological design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), phenomenological design describes participants' lived experiences, feelings, and opinions about a phenomenon. The phenomenon in this study was counselling services/psychoeducation. This design enabled the gathering of information about lived experiences, feelings, and opinions of participants extracted from the focus group discussions and presented as narratives. The participants shared their experiences, feelings, and opinions through focus group discussions that played the secondary supportive role in the data collection. The results from the two designs were triangulated

3.3 Location of the Study

This study was carried out in two public universities in Kenya. These universities are the oldest in Kenya and therefore considered to be "information-rich" for this study. The universities were accessible to the researcher, a fact that is vital for easy collection of data.

The population in these two universities were large enough to draw the respondents of this study. These two universities are located in Nairobi County, which houses the capital city of Kenya.

3.4 Target Population

This study's target population was all first-year undergraduate students taking a bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery and all counsellors in two public universities in Kenya. The target population was 514 students. However, the accessible population was 140 students. The number of counsellors was six. It was impossible to access all the first-year students due to various reasons, including tight laboratory schedules and academic field trips, among others.

To help in this, it is always important to consider other designs for the purpose of collecting complimentary data. For this study, qualitative data was collected with the help of phemenological design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), phenomenological design describes participants lived experiences, feelings and opinions about a phenomenon. The phenomenon in this study was counselling services/psychoeducation. This design enabled gathering of information about lived experiences, feelings and opinions of participants were extracted from the focus group discussions and were presented as narratives. The participants shared their experiences, feelings and opinions through focus group discussion that played the secondary supportive role in the data collection. The results from the two designs were triangulated

The target population and accessible population is presented in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 respectively.

Table 3.1: Target Population of the 2017 Intake

University	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
A	70	13.6	39	7.6	**109**	**21.2**
B	282	54.9	123	23.9	**405**	**78.8**
Total	**352**	**68.5**	**162**	**31.5**	**514**	**100**

Source: Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council (KMPDC) (2017)

Table 3.1 shows that a total of 514 students registered for bachelors of medicine and surgery during the September 2017 intake. 352 students (13.6%) were male students and 162 students (7.6 %) were female students enrolled at University A. From the University B, 282 male students were enrolled (54.9%) while 123 female students (23.9%) were enrolled. This was a total of 78.8% of the target population from university of Nairobi. From University A, 70 male students (13.6%) and 39 female students (7.6%) were enrolled. This made a total of 109 students (21.2%) of the total target population.

Table 3.2: Accessible Population of the 2017 Intake

University	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
A	33	23.6	28	20	**61**	**43.6**
B	45	32.1	34	24.3	**79**	**56.4**
Total	**78**	**55.7**	**62**	**44.3**	**140**	**100**

Source: Self generated

Table 3.2 shows the accessible population during the study. 23.6% of male students and 20% female students were available at University A while 32.1% male students and 24.3% female students were available at the University B. 43.6% of the available students were from University A with 56.4% being available at the University. A total of 55.7% male students and 44.3% female students were available at the time of the study.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The study purposively selected two universities. Consideration was given to the oldest universities in Kenya since they were viable as "information-rich" for this study. The universities were accessible to the researcher, a fact that is vital for easy collection of data. The population in these two universities were large enough to draw the respondents of this study.

The purposively selected students proved convenient for the study as earlier studies such as (Hilman, 2005) have shown that the most significant amount of student failure and drop-out occurs in this particular year (Chacha, 2015). Besides, first-year students transit from secondary school where they have been under almost total supervision from parents and teachers and might find themselves enjoying a lot of freedom that might either help or hinder their academic performance and retention rate. Moreover, first-year students have to bear lengthy and demanding class sessions, unlike what they had in secondary school. These students, therefore, could be principal beneficiaries of counselling services in the universities.

The study employed a multi-stage sampling approach using different techniques. Convenience sampling, cluster sampling and simple random sampling technique were used to select the experiment and the control groups from each of the two sampled universities. Due to various reasons including tight laboratory schedules, academic field trips, desire not to disrupt learning, among others, the study utilized convenience sampling to select the students that were available in each university. The study considered 52 first-year students from each university. The groups were then

clustered in gender. Holdcroft (2007) suggests that findings from an experimental study might mainly be invalid because they might have gender bias implications where one gender gets more consideration and the generalized results are applied to both genders. Therefore, balancing the genders in this study aimed to eradicate biases when generalizing the findings from the study sample on the population. To assign the participants in the experimental and control group, the study employed random sampling.

According to Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determinant table (Krejcie, & Morgan, 1970) (Appendix A5), 104 (103 on the calibrated table) students were suitable for the sample size from an accessible population of 140. Apart from students, the researcher used purposive sampling to incorporate six counsellors, three from each university.

The sample size is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Sample Size of the participants from the 2017 Intake

University	**Male**		**Female**		**Total**	
	F	%	F	%	F	**%**
A	26	25	26	25	**52**	**50**
B	26	25	26	25	**52**	**50**
Total	**52**	**50**	**52**	**50**	**104**	**100**

Source: Self generated

Table 3.3 shows the sample size of students selected to participate in the study from the 2017 intake. 26% of participants were selected from among the male and female participants. From the table, there were a total of 52 female students and 52 male students

who participated in the study.The gender was equally distributed in the research group and control groups.

3.6 Research Instruments

This study used a triangulation of instruments to collect data. Questionnaires for students and counsellors, interview guides and focus group discussion for both students and counsellors were used. Also, the study employed pre-test and post-tests in the process of experiment. In essence, the instruments helped in collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Quantitative data was collected using the students' questionnaire and counsellors' questionnaire. Triangulation of instruments provided an opportunity to gather data which gave a detailed description of the counselling services at the university concerning academic performance and retention rate.

3.7 Pilot Study

Before subjecting the research instruments for this study to the respondents, the researcher piloted the instruments. A pilot study in research helps in establishing study feasibility before the main research, predicting the time and costing (Teijingen & Hundley 2002). Pilot study also helps in ensuring the validity and reliability of the study instruments before collecting the actual data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the instruments were pre-tested on 12 randomly selected students from the School of Medicine in a University in Kiambu County (not selected for this study). They had identical characteristics with the actual sample used in this study. According to Orodho (2014), conducting a pre-testing of study instruments should be with a group which is not involved in the actual collection of data. Results from the pilot study helped the researcher to refine the instrument items and

corrected inconsistencies that may have been ambiguous to the respondents in the actual research. The pilot study also checked the appropriateness of the language and grammar used in the instruments. Linguistic appropriateness helped to remove incidents of ambiguity that may confuse the respondents. The actual study did not include respondents from the pilot study.

3.7.1 Students' Questionnaire

The Students' Questionnaire (Appendix A1) consists of five parts. Part One consisted of Students' Demographic Information. Part Two consisted of items seeking students' retention rate. Information about retention rate was gathered through the help of adopted Retention Scale of the College Level Academic Retention (Carvalho & Chima,2016). The scale had a Cronbach alpha of .889.

Part Three of the questionnaires consisted of items seeking information about the academic performance of the students. In this study, the difference between second semester performance and first semester performance (performance index) was used as a measure of academic performance.

Part Four of the questionnaire sought information about challenges students face in the uptake of the counselling services. It has 5 items measured on a 5 point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). Each item presented a challenge.

Part Five of the questionnaire consisted of status of counselling in the universities. It had 3 items measured on a 5 point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3),

Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). Each item presents a counselling status statement. Use of questionnaires in research is essential as it enables the researcher to collect accurate, exhaustive and vast amounts of data within a short period of time (Orodho 2014). Creswel (2018) also affirms that a questionnaire helps in research by ensuring collection of information which is both quantitatve and qualitative for the purpose of the study.

3.7.2 Counsellors' Questionnaire

The counsellors' questionnaire (Appendix A2) consisted of three parts. Part One consisted of counsellors' demographic information and had 5 items. Part Two consisted of challenges to effectiveness counselling services. It had 5 items measured on a 5 point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). Each item presents a challenge.

Part three of the questionnaire consisted of Status of Counselling in University. This part collected information from counsellors on how they rate the context under which they provide counselling services in university. It had 3 items measured on a 5 point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). The scale has scores ranging from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 15.

3.7.3 University Counsellors' Interview Guide

A semi structured interview guide was used to gather information about ounsellors' awareness of counselling challenges, counselling status, university support towards the counselling programme, retention rate, and academic performance. The respondents were audio recorded during the interviw with their consent. The interview took about 45 minutes. The recorded material was later translated for ease of analysis.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Reliability estimates the consistency of the measurement, or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used in the same conditions with the same subjects. Validity, on the other hand, involves the degree to which the study instruments measures what it is supposed to, more precisely, the accuracy of the measurement (Creswell & Creswell,2018). In this study, validity determined the extent to which the scores of the instruments were able to measure the intended concepts concerning the objectives of the study, while reliability determined the extent to which these instruments were consistent in collecting similar or related data concerning the objectives of this study. This is discribed as follows.

3.8.1 Validity

The research ensured that experimental activities were centered mainly on psycho-education on the knowledge and skills related to enhancing students' academic performance and retention rate. To ensure the validity of the experiment, the scores that were used to examine the effectiveness of counselling services were from the first semester exam and the second semester examination. According to Slack and Draugalis (2001), repeated tests may threaten the internal validity of an experiment. By comparing the first semester results with the second semester results, testing threat was defied. To ensure instrument validity, the research retained the same research assistants.

The validity of the questionnaires, interviews and Focus group discussion were attained through ensuring that the content covered all the domains of interest as guided by the objectives of the study. Construct validity was achieved through accurate

operationalization of the key variables in each objective. Further, the instruments were validated by experts in the field of psychology in the department of psychology at Kenyatta University. Triangulation of research instruments was done, creating correspondence between them.

3.8.2 Reliability

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires administered on the pilot study sample was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-version 20). In the SPSS analysis, the research used the Alpha (Cronbach) model of internal consistence based on the average inter-item correlation to calculate the reliability of the students' questionnaire, and the counsellors' questionnaires. According to Creswell & Creswell, (2018), a study whose instrument's Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above is acceptable as having reliable results. The Cronbach alpha coefficient is the most reliability method in determining internal consistency of items in a research instrument (Al-Osail, et al., 2015).

During the pilot study, the instruments used had alpha indexes ranging from 0.76 to 0.91, therefore the study instruments were considered to be reliable. The retention scale had 0.89, challenges to effectiveness counselling scale had 0.76 and the status of counselling scale had 0.91. This justified their inclusion in collecting data because the items in the questionnaires were well related to each other and therefore, suitable in measuring single variables in the objectives of the study.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The research began with training the research assistants. They were trained to understand the purpose of the study, objectives of the study and to use appropriately the tools of collecting information to address the concerns of the objectives of the study. The researcher and the four assistants visited the targeted universities faculty of medical school and consulted relevant staff who introduced them to the students (target population) in the school. The research team used random sampling to select 104 students - 52 students from each university. The selection aimed to provide the researcher with both experimental and control group samples. A register was established to track the participants' attendance. Each group was asked to choose a representative who opened a separate register to monitor the group members' attendance. The data collection procedure is graphically presented in Figure 3.1.

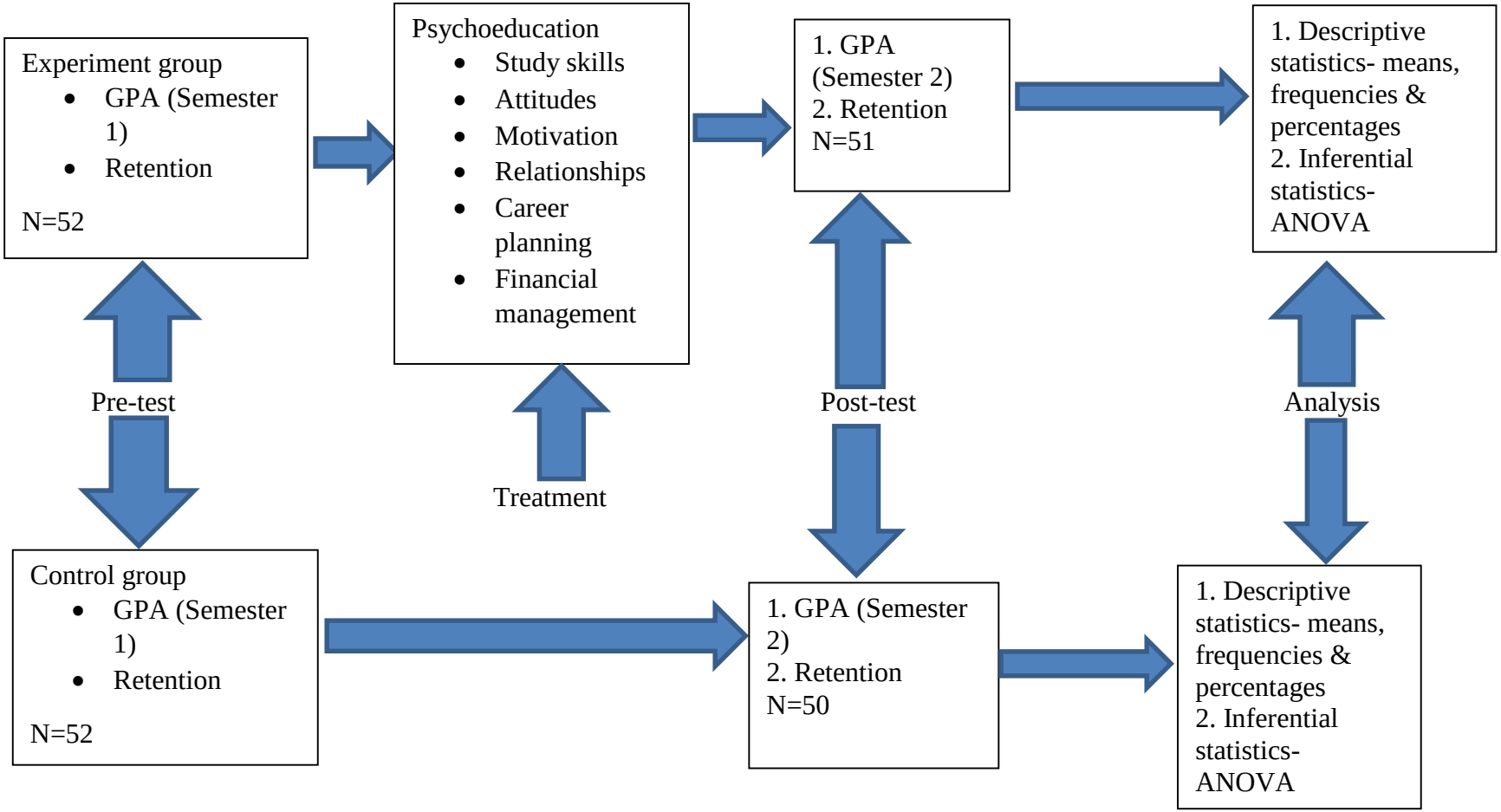

Figure 3.1: Data Collection Procedure

Source: Self-generated

In Figure 3.1, the researcher recorded each participant's Grade Point Average (GPA) for first semester exams from the experiment group and the control group as the basis for the study. The participants in the experiment group were taken through counselling in psycho-education in study skills, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, decision making skills stress management, positive attitude, motivation, social relationships, substance use and abuse, financial management, and career planning (Appendix 8). The counselling venue was provided by the university's counselling centres.

The control group was engaged in normal academic activities and were not aware that they were being monitored. However, they were aware that they were participating in a study. The experimental group was enrolled in a psycho-education counselling programme conducted in counselling sessions. The experimental group was taken through one session of one and a half hours per week for a period of 12 weeks. Details of the psychoeducation intervention is presented in Appendix 7. At the end of the 12 weeks, the participants were set free to prepare for the end of semester exams after which they were issued with questionnaires (post-test) to fill. The research team tracked and recorded each participant's Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs), class attendance and participation. The research team then recorded each participant's GPA for the second semester exam results.

Data on students' retention rate and challenges experienced in counselling services were collected from the experimental group, control group and counsellors two weeks prior to the end of semester two. Qualitative data was collected from focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires involving the students in experiment and control groups

separately. The focus group discussions were recorded and the recorded information was later transcribed.

3.10 Data Analysis

The study obtained both quantitative and qualitative data. The data was first cleaned, grouped into themes, coded, and then keyed into the computer and analyzed using the SPSS Version 20 (SPSS-20). Quantitative data was collected from the sample size of 104 students and 6 counsellor participants. It was then coded and entered in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20 (SPSS -20) for analysis. Finally, it was analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically, frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations to describe demographic characteristics of the participants, status of counselling service, patterns of academic performance and retention, and challenges experienced in counselling. The results from the analysis was presented in tables, pie-charts. Inferential statistics, namely, the 2-way ANOVA was used to test the differences in the experimental and control group.

The selection of ANOVA is based on its intensity in handling data from experiments with variables that involve more than two conditions. In this study we had two groups being measured each in two conditions: retention and academic perfornance.

Qualitative data analysis was thematically done as per the study's objectives. For example on the status of the counseling services, the focus was on the experiences of the students in the ability to feel relaxed in order to be able to open up, on issues of retention the study focused on identifying different ways in which counseling helped to empower students address the problems that challenged their stay at the unifacity to affect retentio. On

academic performance, the focus on themes that related to study skills, time management and te overrall balacing of class and social life, among others. The outcomes were presented as narrative quotes. Both qualitative data and quantitative data were triangulated to provide an In-depth description of counselling services as demonstrated in Figure 3.2.

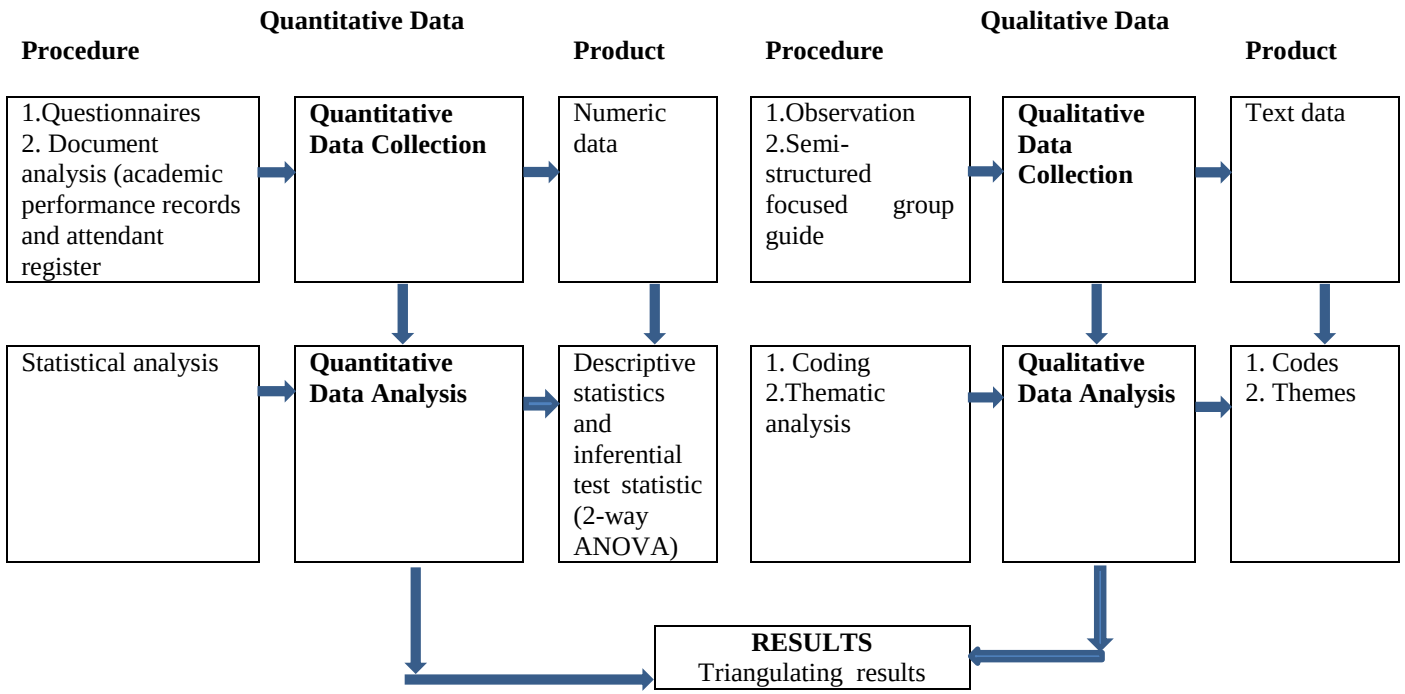

Figure 3.2: Diagrammatical representation of the study design

The effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing academic performance and retention rate was drawn from the triangulated data as illustrated in Figure 3.2.

3.11 Data Management and Ethical Consideration

The research sought approval of the research proposal from the Graduate School of Kenyatta University to enable the researcher get ethical clearance from Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee (KUERC) (Appendix A10). The researcher then got an introductory letter from the Graduate School of Kenyatta University which enabled her to apply for research authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), which was granted (Appendix A11). The application letters were done scanned and forwarded. Once NACOSTI issued a research authorization and research clearance permit, the researcher proceeded to the field to collect data.

The researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the study and the importance of their participation. The participants were briefed on the broad aims of the study. The researcher assured the participants confidentiality of the information they were to give by assigning each participant an identifying code throughout the study period and also asked them not to write their names on the questionnaires. The researcher got consent forms the participants drawn into the sample to participate in the study and they signed the forms (Appendix A7). Finally the researcher kept all information obtained from the research findings in confidence and used it for the purpose of this study only.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing students' academic performance and retention rates in universities in Kenya. This chapter includes data analysis, presentation and discussion of findings. The study respondents were first-year undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor of medicine in their second semester and university counsellors from the selected universities. The sample respondents of this study were 104 students and 6 university counsellors. The study utilized quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To ascertain the status of counselling services in universities in Kenya.
2. To assess the extent to which counselling services influence students' retention rate in universities in Kenya.
3. To establish the effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing students' academic performance in universities in Kenya.
4. To find out the challenges experienced in offering counselling in universities in Kenya.
5. To identify strategies that can be put in place to enhance counselling services in universities in Kenya.

4.2 Demographic Information

Before the presentation and discussion of the findings of this study based on the objectives, it was imperative to discuss the demographic information of the respondents. They were pegged on characteristics that included gender, age, marital status, years of counselling practice and level of training in counselling. The study sampled 104 students; however, three dropped out due to undisclosed engagements. Therefore, 101 respondents were participants in the study representing 98.1% of the sample size, which is a representative sample for the research in social sciences (Saleh, & Bista, 2017).

From the counsellor population, the study targeted 6 counsellors, and all of them participated in the study. Demographic information was important in this study for it provided data regarding research participants and it was necessary for the determination of the respondents' characteristics as a representative sample of the target population for generalization of this study results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

4.2.1 Gender of Participants

The main focus of this study was to investigate the effectivenesss of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya. The two populations in this study (students and counsellors) included both males and females. Table 4.1 shows the distribution of gender of students.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Gender across Student Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	52	51.5	51.5	51.5
	Female	49	48.5	48.5	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1 show that 52 males (51.5%) and 49 females (48.5%) participated in the study. It would have been important for equal representative of gender respondents however, the three participants dropped out of the study during the data collection process. The distribution of gender of counsellors who participated in the study is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Gender across Counsellor Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	2	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Female	4	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2 shows that 2 males (33.3%) and 4 females (66.7%) counsellors participated in the study. The table shows that there were more female counsellors than male counsellors providing counselling services to students in universities in Kenya. This finding compares favourably with Wambui (2015) who found out that among counsellors in institutions of higher learning in Kenya females are more than males. Consideration of gender in this study was vital since the studies have shown that female clients often prefer to be attended to by their fellow female counsellors while male clients mostly prefer to be counselled by female counsellors (Lindah,Kingerlee & Barry, 2017).

4.2.2 Age of Participants

Participants from different age groups from the two populations of the study (students and counsellors) were sampled. The age of the students who participated in the study is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Age of Student Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	20 and below	81	80.2	81.0	81.0
	21 – 25	12	11.9	12.0	93.0
Valid	26 – 30	7	6.9	7.0	100.0
	Total	100	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		101	100.0		

Table 4.3 shows that 80.2% of participants in the study were 20 years and below, 11.9% were between 21-25 years and 6.9% were between 26-30. One participant did not indicate age but indicated being a female. The study reveals that majority of first year medical students in the selected universities were 20 years and below which is the normal age for first year students in Kenyan universities (Odhiambo & Onyango, 2008). These students are in the stage where they are in early adulthood an age marked by desire for relationships and career development.

These students have a lot of time for leisure and relationship issues, which, most likely, derail them from focusing in their studies.

Kamuyu, Ndungo and Wango (2016) posit that university students are faced with significant personal growth and decision making time regarding their values, relationships, career and other life goals that affect their academic performance and retention rate. Effective counselling is necessary to respond to students' issues (Frijda, & Rietveld, 2014) and help them to focus on their academic goals.

The age distribution of the counsellors who participated was important in providing information of counsellors who provided counselling services in the university, targeting

students' academic performance and retention rate. Counsellors' age distribution is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Age of Counsellor Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	36 – 45	2	33.3	33.3	33.3
	46 and above	4	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 shows that 33.3% counsellors who participated in the study were aged between 36-45 years while 66.7% were aged 46 years and above. This finding reveals that majority of counsellors in universities are above 40 years of age, and therefore gained maturity in life experiences to handle students' issues. According to Marcia and Jesselson (2013), Erick Erickson stipulates that the age between 40-60 is the time when adults strive to bring a positive impact, show care to bring a lasting change to the next generation within their environment instead of feeling uninvolved and disconnected. The implication is that counsellors at this stage could be more fruitful in helping students improve their academic performance and retention rate.

Moreover, majority of people above 40 years are mature and settled with families and most have adolescent and college going children (Molzahn, Kalfoss, Makaroff, & Skevington, 2010). The experience of family issues facilitates development of caring attitude that is important in counselling. In addition, caring for their own families may provoke empathy for the young students who need their services.

Furthermore, the age of counsellor's might influence the way students perceive counsellors' roles and function (Willys, 2017) thereby enabling the students to establish

trust in the counselling process. Maturity comes with desirable personality characteristics such as ability to communicate, care, and competence (Grencavage, & Norcross, 1990) and they show persistent positive features that enhance inherent growth tendencies through repeated effort, urgency and commitment in their life (Ryan, & Deci, 2000).

4.2.3 Marital Status of Participants

The marital status of the students in this study is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Marital Status of Student Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	100	99.0	99.0	99.0
	Married	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5 shows that 99% of students who participated in the study were single. This could imply that the students have fewer responsibilities and are likely to concentrate on their studies and perform academically well and complete in time. Conversely, this could also imply that with less family responsibilities, they could be outgoing and spend most of the time in leisure activities that could negatively impact their studies, thus the crucial need for counselling services in the university (Felez-Nobrega, Hillman, Cirera, & Puig-Ribera, 2017).

Similarly, the marital status of counsellors who participated in the study is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Marital Status of Counsellor Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Married	4	66.7	66.7	83.3
	Widowed	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6 shows that 16.7% of the counsellors who participated in the study were single, 66.7% were married while 16.7% were widowed. According to those findings majority of counsellors in universities in Kenya are married. Married counsellors might be able to face psychosocial challenges and resolve them with more understanding (Simon, 2002). It is therefore evident that counsellors who participated in this study were mature and responsible to handle students' issues during counselling sessions. Counsellors' characteristics such as maturity, warmth and empathy contribute to effective counselling according to Grencavage and Norcross (1990) to enhance academic performance and retention rate.

4.2.4 Counsellors' Experience

The data collected from this study sought to establish counsellors' experience in offering counselling services. The distribution of the counselling experience of the interviewed counsellors is presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Counsellors' Years of Experience in Counselling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 – 8	3	50.0	50.0	50.0
	9 – 13	1	16.7	16.7	66.7
	Above 14	2	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.7 shows that out of the 6 counsellors who participated in the study, 3 (50%) of counsellors had a counselling experience ranging from 4-8 years. From the Table, 16.7% of the counsellors had a counselling experience ranging from 9-13 years while 33.3% had an experience of more than 14 years in active practice. This finding shows that all the counsellors had practiced over 4 years' of experience in counselling. Experience is an important aspect in counselling. Although it may not be associated with the outcome, Goldenberg et al (2016) observe that the experience of a counsellor is positively correlated with maintaining clients in therapy beyond second sessions. This has the implication that with their experience the counsellors at the universities could facilitate students' adherence to counselling interventions provided in the counselling services.

Boglia, Millings and Barkham (2017) found that university students have unique needs and require experienced counsellors. Students may not be attracted to counsellors who lack experience or to those who became complacent with their skills and fail to be open to new ideas and experience. Studies show that familiarity may act as a barrier to the performance of counselling (Meiberg, Bos, Onya, & Schaalma, 2008). It was therefore interesting to find out how the counsellors perform in their service to help the students.

4.2.5 Counsellors' Level of Training

Collecting information on the counsellors' level of training in this study was meant to bring out an understanding on the skills, techniques and theoretical orientation acquired by the counsellors. This information was deemed relevant as effectiveness counselling is based on skills of the counsellor and the competency of counsellors is dependent on the

counsellor's level of training. The level of training of counsellors who participated in the study is presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Counsellors' Level of Training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Degree	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Masters	4	66.7	66.7	83.3
	Doctorate	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8 shows that 1(16.7%) of counsellors who participated in the study had a bachelor's degree in counselling psychology, 4 (66.7%) had a master's degree while 1(16.7%) had a doctorate degree in counselling psychology. The finding is that all counsellors in the selected universities had a minimum bachelor degree in counselling and therefore had a sound training in skills, techniques and theoretical foundation. According to Goldenberg at el, (2016) the competence of counsellors is important for the counselling services to be effectiveness in helping students concentrate in their academic performance and also increases their retention.

University students are a unique population and face many psychosocial issues. Consequently, they might lack focus on academic work affecting their graduation within the specified period. They, therefore, require the services of competent counsellors who can fit within this context. The level of training provides a foundation of competencies upon which other training bases. Molzahn et al. (2010) suggest that university students' need trained, competent counsellors who are versed with students' academic context and who understand students' complex issues.

4.3 Findings of Study as per Objectives

The purpose of this study was to establish the effectiveness of counselling services in improving retention rate and academic performance. The findings were guided by the specific objectives as follows:

4.3.1 Status of Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya

The first objective of the study was to ascertain the status of counselling services in universities in Kenya. The common factor theory that informed this study asserts that context is crucial in effective counselling. It was essential to establish the status so as to authenticate conditions under which counselling services are offered. Participants in the experiment group provided information on the status of counselling in universities. Table 4.9 presents the respondents' responses to the status of counselling services in the university.

Table 4.9: Experiment Group Participants' Response to Counselling Status

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	n	%
I find counselling rooms to be adequately furnished and comfortable	19	37.3	19	37.3	11	21.6	1	2.0	1	2.0	51	100
Counselling rooms are located in private places ensuring me confidentiality	21	41.2	18	35.1	4	7.8	7	13.7	1	2.0	51	100
Counselling rooms have adequaate space so that there is no sense of intrusion on my personal space.	11	21.6	24	47.1	10	19.6	5	9.8	1	2.0	51	100
Average	**17**	**33.4**	**20.3**	**39.8**	**8.3**	**16.3**	**4.3**	**8.5**	**1**	**2**	**51**	**100**

Table 4.9 shows that 37.3% of participants in the experiment group strongly agreed that counselling rooms are adequately furnished and comfortable. Participants who agreed were 37.3%. Participants who were not sure were 21.6%. Those who disagreed were 2.0% and strongly disagreed were 2.0%. As to whether counselling rooms are located in private places ensuring students confidentiality, 41.2% strongly agreed, 35.3% agreed, 7.8% were not sure, 13.7% disagreed and 2.0% strongly disagreed. In line with space, 21.6% strongly agreed, 47.1% agreed, 19.6% were not sure, 9.8% disagreed and 2.0% strongly disagreed.

In summary, 73.2% participants were in agreement that the status of counselling services is adequately favourable. Those who were not sure were 16.3% while 10.5% were in agreement that the status of counselling services is less favourable. This summary of finding is presented in Figure 4.1.

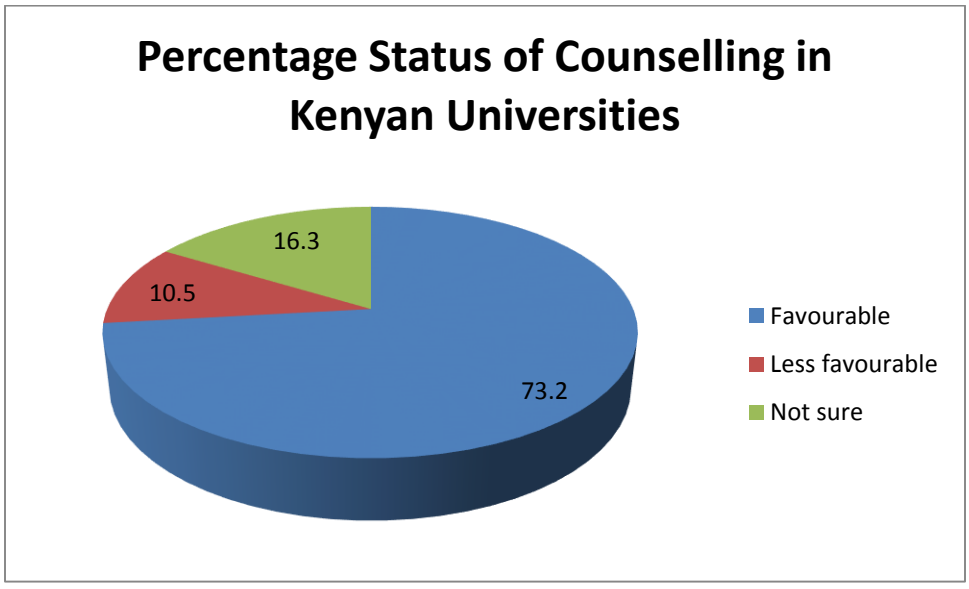

Figure 4.1: Status of Counselling in Kenyan Universities

Figure 5 indicates that majority of students' participants (73.2%) are in favour that counselling rooms have adequate infrastructure that make them feel comfortable during counselling, 10.5% are less in favour while 16.3 are not sure. Sanders and Lehmann (2018) stressed the importance of modelling counselling rooms to enhance an interplay between physical–spatial features such as comfortable seats and seats positioning in promoting clients' thoughts and feelings. This is an indication that universities have observed the prerequisites that can facilitate effectiveness counselling. Pressly and Heesacker (2001) observe that presence of furnishings such as furniture; plants and sculptures contribute positively towards the healing process as they help diffuse anxiety in clients. These findings were collaborated by qualitative data as indicated as follows:

> "…during the counselling session…I felt at home …the seat was good compared to what I have in class…we talked a lot…. coz I was feeling comfortable throughout…" [Female student, 19 years]

The disclosure is in line with Saari (2002) who found that counsellors' offices that are comfortable trigger clients to freely communicate sensitive information and help in positive counselling outcomes.

Majority of the participants were satisfied with the location of counselling rooms and thus they felt that their privacy and confidentiality was secure during the counselling process. As noted by a participant:

> "…I find counselling room more private … located in good place with little activities around it…like you don't find students around that place…. I am comfortable knowing nobody knows what I am up to…" [Female student, 21 years]

The location of a counselling room is important because it directly influences clients' attitudes towards seeking assistance and affects the depth of disclosure during counselling.

Lack of privacy has been attributed to lower levels of disclosure during counselling session's thereby limiting client communication (Pearson, & Wilson, 2012). This is also supported by Omonyi (2016) who found that counselling rooms that are too open and those located next to administration offices negatively influence students' attitude towards going for help. Effective counselling may not be attained if the privacy of students is compromised by the location of the counselling service within the university. These findings show that the status of counselling services in Kenyan universities is favourable, meaning that the university administration find counselling an important aspect in the student support services and will therefore provide what is needed for the service to function to help enhance students' academic performance and retention rate. Participants were asked whether counselling rooms have adeguate space so that there is no sense of intrusion on their personal space. A student participant commented about space in the counselling room as:

"…. the space is ok with me…am comfortable …" [Male Student, 19 years].

The size of the counselling rooms and their requisite facilities provide a counselling context for a collaborative interpersonal relationship between the counsellor and client. This context according to the common factors theory provides a treatment setting where new learning experiences occur and lead to client changes during sessions. Kastrani, Deliyanni-Kouimtzis and athanasiades (2017) classify "space" as a counselling tool that builds client-counsellor relationship during the counselling process. The implication is that the physical elements of space can influence clients' first impressions and might enhance their ability to build a positive and healthy working collaboration for more client growth because space provides an initial feeling of safety.

In summary the study shows that the status of university counselling services are favorable because: counselling rooms are adequately furnished, comfortable and are located in places that ensure privacy and security. According to Pressly and Heesacker (2001) favorable conditions will affect counselling outcome in clients during counselling. Furthermore, Pearson and Wilson (2012) add that physical comfort of the counselling room enables clients to feel at ease and therefore interact in-depth during the counselling process. In depth sharing will enable the counsellor to pick the crucial issues affecting the client thereby helping them become more aware of the feelings, thoughts, and anxiety, which might affect their academic performance and retention rate.

The findings shows that counselling services at universities are provided in favourable physical conditions thus meeting the requirements of a counselling status by the World Health Organisation (2013) which stresses that the status of counselling should have a conducive physical environment. This in turn nurtures a good emotional climate in a counselling relationship. These favourable conditions are perceived to facilitate effectiveness counselling to achieve positive outcomes in line with academic performance as well as retention rates. However, it will be recalled that the common factor theory that informed this study suggest that many factors influence counselling outcome among them counsellors and clients' characteristics as well as the process of change. Therefore, it was important to establish whether the services offered could influence change that would facilitate retention and academic performance of students. These are examined in the next section.

4.3.2 Influence of Counselling Services on Students' Retention

The second objective of the study was to assess the extent to which counselling services in universities in Kenya influence students' retention rate. Retention is a crucial aspect of university education because the programs at the university are time-bound, and the expectation is that the students finish within the scheduled time. However, students are increasingly dropping out from their studies while others are deferring or transferring to other courses at universities, thereby delaying students' completion. The study employed a quasi-experimental design to achieve this objective. Two groups comprising of an experimental group and a control group were randomly selected from the school of medicine.

The researcher subjected students in both groups to a pre-test where the students filled a retention rate scale. Then the experimental group was taken through twelve sessions of psycho-education counselling during their second semester of the first year, second semester. The topics covered were study skills: time management, motivation, problem-solving, creative thinking, decision making and attitude. Other topics included: career planning, stress management, social relationships, financial management, and substance use and abuse. After the experiment group went through the psycho-education programme, the researcher subjected students from the two groups to second testing, using the retention scale while employing the same procedure as used in the pre-test, and their probabilities of dropping out were measured. Results are presented in Table 4.10 and Table 4.11, respectively.

Table 4.10 presents results of students' retention in university before psycho-education (pre-test).

Table 4.10: Indicators of Students' Retention in University before Psycho-education (Pre-test)

S/N	Strongly agree				Agree				Not sure				Disagree				Strongly disagree				Missing				Total	
	E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	n	%
1.	13	25.5	8	44	15	29.4	22	44	2	4	12	23.5	7	13.7	6	12	4	7.8	2	4	0	0	2	4	101	100
2.	17	33.3	11	46	20	39.2	23	46	6	6	5	9.8	4	7.8	2	4	4	7.8	6	6	1	2	5	10	101	100
3.	13	25.5	13	52	21	41.2	26	52	2	4	11	21.6	3	5.9	2	2	0	0	2	4	3	5.9	1	2	101	100
4.	14	27.5	8	32	14	27.5	16	32	7	14	5	17.6	8	15.7	6	12	6	11.8	7	14	0	0	2	4	101	100
5.	6	11.8	13	40	23	45.1	20	40	3	6	6	11.8	8	15.7	10	20	5	9.8	3	6	3	5.9	2	4	101	100
6.	3	5.9	4	6	5	9.8	3	6	21	42	5	9.8	19	37.3	18	36	18	35.3	21	42	1	2	1	2	101	100
7.	19	37.3	16	40	22	43.1	20	40	3	6	7	13.7	1	2	5	10	1	2	3	6	1	2	2	4	101	100
8.	35	68.6	27	28	14	27.5	14	28	2	4	2	3.9	0	0	2	4	0	0	2	4	0	0	1	2	101	100
9.	36	70.6	36	18	12	23.5	9	18	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	3.9	1	2	101	100
10.	23	45.1	28	26	17	33.3	13	26	2	4	4	7.8	4	7.8	2	4	0	0	2	4	3	5.9	2	4	101	100
11.	26	51	23	34	23	45.1	17	34	4	8	2	3.9	0	0	1	2	0	0	4	8	0	0	3	6	101	100
12.	25	49.0	25	32	20	39.2	16	32	2	4	2	3.9	1	2	1	2	0	0	2	4	3	5.9	3	6	101	100
13.	27	52.9	28	36	20	39.2	18	36	1	2	3	5.9	0	0	2	4	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	101	100
14.	14	27.5	13	44	23	45.1	22	44	3	6	5	9.8	2	3.9	5	10	5	9.8	3	6	2	3.9	2	4	101	100
Average	19.4	38.0	18.1	34.1	17.8	34.9	17.1	34.3	4.2	9.9	5.0	10.6	4.1	8.0	4.5	8.9	3.1	6.4	4.2	8.2	1.4	2.8	1.9	3.9		

Key:
E- Experimental group
C- Control group

1. I know how to deal with upsetting problems that affect my studies.
2. I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling in this university.
3. Faculty members have been available to help me make course choices.
4. I am satisfied with my academic experience at this university.
5. I am confident that this is the right university for me.
6. I am satisfied with the quality of training I am getting in my programme of study.

7. I am sure if I transfer to another university of my choice; I will not get better training than what I am getting currently.
8. I am not thinking of transferring to another university.
9. I am not thinking of transferring from my current course to another course.
10. Given a choice, I could never defer my studies to engage in other activities.
11. The course I am pursuing is not difficult.
12. I have not lost interest in the course I am studying.
13. The programme I am studying has a direct link with my preferred career in future.
14. This university regards students' welfare and I am very comfortable being a student at this university.

Table 4.10 presents indicators to students' retention rate before psycho-education programme. Table Students in both groups were given the retention rate scale (Pre-test). In summary, an average of 72.9% of participants in the experiment group (strongly agreed = 38% and agreed = 34.9%) had high potential to complete their current courses in the same university as compared to 68.4% of participants in the control group (strongly agreed = 34.1% and agreed = 34.3%) that had high potential to complete their current courses in the same university.

In the experiment group, an average of 14.4% of participants (disagreed = 8% and strongly disagreed = 6.4%) had low potential to complete their current courses in the same university as compared to 17.1% (disagreed = 8.9% and strongly disagreed = 8.2%) in the control group. An average of 9.9% of participants in the experiment group was not sure whether they would complete their current courses in the same university against 10.6% in the control group. In the experiment group 2.8% did not respond while in the control group 3.9% did not respond.

Table 4.11 presents results of students' retention in university after psycho-education (post-test).

Table 4.11: Indicators of Students' Retention in University after Psycho-education (Post-test)

S/N	Strongly agree				Agree				Not sure				Disagree				Strongly disagree				Missing				Total	
	E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C		E		C			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	n	%
1.	18	35.3	6	12	24	47.1	19	38	2	3.9	0	0	2	3.9	16	32	5	9.8	8	16	1	2	1	2	101	100
2.	6	11.8	3	6	22	43.1	11	22	5	9.8	0	0	16	31.4	19	38	2	3.9	16	32	0	0	1	2	101	100
3.	4	7.8	2	4	26	51	14	28	3	5.9	3	6	13	25.5	15	30	1	2	14	28	4	7.8	2	4	101	100
4.	26	51	9	18	8	15.7	12	24	7	13.7	3	6	5	9.	14	28	4	7.8	11	22	1	2	1	2	101	100
5.	11	21.6	6	12	22	43.1	15	30	4	7.8	2	4	6	11.8	18	36	8	15.7	7	14	0	0	2	4	101	100
6.	20	39.2	22	44	24	47.1	23	46	1	2	2	4	5	9.8	0	0	1	2	2	4	0	0	1	2	101	100
7.	26	51	20	40	12	23	16	32	9	17.6	8	16	4	7.8	5	10	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	101	100
8.	37	72.5	35	70	13	25.5	12	24	1	2	2	4	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	101	100
9.	39	76.5	41	82	9	17.6	9	18	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	101	100
10.	38	74.5	30	60	11	21.6	16	32	0	0	3	6	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	101	100
11.	26	51	27	54	21	41.2	10	20	0	0	2	4	3	5.9	11	22	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	101	100
12.	41	80.4	30	60	8	15.7	1	2	2	3.9	0	0	0	0	16	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	101	100
13.	38	75.5	38	76	12	23.5	5	10	0	0	1	2	0	0	6	12	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	101	100
14.	18	35.3	24	48	18	35.3	11	22	9	17.6	6	12	5	9.8	18	36	1	2	5	10	0	0	0	0	101	100
Average	24.9	48.8	20.9	39.8	16.4	32.2	12.4	24.9	3.1	5.8	2.3	4.6	4.3	8.4	10.0	20.0	1.9	3.7	4.6	9.1	0.6	1.1	0.8	1.6		

Key:
E- Experimental group
C- Control group

15. I know how to deal with upsetting problems that affect my studies.
16. I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling in this university.
17. Faculty members have been available to help me make course choices.
18. I am satisfied with my academic experience at this university.
19. I am confident that this is the right university for me.
20. I am satisfied with the quality of training I am getting in my programme of study.
21. I am sure if I transfer to another university of my choice; I will not get better training than what I am getting currently.
22. I am not thinking of transferring to another university.
23. I am not thinking of transferring from my current course to another course.
24. Given a choice, I could never defer my studies to engage in other activities.
25. The course I am pursuing is not difficult.
26. I have not lost interest in the course I am studying.
27. The programme I am studying has a direct link with my preferred career in future.
28. This university regards students' welfare and I am very comfortable being a student at this university.

Table 4.11 shows indicators to students' retention rate after the experiment group went through the psycho-education programme. Students in both groups were again given the retention rate scale (post-test). In summary, an average of 81% of participants in the experiment group (strongly agreed = 48.8% and agreed = 32.2%) had high potential to complete their current courses in the same university as compared to 64.7% of participants in the control group (strongly agreed = 39.8% and agreed = 24.9%) that had high potential to complete their current courses in the same university. In the experiment group, an average of 12.1% of participants (disagreed = 8.4% and strongly disagreed = 3.7%) had low potential to complete their current courses in the same university.

In the control group, an average of 29.1% of participants (disagreed = 20% and strongly disagreed = 9.1%) had low potential to complete their current courses in the same university. An average of 5.8% of participants in the experiment group was not sure whether they would complete their current courses in the same university. An average of 4.6% of participants in the control group were not sure whether they would complete their current courses in the same university.

An average of 1.1% of participants in the experiment group did not respond to whether they would complete their current courses in the same university. In the control group an average of 1.6% of participants in the control group did not respond to whether they would complete their current courses in the same university. This summary finding is presented in Figures 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.

Figure 4.2 presents percentage retention in the control group before psycho-education.

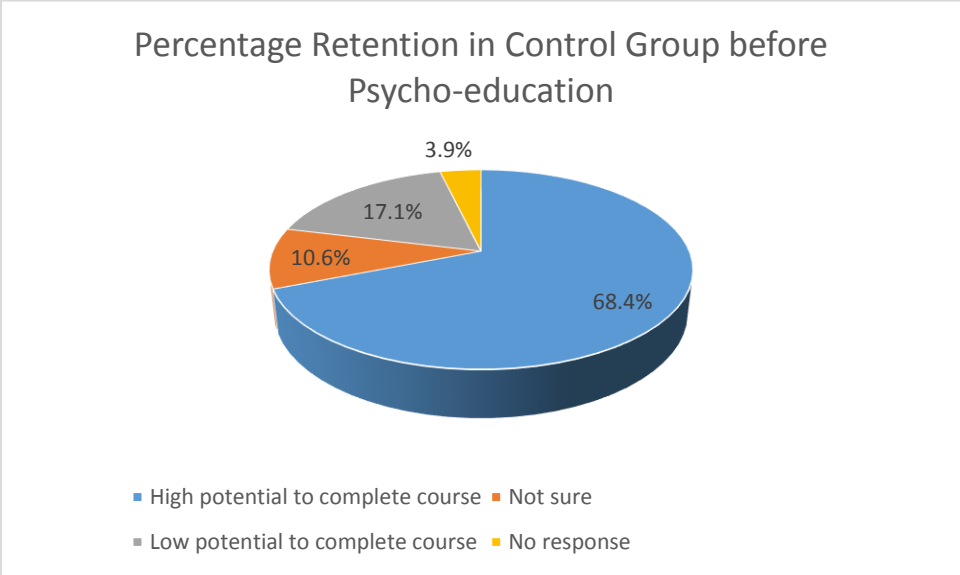

Figure 4.2: Retention Rate of Participants in the Control Group before Psycho-education (pre-test)

Figure 4.2 shows that 68.4% of the participants in the control group before psycho-education had high potential (high retention rate) to complete course, 17.1% had low potential to complete course, 10.6% were not sure of completing course while 3.9% had no response.

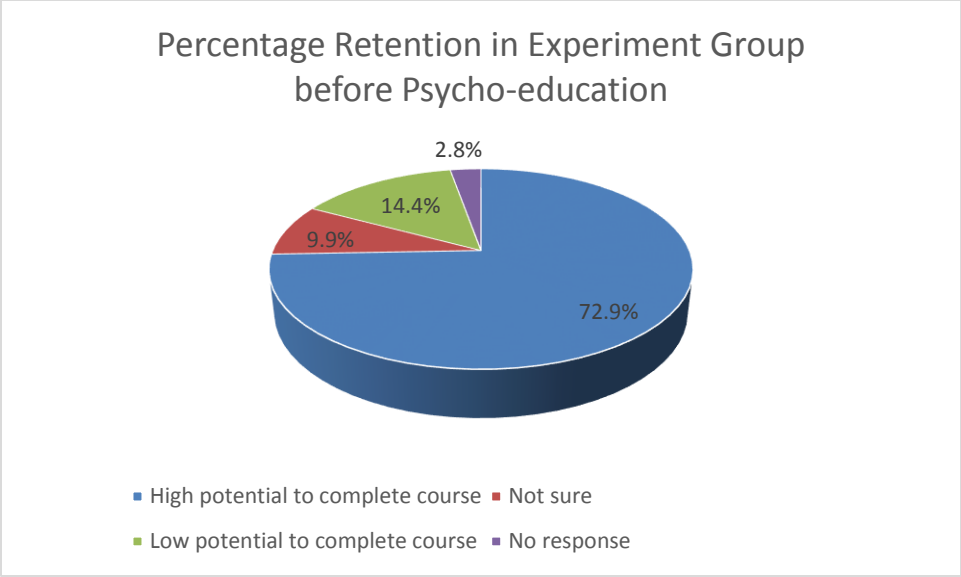

Figure 4.3: Retention Rate of Participants in the Experiment Group before Psycho-education (pre-test)

Figure 4.3 shows that 72.9% of the participants in the experiment group before psycho-education had high potential (high retention rate) to complete course, 14.4% had low potential to complete course, 9.9% were not sure of completing course while 2.8% had no response.

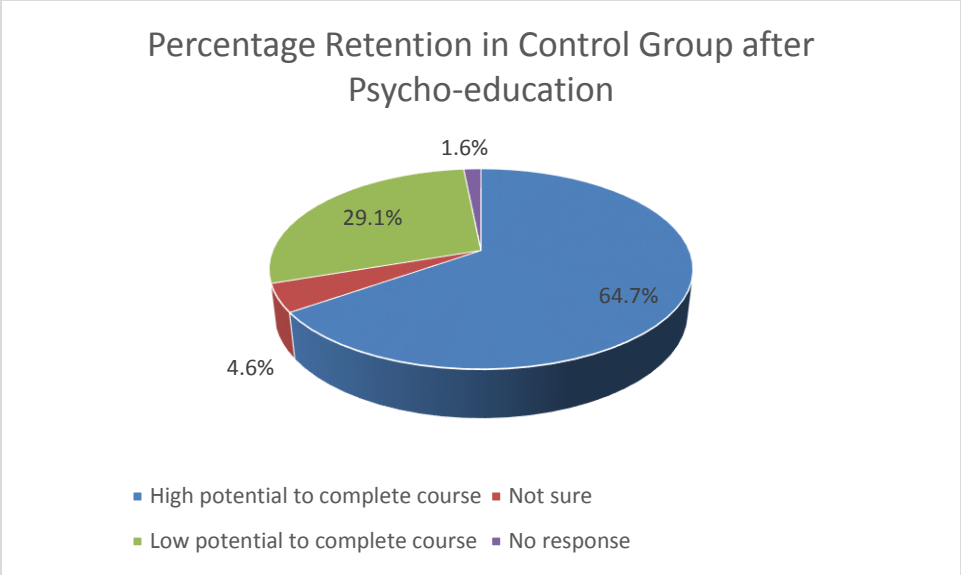

Figure 4.4: Retention Rate of Participants in the Control Group after Psycho-education (post-test)

Figure 4.4 shows that 64.7% of the participants in the control group after psycho-education had high potential (high retention rate) to complete course, 29.1% had low potential to complete course, 4.6% were not sure of completing course while 1.6% had no response.

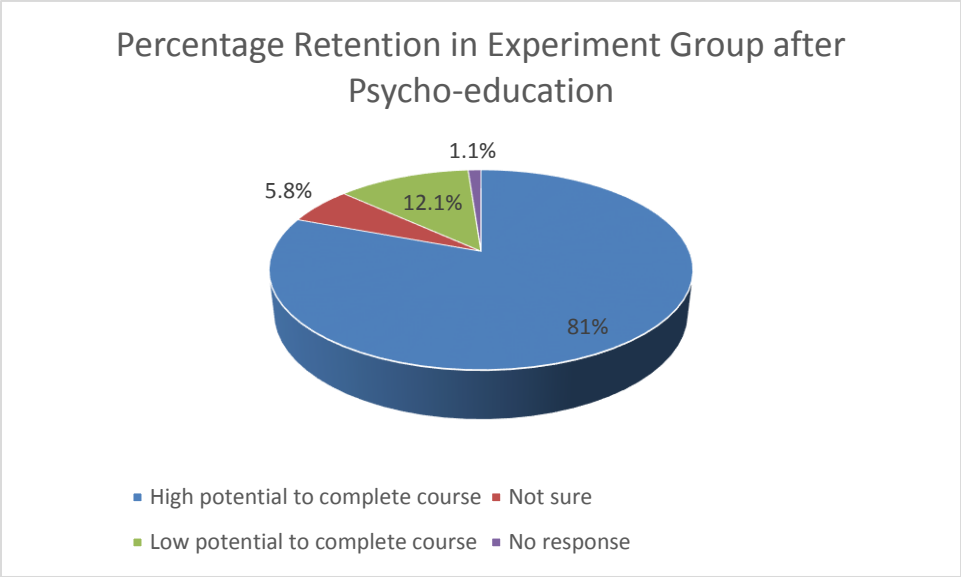

Figure 4.5: Retention Rate of Participants in the Experiment Group after Psycho-education (post-test)

Figure 4.5 shows that 81% of the participants in the experiment group after psycho-education had high potential (high retention rate) to complete course, 121% had low potential to complete course, 5.8% were not sure of completing course while 1.1% had no response.

The study compared pre-test results and post-test results. The finding indicated that students who went through the psycho-education programme in the experiment group had a higher retention rate compared to those in the control group who never went through the psycho-education programme. Counselling services enable students to acquire skills and knowledge that are invaluable in resolving personal issues which otherwise would affect their studies resulting to dissatisfaction with courses, transfer of courses, transfer to other universities, deferments, discontinuation, and drop out among others.

Skills learnt during the psycho-education programme appear to have enabled students in the experiment group to manage personal issues, thereby giving them the ability to plan their time facilitating concentration on their studies. Results from the qualitative research reinforced the findings. For instance, a participant said:

"…this psycho-education training has made me sharpen my reading skills …am now trying to manage my time well…." [Male student, 18 years]

Yet another participant observed that:

> "…. can solve problems more effectively…. I can think over issues that may likely make me drop from my studies critically…" [Female, student, 19 years]

As can be seen from the quote, psycho-education has the capability of enhancing study skills and also enable students to learn effective ways of solving problems as well as manage time. Effective time management and problem-solving enable them to positively cope with day-to-day challenges, hence reducing destructions that affect their life in the university negatively.

The findings of the study are in line with a study conducted in Malaysia on factors that contribute to students graduating on time in technical universities by Othman, Mohammed, Salley, Bakri and Fauzi, (2015). According to these authors, support from counsellors is an important factor that moderates retention and helps university students to gain study skills such as time management, which enables them to finish their courses in time. Similarly, Thamrin (2012), while studying factors that influence completion of a PhD programme in Australian universities, found that study skills such as time management, problem-solving skills are important in enhancing completion rate. The implication is that a deficit

of such skills compromise or delay completion. However, through counselling programmes such as psycho-education, instilling these skills can help students focus on their studies. According to Kader and Eissa (2015), time management intervention enhances such skills as goal setting, scheduling, prioritizing tasks, self- monitoring and problem-solving techniques, among others.

These are important aspects that make the student remain focused to complete their studies on time. Further effectiveness study skills enable students to work on their assignments and complete them on time. It also means that the students get enough time to study, therefore improving their academic performance, which boosts their self-esteem motivating them to work hard and complete on time. Well managed time, for instance, could allow students some reaction activities that would help revitalize their energy levels, making them concentrate on their studies.

The students in the experimental group also said they learnt problem-solving. A study conducted in the USA by Weaver (2018) suggests that problem-solving helps students identify, understand and be specific about the problem they have. Consequently, they get to know how to be logical, analytical, take action and select the best alternatives using critical and creative thinking about their issues and making proper decisions. The findings are therefore indicative that psycho-education can be a forum through which students can be empowered to enhance retention rate.

From a general perspective, psycho-education emphasizes on knowledge and skill training that could be generalized in addressing life challenges. According to Brown (2004), psycho-education contributes significantly to group counselling and to group learning.

Group counselling has several important healing/curative factors such as information sharing and the benefit accrued from the feedback that members give and receive from each other Corey, (2011). As a result, levels of self-esteem of students learning in groups is raised because they realise they are not alone in their academic journey from fellow group members that form a strong supportive unit and this can facilitate learning (Hajloo, 2014). For example, a participant had this to say;

> "…. During psycho-education programme …. I learnt how to deal with the problems I face day to day…. that bodies like CDF, HELB, …. exist to give financial support…Am motivated to go on trying and not drop out of school…" [Male Student, 21 years].

As can be seen from the quote the participants' issues of economic resources are key in retention, but through psycho-education students can get information that can help them know where to seek assistance. Psycho-education imparted skills on financial management to help students understand the importance of living within their means instead of comparing themselves with others. Murray (2014) found that financial problems are one of the factors that contribute to stress among university students. Sabri, et al. (2008) suggests that psycho-education is important towards helping students get information on financial management. It is therefore not surprising that the experimental group that went through psycho-education perceive to have received useful help that could enhance retention.

Having looked at descriptive statistics employed in this objective, a two-way ANOVA was further used to test whether the differences between the experiment group and control group were statistically significant. A null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between counselling services and the retention rates of

undergraduate students in universities in Kenya was put to a test and results are represented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: ANOVA for Counselling Services and Retention Rate

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.091	1	1.091	4.470	.037
Within Groups	24.157	99	.244		
Total	25.248	100			

N = 100; Group df = 1; Sample size df = 99; $\alpha = .05$; $F = 4.470$; p = .037; critical $F = 3.94$

Table 4.12 shows that null hypothesis being tested is rejected because the calculated $F(1,99) = 4.470$, at p = .037 is greater than critical $F(1,99) = 3.94$. The relationship is significant. The null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between psychoeducation counselling and retention rates of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya is rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis means that counselling services influence student retention rate in universities in Kenya.

The finding supports the common belief that counselling enables students to complete studies. This finding agrees with findings by Lotkowski, Robbins and Noeth (2004) who found that academically focused psycho-education programmes including factors such as academic self-confidence, achievement, motivation, goals commitment, social support and involvement contributes to increased retention rates in American universities.

The two-way ANOVA was used in this study to help in understanding the relationships withing the control and experimental group, answer the study question in order to assit in making recommendations for the study (Patel,2015). Analyses indicate that

psychoeducation which is a key apprach widely used in empowering individuals in counselling process, influences students' retention rate in university in that students who went through psycho-education showed a low potential of dropping out than those who did not. This revelation is in agreement with Odes, Michelson, Locke, Oslon and Lee (2009) who found that in American universities, college freshmen retention significantly improved because of counselling intervention.

These findings reinforce Binnett (2003) who stressed students' characteristics as the main determinant factor of a student stay in university and found that students drop out of college because of factors outside the institutional control notably, change of career goals and negative attitude towards the institution. Although these factors were not tested because they were beyond the scope of this study, it is possible that they could be present among medical students at the Kenyan Universities therefore contributing to their poor retention. Psycho-education impacted skills on positive attitude towards academic performance and retention rate. Students with a positive attitude will have the ability to cope with the environment within their institution and focus their career goals.

According to the common factors theory, (Grencavage, & Norcross, 1990) institutional goals can best be achieved if clients' needs (a main factor in the theory) are factored in the institutional strategy. Therefore, if the university counselling factors the students' psychological needs in their counselling programme they will not only attract the students to utilize the services but will also empower students with abilities to take charge of their own academic lives. Each institution has a goal of maintaining its clientele and attracting

more students. Universities therefore could prevent student dropout and transfers to other institutions through psycho-education.

In summary, counselling is an important intervention in boosting student retention in university. It helps students to resolve psychosocial issues which may otherwise derail their academic progression in university thereby resulting in drop outs, prolonged stays, course transfers or institutional transfers. The psycho-education programme in this study reduced the participants' potential prospect of dropping out as earlier. Indeed, (Griffith Quality, Planning and Statistics (2015) reported that student dropout rate in Australia reduced because of counselling. In the study, counselling helped students to sort out personal difficulties such as family and finances. The psycho-education programme also instilled in participants a sense of institutional belonging thereby increasing retention prospects as found out in another study by Han, Farrugia and Moss (2017), where students' feelings of belongingness increased their retention in college. It is therefore possible to argue that counselling service could enhance retention rates

4.3.3 Effectiveness of Counselling Services and Students' Academic Performance

The third objective of the study was to find out the effectiveness of counselling services in enhancing students' academic performance in universities in Kenya. Counselling is supposed to enable students to solve psycho-social issues that affect their academic performance. The study employed a quasi-experimental design to test this objective. Two groups comprising of an experimental group and a control group were used. The end of first-semester results for students in the two groups was presumed to be pre-test results while the end of semester two results was assumed to be post-test results. The differences

occasioned by comparing the two tests formed the basis of academic performance which was either high or low. The control group, while closely monitoring their performance, engaged in normal academic activities. The researcher took the experimental group through twelve sessions of psycho-education during their first year second semester. Students in the experimental group also went through 12 sessions of study skills, namely: reading skills, problem-solving, creative thinking, decision-making skills, time management, stress management, motivation, and attitude. These skills were essential in helping students solve personal issues that affect their studies and be able to focus on their studies hence improving their academic performance.

On the other hand, the researcher monitored the academic performance of the students in the control group and observed them go through regular schooling, and attend classes for twelve weeks. Students from the two groups were allowed to sit for the end of semester two examinations, and their academic performance was measured by finding the difference in marks scored in semester one examinations and semester two examinations. The findings are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Student Group and Academic Performance

			Performance index		Total
			Improved Academic Performance	Unimproved Academic Performance	
Student group	Experimental Group	Count	33	15	48
		% within Student group	68.8%	31.2%	100.0%
	Control Group	Count	24	26	50
		% within Student group	48.0%	52.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	57	41	98
		% within Student group	58.2%	41.8%	100.0%

Table 4.13 shows that within the experimental group (students treated to psycho-education counselling services), 68.8% had improved academic performance and 31.2% had a drop in their academic performance. From the table, 48% within the control group had improved academic performance and 52% had a drop in their academic performance. This finding shows that psycho-education is effectiveness because students who went through the programme improved in academic performance than students in the control group.

The study found that psycho education played an important role in helping students to improve academic performance. However, there was need to test if the academic differences between the experiment group and the control group was statistically significant. A two-way ANOVA was used to test whether there is a statistically significant relationship between counselling services and academic performance. Results are represented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: ANOVA for Counselling Services and Academic Performance

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.083	1	1.083	4.441	.038
Within Groups	23.407	96	.244		
Total	24.490	97			

N = 100; Group df = 1; Sample size df = 96; $\alpha = .05$; $F = 4.441$; p = .038; critical $F = 3.94$

Table 4.14 shows that the calculated F (1,96) = 4.441, at p = .038 is greater than critical F (1, 96) = 3.94. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between counselling services and academic performance of undergraduate students in universities in Kenya is rejected. The test concludes that counselling services influence academic performance and has proven that students who underwent psycho-

education counselling in this study improved in their academic performance than those who did not participated in the psycho-education programme. Through psycho-education, students were equiped with study skills that enhanced their academic performance.

This finding is consistent with a study in USA that examined the contribution of counselling intervention in college academic performance and found that there was a statistically significant relationship between the two in that students who sought counselling performed academically better than those who did not (Odes, Michelson, Locke, Oslon, & Lee, 2009). This finding shows that students can be assisted through psycho-education. Students acquired skills that helped them to have a positive attitude towards studying, time management, motivation, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and stress management which enabled them to have concentration on studies leading to improved academic performance. McGillivray and Pidgeon (2015) found that decreasing resilience among university students in Australia was contributing to poor grades and students who sought counselling improved their grades.

Counselling services are effectiveness in triggering students' motivation to work harder in their studies because they enable the students become aware of factors which distract them from their studies more so psychosocial, cognitive and demographic issues (Kyalo, & Chumba, 2011). The psycho-education programme in this study further enhanced students' social and academic adjustment in a new environment in the university through study skills and relationship skills. Kyalo and Chumba (2011) found that students who sought counselling services on how to manage interpersonal relationships and how to acquire a positive attitude towards academic programme ended up performing better in their studies

than those who did not because they were able to acquire adjustment skills to personal issues and to relate with their peers and faculty in a healthier way. Accordingly, counselling helps in easing personal difficulties thereby facilitating adjustment (Renuka, Devaki, Madhavan, & Saikumar, 2013).

From a focused group discussion with student participants, three themes emerged in regard to students' needs: psychosocial issues, time management and choice of career programme. The first theme to emerge from the focus group discussion was relationship issues. The participants were in agreement that they have social issues that interfere with their studies. Most of these issues revolve around relationships. A participant remarked the following:

> "…. I never thought I will get mixed up in relationship issues…through the psycho-education programme I have realised that I must focus more on my studies than friends…." [Female student, 20 years]

As can be seen from the quote, there are many factors that can interfere with academic performance. Issues of relationship can derail students from concentration on their studies. In the developmental theories, students are at the stage of young adults in which both career and relationship are important milestones. Therefore, their attention and concentration could be more on relationships than academic affairs. This remark is in agreement with findings in South Africa where Malefo (2000) found that psycho-social issues based on the historical background of students such as romantic relationships and family issues influence their concentration in class during learning. For instance, a student said:

> "…my boyfriend was employed and I became pregnant but when I went to visit him I found he had a wife and two children…I got downcast and wanted to abort the pregnancy…I became very confused and my grades dropped and I had problems with my parents, I suffered low self-esteem…" [Female student, 22 years]

Another student participant narrated how her friend got pregnant:

> "…she continued but now she left…took a study leave…she has not come back yet…she said she will come back…" [Female student, 18 years]

In this finding, students who are involved in romantic relationships have mixed emotions such as anger, sadness, and at times feelings of joy, and excitement among others which end up taking much of their time and if the issues remain addressed might make students unable to adequately concentrate in their studies and thereby trigger dropping out. Psycho-education programme goals are expected to help students address issues that arise from such imbalanced emotions and develop coping skills to help them improve their academic performance.

The second theme to emerge was time management. Effectiveness time management enhances academic performance. Students who have poor time management skills end up performing poorly in academics because they end procrastinating and not setting smart goals while others find life in the university robust thus making them loose track of time. Majority of students who seek counselling want to know how to manage their time well and gain focus on their studies. They want to know how to balance time between non-academic and academic activities. Their conceptualization of time and activities is lost and this leads to the last minute rush resulting to poor performance. Psycho-education helped the students gain skills on time-management for better academic performance. As noted by a participant:

> "… most of the time you feel so pressurized… feel like you still have a lot to do and yet you have very little time…. [Male student, 19 years]

As per Aliwagait, et al. (2014) students' poor time management skills negatively affect academic performance and therefore if students misuse their time while in college, their

grades may not be good as found out by Broadbent (2017) that time management skills give correct predictions on grades realized after exams. The main challenge to academic performance is poor time management by the students. They end up spending most of their time in non-academic activities such as hanging out with friends. They only come to realize that there is not much time left when confronted with continuous assessment tests and end of semester examinations. Therefore, the little time left for academic activities such as revision, and discussion groups cannot be enough to enable some of these students perform well academically.

This finding reinforces Olowookere, et al. (2015) who found that time management practices influence students' character development such as idleness, laziness, which in turn determines academic performance. A student said:

> "….you need to set goals …you take it step by step and form a pattern on how to manage time and do things…and you generate a timetable…find out what works for you…find students for study group….you help others and they help you…if you fail to belong to a study group in first year, you will have problems….those who read widely release information and if you don't seem to follow or you make a mistake you feel left out or like you are in the wrong group of more focused students…if you don't understand, some will really take time and explain to you…first year is too much and time management is of great essence.." [Female student, 20 years]

Students who are able to set realistic goals perform better in their academic work because they are able to remain focused on their studies and do not waste time in non- academic activities. Yusuf (2018) found that students who set individual goals and designed a study plan significantly improved their academic performance because they were able to focus better on their studies. Likewise, students who engage in study groups learning perform better academically because they acquire skills such as positive attitude about learning through sharing knowledge and making study more interactive and interesting.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (2014) suggests that students who study in groups are able to collaborate more hence gaining knowledge, retaining what they study, gaining ability to solve problems, skills of critical thinking and reasoning. This enhances their academic performance. However, from the foregoing quote from a student participant those who fail to join groups might experience more problems because they will not be able to catch and compete favorably with those participating in groups. This is in agreement with Johnson Johnson and Smith (2014) who posits that study groups can help students gain skills to tackle more complex problems than individuals.

The findings as supported by literature underscores the personal agency which is a key factor in academic performance. As can be seen from the quote and supported by literature, students need to take initiative. The need to take personal responsibility in self-improvement is emphasized in humanistic theories of counselling. Gestalt psychologists for example aver that taking personal responsibility is crucial in attainment of personal goals (Nelson-Jones, 2015). Similarly, Carl Rogers in his person centred theory emphasis organismic value process which means the importance of self-values and taking charge of one's life. The findings are also in line with the self-determination theory that informed this study. In essence the way some students conduct their affairs might affect their academic performance. For example, a participant had this to say:

> "…I always come to university by 7.00am…. I have a habit of making calls and chatting with my friends on Facebook only to realise that I am late for class…I find the lecture has already started and students are busy taking notes…. most times I am unable to hand in my assignments in time…this has made me not to get good grades…it is all my fault…." [Male student, 19 years]

The foregoing quote suggests some of the struggles university students face that affect their academic performance. Sometimes students face a lot of time robbers' technology such as use of mobile phones being one of them. They spend productive time on internet chatting with friends and abandon class lectures and assignments thus affecting their overall academic performance. Hussain and Sultan (2010) found that procrastination contributes to poor reading habits, being anxious during exams, last minute clamming, and submitting assignments leading to being anxious during exams. These factors may lead to poor academic performance. Psycho-education counselling was meant to equip students with time management skills and good study habits of making accurate judgments to enhance their academic performance.

The third theme that emerged from the focus group discussion is choice of career programmes. The discussion revealed that students' poor academic performance was caused by lack of interest in studying as a result of poor choice of career programmes they were enrolled. A participant noted:

> "…….I feel motivated…my interest in my course has tremendously gone up…. the motivation session helped me a lot…I try to participate in class than before…." [Male student, 22 years]

These finding demonstrates the relevance of career counselling in motivating students to perform better academically as found out by Wibrowski, Mathews and Kitsantas (2016). The study revealed that students who enrolled in the skills learning support programme (career counselling programme) in the USA ended up achieving higher academic grades than students who did not enroll in the programme. This is because they are motivated to study during the skills learning programme. Motivated students are enthusiastic and curious towards their studies and end up performing better academically. Some parents

direct their children to do courses which are marketable without taking into consideration their children's passion. A student participant collaborated with this view:

> "….in my group of friends ….one dropped out…. His parents had forced him to take a medical course so that he could take up their family business……He could not cope with the pressure…." [Male student, 18 years].

In summary, psycho-education counselling can be employed to help students to have improved academic performance. The selected topics benefitted the experimental group in that they were equipped with skills, abilities, and knowledge that positively enhanced their academic performance. These topics included Study skills: time management, motivation, problem solving, creative thinking, attitude, stress management and career planning. Other topics were: social relationships, financial management, drug and substance abuse and building lasting habits. All these topics were selected to meet the academic needs of the university students.

4.3.4 Counselling Challenges Experienced in Universities in Kenya

Objective four sought to find out challenges experienced in offering counselling in universities in Kenya. Results on challenges experienced in the provision of counselling services from the participants are shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Counselling Challenges

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing		**Total**	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	**N**	**%**
Students' responses														
Shortage of enough counselling materials	6	11.8	17	33.3	5	9.8	16	31.4	7	13.7	0	0	**51**	**100**
Lack of enough counselling staff.	5	9.8	11	21.6	10	19.6	16	31.4	8	15.7	1	2	**51**	**100**
Increased student enrolment.	11	21.6	14	27.5	11	21.6	12	23.5	1	2	2	3.9	**51**	**100**
I have a negative attitude towards seeking counselling help.	5	9.8	8	15.7	3	5.9	15	29.4	20	39.2	0	0	**51**	**100**
Sometimes influences from my peers prevent me from seeking counselling at the university.	7	13.7	13	25.5	0	0	16	31.4	15	29.4	0	0	**51**	**100**
Average	**6.8**	**13.3**	**12.6**	**24.7**	**7.3**	**14.2**	**15.0**	**29.4**	**10.2**	**20.0**	**1.5**	**3.0**		
Counsellors responses														
Shortage of enough counselling materials	1	16.7	3	50	0	0	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	**6**	**100**
Lack of enough counselling staff.	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.7	0	0	0	0	1	16.7	**6**	**100**
Increased student enrolment.	3	50	1	16.7	0	0	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0	**6**	**100**
I have a negative attitude towards seeking counselling help.	4	66.7	0	0	1	16.7	0	0	1	16.7	0	0	**6**	**100**
Sometimes influences from my peers prevent me from seeking counselling at the university.	1	16.7	3	50	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0	0	0	**6**	**100**
Average	**2.2**	**36.7**	**1.8**	**30.0**	**0.6**	**10.0**	**0.8**	**13.3**	**0.4**	**6.7**	**0.2**	**3.3**		

Table 4.15 shows participants' responses to challenges facing counselling services in selected universities in Kenya. Regarding shortage of counselling materials, 45.1% (strongly agree = 11.8% and agree = 33.3%), of the students were in agreement, 9.8% were not sure and 45.1% (disagree =31.4% and strongly disagree = 13.7%). Whether there is lack of enough counselling staff 9.8% strongly agreed, 21.16% agreed, 19.6% not sure, 31.4% disagreed, 15.7% strongly disagreed and 2% did not respond. About increased student enrolment 21.6% strongly agreed, 27.5% agreed, 21.6% not sure, 23.5% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed and 3.9% did not respond. From the study, students who indicated negative attitude towards seeking counselling help, 9.8% strongly agreed, 15.7% agreed, 5.9% not sure, 29.4% disagreed, and 39.2% strongly disagreed. In relation to peer influence, 13.7% strongly agreed, 25.5% agreed, 31.4% disagreed, and 29.4% strongly disagreed. However, counsellors who participated in the study differed with students in their opinions regarding challenges facing counselling services.

From these findings, majority of students who went through psycho-education indicated that counselling materials are adequate. University counsellors agreed with the views of the student participants:

> "…. counselling materials is not a problem, however equipment's like computers and cameras are inadequate …." [Male counsellor, 52 years].

When counselling materials such as pens, charts, files, client register for appointment booking, counselling forms to aid student intake, consent, referrals, and contract forms make contracting and follow up easier for the counsellor and also give them confidence to attend to their clients after they consent and throughout the counselling process. This will

in turn have a negative implication on the delivery of counselling services. This finding resonates with Lemesa (2018) that listed unavailability of material resources as a major challenge facing counselling services in universities. Inadequate counselling equipment's might derail counsellors' performance in that they are not able to effectivenessly carry out some work such as typing and printing reports that might be required in cases of referral and clients' recommendation that may be useful information in advising institutions where need be.

Counsellors who participated in the focus group indicated that there were inadequate counselling staffs to handle the large number of students seeking help. This finding is consistent with Stallman (2012) that universities in Australia have a serious challenge of inadequate counselling staff and as a result, counsellors experience frequent episodes of burnout. A counsellor participant said:

> "…sometimes I work for long hours …I start seeing clients as early as 8:00am and finish late in the evening…. I have little breaks in between sessions…. I Am overwhelmed…" [Female counsellor, 43 years]

This shows that university counsellors' work for long hours to handle the large number of students who seek counselling services that might affect the delivery of counselling services in universities. Songok, Yungungu and Mulinge (2013) found that shortage of counselling staffs hinders effectiveness counselling in learning institutions in Kenya. The results from students' participants reveal that student enrolment poses less challenge to existing counselling services. The counsellors who participated in the study indicated that increased student enrolment poses a challenge to counselling service.

A counsellor participant said that:

> "…as the number of students' enrolment increases, the students who enroll for counselling also increases…. on the other hand, you find that counsellors are not increasing to deal with these rising numbers of students…. I get drained…." [Female counsellor, 38, years]

When a counsellor is psychologically drained, issues of burnout may affect performance. Similarly, Kiarie, Sirera and Mwenje (2011) observe that many counsellors in Kenyan education system suffer burnout which is detrimental to the services given. For example, a counsellor who experiences burnout manifests depersonalization which has the capacity to derail the counsellor's empathic qualities thus affecting counselling outcome. In general job stress could lead to burnout that incapacitates counsellors. Counsellors who do not develop burnout are more productive that those who suffer burnout.

From another perspective counsellor could reduce experience of burnout if they adopted psychoeducation approach. Psycho-education counselling is effectiveness because it handles a large number of students and also addresses a range of topical issues that are relevant to the academic need of the students. Simpson and Ferguson (2014) suggests that increased student enrolment in universities in Britain has increasingly asserted pressure on university counselling support services because with the increased number of students, the ratio of students with issues goes up. The increased student enrolment leads to arbitrary increased psycho-social issues among the students thereby increasing pressure on counselling services.

Results from students' participants' reveal that attitudes towards seeking counselling help demonstrates mixed results. A student had this to say

> "….as far as my issues are addressed…. I will see a counsellor…." [female student, 19 years].

While another student remarked:

> "…. I have had reservations about seeking counselling before this encounter…. I always thought that counselling is for those with serious challenging which I do not have…. but I have really benefitted from the psycho-education…" [Male student, 18 years]

As can be seen students have mixed feelings about counselling services. While feels that the end result is the motivating factor, the other has reservations about the process. The results were corroborated by the counsellors who had this to say:

> "…sometimes the students have attitude towards counsellors…. they want to be attended by a counsellor of their choice and sometimes one from their faith…." [Male student, 20 years].

The above quotes from university students shows that students sometimes do not show negative attitude towards seeking counselling help. Counsellors the other hand agree and said that sometimes students show negative attitude towards seeking counselling help. Negative attitude affects counselling effectiveness in that the client will not register expected growth. Kirimi (2011) found that students' attitudes towards counselling in institutions of higher learning in Kenya have made counselling ineffectiveness. Positive attitudes towards counselling influence motivation to seek help. The implication is that personal characteristics, attitudes and beliefs heavily influence the health seeking practice. This is in line with common factor theory that suggest that personal factors of clients are important for effectiveness counsellors. Notably, however through psycho education this issues can be resolved.

The study reveals that influences from peer pressure could be an issue that influences seeking counselling help. For example, a student remarked:

> "…my friends do not seem to understand how I am attending this psycho-education programme…. but I will continue participating

> regardless…it is me who knows how am benefiting…I have gained a lot" [Male student, 23 years]

As can be seen from the quote, the friends seem wonder why one would attend psychoeducation. This could mean that among the friends could be dissenting voices that could easily discourage those with weak personality to seek the services. As said in the quote the students understand the benefits, but those who are yet to understand the benefits could be derailed.

The student's views are corroborated by the counsellor participant who said that peer pressure poses a challenge to students seeking counselling help. A counsellor participant remarked that:

> "…. now why are you going to see a counsellor and you can counsel yourself…. I thought counselling is for the people with serious problems …and you are not sick…" [Female counsellor, 45 years]

Some students fail to seek counselling because of the opinions held by their friends about counselling. This is collaborated by Ambayo and Ngumi (2016) who posit that peer pressure influences student's willingness to seek counselling resulting in poor academic performance however the peers could not influence student's social and emotional behavior. Psycho-education was meant to equip students with skills, abilities and knowledge important in helping in their day to day life. This will in turn help them to focus on their academic performance and retention rate.

In summary, psycho-education might help to address some of the challenges facing the counselling services in the universities like negative attitude towards seeking counselling help, and influence from peers against seeking counselling help. Even though psycho-education can deal with these issues, it is notable that some challenges such as shortage of

enough counselling materials, lack of enough counselling staff to meet the increased student enrolment can best be addressed by the university management.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study was set out to investigate the effectivenesss of counselling services in universities in Kenya in enhancing students' academic performance and retention rate. This chapter presents summary of the findings of the study based on the objectives, conclusions and recommendations of the findings, implications of the study, strengths and limitations of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This study discusses the summary of the findings as per the research.

5.2.1 Status of Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya

In this study, it was crucial to establish counselling status under which universities in Kenya offer counselling services. These conditions included furnishings and comfort of available counselling rooms, the physical location of counselling rooms in regards to privacy and confidentiality of the counselling process, and finally sufficiency of space in the counselling rooms in relation to the provision of personal space of both client and counsellor during counselling. Establishing the status of the counselling was vital, as it is fundamental in creating a physical context in which counselling takes place in universities. It is such conditions that attract students to seek counselling help. The status of university counselling is essential because it guarantees feelings of safety and confidentiality of the information shared during counselling. Kenya was Adequately favourable.

The study found that counselling status in universities created a conducive environment for the provision of counselling services for the students. This state is because of the availability of counselling rooms. The study established that counselling rooms were adequate in universities.

The counselling rooms had adequate space, thereby creating feelings of comfort and a sense of personal space during counselling. The counselling rooms were adequately furnished. Counselling rooms had basic facilities such as furniture and filing cabinets. They were privately located within universities where students had access, thus boosting confidentiality of the services offered within the centres.

The study elucidated that counsellors in counselling centres in the selected universities were professionals. The study revealed that all counsellors had a minimum degree level of training in counselling psychology. They also had mastery of theoretical application in counselling.

5.2.2 The extent to which Counselling Services in Universities in Kenya influences Students' Retention Rate

It was important to find out the rate of retention among students in universities in Kenya, and establish reasons that make them drop out of the university, transfer to other courses or move to other universities. The findings will aid in determining ways of addressing these issues and focus on preventing future dropouts or transfers. Once students enrol for courses at university, there is a clear understanding that the courses are time-bound. Therefore, the universities expected students to complete their courses on time to avoid incurring extra costs.

Completing programmes on time enables universities to free up facilities to benefit potential students lined up for enrolment. The students in the universities based their retention rate on the need to transfer to other courses, discontinuation from study or transfer to another institution. The study found that counselling services in universities significantly influence retention rates of students. Students who attend counselling gain important skills such as study skills, time management skills, problem-solving skills, and creative and critical thinking skills. Such capabilities could influence them in making decisions concerning transferring to other courses, discontinuing studies or relocating to other institutions.

5.2.3 Effectiveness of Counselling Services in Enhancing Students' Academic Performance in Universities in Kenya

Personal issues, if not resolved, may end up affecting students' academic performance negatively. Therefore, counselling in universities is modelled to help students address and manage personal issues that may affect their academic performance. Counselling services aim to make students redirect focus to studies resulting in improved academic performance. In counselling, the realization of students' attention to academics is through acquiring study skills, namely: reading skills, problem-solving, creative thinking, time management, stress management, motivation, and attitude change.

The main finding is that counselling services influence students' academic performance. Students who underwent psycho-education counselling had positive academic improvement in semester two examinations compared to first semester examinations. Students in the control group who did not undergo psycho-education

counselling during the second semester had mixed deviations in their second-semester examinations. The finding shows the benefits that counselling services have on students' academic performance.

Counselling services enabled students to conceptualize time and activities through time management skills. The study found that students' lack of interest in studying emanated from a poor choice of career programmes. Students who are unsuccessful in changing courses lack interest in their initial course and end up achieving low grades, academically.

5.2.4 Challenges Experienced in Offering Counselling in Universities in Kenya

In this study, the aim of counselling services in universities was to enhance student retention rates and improve students' academic performance. During the research, various challenges arose that threatened counselling services' effectiveness in increasing student retention and improving academic achievement. The basis of these challenges is counselling materials, the counselling staff, student enrolment, student attitude towards counselling, and peer influence. Consequently, universities were unable to achieve high student retention rates, and academic performance continued to deteriorate.

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, the study found that the status of university counselling services was adequately favorable. It established that there were adequate furnishing and comfortability of counselling rooms. The rooms' locations ensured privacy, security, and confidentiality of student issues. The study found that students who went through psycho-education in the experimental group had a higher retention rate than those in the control group and who never went through the psycho-education counselling. Their likelihood of

completing their courses in time, not transferring courses, and universities, was higher than students who did not go through the psycho-education counselling.

Psycho-education counselling services enabled the students to acquire skills and knowledge invaluable in resolving personal issues that otherwise would affect their studies, resulting in dissatisfaction with courses, transfer of courses, transfer to other universities, deferments, discontinuation, and drop out among others. In a nutshell, counselling can equip students with skills and knowledge that would help improve retention rate at the same time help in improving academic performance.

Notably, however, counselling at the university is challenged by many factors that hinder the optimization of offering services. The high enrolment rates vis-à-vis shortage of staff coupled with limited materials that facilitate counselling acts as a barrier towards counselling outcome. Besides, students' negative attitude towards counselling services coupled with peer pressure works against the help-seeking behavior of students. Therefore, there is a need to address these challenges to increase access to counselling services to all students who want the services. Addressing the challenges will enable the universities to address the retention rates and academic performance of the students.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

This study based the recommendations on the findings of the research. During the psycho-education counselling, course difficulty and lack of interest in the course emerged among the factors affecting retention at university. There is a need for the university administration to consider psycho-education counselling as part of their programmes to boost retention and academic performance for their students.

The psycho-education counselling programme in this study enabled students to acquire knowledge and skills such as problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, time management, decision-making, and motivation that helped them perform better in their studies and remain in the university. There is a need to integrate these skills into counselling programmes offered by universities.

The study found the status of counselling services to be adequately favourable such as counselling rooms, necessary facilities, location, and accessibility. However, it recommends that university administrations equip counselling offices with more equipment and modern devices such as computers, cameras, and recording tools and software.

This study revealed challenges facing counselling service in universities, the major one being inadequate counsellors. This study hence recommends that the universities employ an adequate number of counsellors to assist the students.

5.5 Implications of the Findings of this Study

Findings of this study have the following implications.

5.5.1. Implications for Methodology

The participants' responses were significant since the quasi-experimental design never created an artificial research environment, as is the case with true experimental designs where a laboratory acts as an artificial research environment. Secondly, the researcher subjected the results generated from the participants to both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. For example, pre-test and post-test data on retention and academic

performance were subjected to a Two-way ANOVA analysis to ascertain if there were significant differences between them.

Although the design may have failed to control some pre-existing conditions in the participants such as financial constraints and sickness, which could have contributed to their poor academic performance and dropout, the embedment of the qualitative aspect was employed, which allowed triangulation of the results hence strengthening the results.

5.5.2 Implications for Policy and Practice

Academic performance among undergraduate students in universities in Kenya remains the core mission in enhancing teaching and research. As a mission, successful teaching is gauged through the academic performance of students at the end of each semester. University senates keenly monitor the performance of students and their retention; it is crucial to research ways to improve academic performance and retention.

The results revealed that psycho-education counselling offered in counselling positively influenced the academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in the universities selected for the study. It is against this background that makes this study viable. Based on this finding, University Senates should put in place effectiveness counselling programmes and allocate adequate resources in terms of funding and staffing.

Findings from this study show that course difficulty affects students' retention and academic performance. Therefore, university administrators need to emphasize career counselling aspects within the few weeks of students' enrolment. The universities need to employ more counsellors to work in the counselling centers, thereby lessening the

workload of existing counsellors to enable them to become more productive. The universities' managements need to review challenges affecting counselling that emerged in this study and make efforts to address them to have the centers operate effectively.

In conclusion, universities should ensure that they recruit well-trained counsellors to address students' issues competently, as demonstrated by those counsellors who took students through psycho-education. It is essential to recognize the experimental group which went through psycho-education and registered an improvement in their academic performance. Notably, students who require individual counselling may need more attention; hence university Senates need to employ more counsellors to cope with this demand. Therefore, it reflects the realistic university environment where counselling takes place.

5.5.3 Implications for Theories

The common factors theory informed this study by Greencavage and Norcross (1990) and the self-determination theory by Ryan and Deci (2000). The common factors theory proposed that there are common factors in counseling that determine the effectiveness of psychological treatment. Among these common factors, clients' characteristics, counsellors' characteristics, and the counselling context. Besides, counsellors' characteristics that emerged during the psycho-education programme were unconditional positive regard, counsellor's biasness towards cultural issues of clients, mastery of communication skills, and counsellors' warmth.

These counsellor characteristics played a vital role during the psycho-education programme, which resulted in students improving their academic performance. It also

emerged during the study that students need to enhance characteristics such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness that will, consequently, make them more receptive and eager to participate during the psycho-education sessions.

Student characteristics such as hope for improvement and positive expectations helped the students to understand themselves. They equipped them with skills that enabled them to address the daily challenges that they faced. These characteristics enabled the students to improve their academic performance and retention.

The counselling centres have adequate resources such as furniture. The common factors theory stresses the importance of a counselling context in realizing the effective psychological outcome. The setting should be ideal to ensure a relaxing and conducive environment where the counsellor and clients struck resonance and understanding during the interaction. A conducive environment will ensure trust, privacy, and above all, confidentiality.

The self-determination theory stresses that human nature shows persistent positive features that enhance inherent growth tendencies through repeated effort, urgency, and commitment in life. During the psycho-education programme, students demonstrated great effort, urgency, and commitment during the counselling sessions. Their effort and dedication led to the anticipated counselling outcome, which was to show improved academic performance among the counselled students. In this case, the researcher argues alongside other researchers who have postulated the importance of self-determination. The study recommends the application of theories that emphasize empowerment to help students take charge of their academic lives based on well-informed choices.

5.5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

The findings of this study have unearthed knowledge gaps, which requires further studies. This study has hence identified the following areas for further studies:

1. The researcher conducted this study in public or government-sponsored universities in Kenya. The private universities might perhaps be facing different difficulties concerning student academic performance and retention. It is crucial to conduct a similar study in private universities in the country.

   This study established the effectiveness of counselling services in universities. There could be a need for these services in other levels of education in the country. It is advisable to conduct studies of this nature at different levels of education in the country.

3. The study focused on psycho-educational counselling services only. Other forms of counselling could be beneficial to students and the university management in general. Similar studies could be conducted in favour of other counselling forms at different levels of education in the country.

REFERENCES

Agboola, B. M., Adeyemi , J. K., & Ogbodo, C. M. (2014). Academic Achievement and Admission policy as Correlate of Student retention in Nigerian Federal Universities. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 5 (2), 101-108.

Ajowi, J. O., & Simatwa, E. M. (2010). The Role of Guidance and Counselling in Promoting Student Discipline in Secondary Schools in Kenya:A Case of Kisumu District. *Educational Research and Review*, *5*, 263-272.

Al-Osail, A. M., Al-Sheikh, M. H., Al-Osail, E. M., Al-Ghamdi, M. A., Al-Hawas, A. M., Al-Bahussain, A. S., & Al-Dajani , A. A. (2015). Is Cronbach's alpha sufficient for assessing the reliability of the OSCE for an internal medicine course? *BMC Res Notes, 8*(582). doi:10.1186/s13104-015-1533-x

Alwagaita, E., Shahzad, B., & Alim, S. (2015). Impact of social media usage on students academic performance in Saudi Arabia. *Computers in Human Behavior, 51*(B), 1092-1097.

Bennett, R. (2003, May). Determinants of Undergraduate Students Drop out Rates in Unuversity Bussinness Studies Department. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 27*(2), 123-141. doi:10.1080/030987703200065154

Broadbent, J. (2017). Comparing online and blended learner's self-regulated learning strategies and academic performance. *The Internet and Higher Education, 33*, 24-32.

Broglia , E., Millings , A., & Barkham , M. (2017). The Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS-62): Acceptance, feasibility, and initial psychometric properties in a UK student population. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy, 24*(5), 1178-1188. doi:10.1002/cpp.2070

Burke, L. (2016). University Attrition Rate, Why are so Many Students Dropping Out? melbourne: News.com.au.

Cairns, S. L., Massfeller, H. F., & Deeth, S. C. (2010). Why do Post-Secondary Students Seek Counselling? *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy, 44*(1), 34-50.

Capital Campus;. (2014, Aprl 7). *www.capitalfm.co.ke.* Retrieved May 22nd, 2016, from Capital Campus: www.capitalfm.co.ke/campus/rising-number-of-kenyan-students-dropping-out-of-uni/

Carpman, J. R., & Grant, M. A. (1993). *Inpatient Preferences for Hospital Room Artwork.* University of Michigan, Office of the Replacement Hospital program. Michigan: Ann Arbor.

Carpman, J. R., & Grant, M. A. (2016). *design That Cares* (3 ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Carvalho, J., & Chima, F. O. (2016). Development and Validation of College Level Academic Retention Scale. *American International Journal of Social Science, 5*(3), 1-8.

Chacha, G. (2015, March 30). Tale of Kenyan students enrolling for prestigious medicine course, only to drop out when it gets tough. *The Nairobian*, 2.

Ching, F. D. (2015). *Architecture: Form, Space, & Order* (3 ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Cloete, N., Bailey, T., & Pillay, P. (2011, January 17). *Universities and Economic Development in Africa.Case Study:enya and University of Nairobi*. Retrieved from kenya and University of Nairobi.pdf: chet.org.za/files/up;oads/reports/case study

Commission for University Education. (2015, November 17). *status-of-universities*. Retrieved from www.cue.or.ke: http://www.cue.or.ke/services/accreditation/status-of-universities

Corey , G. (2011). *Theory and Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy* (Eighth ed.). Belmont: Brooks/Cole.

Creswell , J. W., & Clark, V. P. (2018). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3 ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Cummings, N. A., & Cummings, J. L. (2008). Pschoeducation in Conjuction with Psychotherapy Practice. *American Psychological Association*, 41-59.

Dyer, W. W., & Vriend, J. (1988). *Counseling techniques that work.* Alexandria: VA.

Egan, G., & Reese, R. J. (2018). *The Skilled Helper: A Problem-Management and Opportunity-Development Approach to Helping* (11 ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning Inc.

Erekson, D. M., Janis, R., Bailey, R. J., Cattani, K., & Pedersen, T. R. (2017). A longitudinal investigation of the impact of psychotherapist training: Does training improve client outcomes? *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 64*(5), 514-524.

Erlichman, H., & Halpern, J. N. (1988). Affect and Memory: Effects of Pleasant and Unplesant Odors on Retrieval of Happy and Unhappy Memories. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 769-779.

Felez-Nobrega, M., Hillman, C., Cirera, E., & Puig-Ribera, A. (2017). The association of context-specific sitting time and physical activity intensity to working memory capacity and academic achievement in young adults. *The European Journal of Public Health, 27*(4), 1-6.

Feltham, C., & Dryden, W. (2006). *Brief Counselling|: A Practicaal Integrated Approach* (2 ed.). London: Open University Press.

FlorCruz, M. (2013, January 13). 1 In 4 Chinese Students Drop Out Of Ivy Universities And Return Home For Jobs. *International Business Times*. Retrieved from https://www.ibtimes.com/1-4-chinese-students-drop-out-ivy-universities-return-home-jobs-1446382

Fong, C. J., Davis, C. W., Kim, Y., Kim, Y. W., Marriott, L., & Kim, S. (2017). Psychosocial Factors and Community College Student Success . *South african Journal of Psychology, 87*(2), 388-424 .

Frederico, R., Inês, S. M., Kathryn, A., Leo, P., & Niamh, F. (2018). Factors Influencing the Implementation of Screening and Brief Interventions for Alcohol Use in Primary Care Practices: A Systematic Review Protocol. *Acta Medica Portuguesa, 31*(1), 45-50.

Frijda, N. H., & Rietveld, E. (2014). Impulsive action: Emotional impulses and their control. *Frontiers in Psychology, 5*, 518.

Goldenberg, S. B., Miller, S. D., Nielsen, S. L., Rousmaniere, T., Whipple, J., & Hoy, W. T. (2016). Do Psychotherapists Improve With Time and Experience? A

Longitudinal Analysis of Outcomes in a Clinical Setting. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 63*(1), 1-11.

Gray, P. (2015, January 24). Declining Student Resilience: A Serious Problem for Colleges. Psychology Today. Retrieved January 24, 2016, from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/freedom-learn/201509

Grencavage, L. M., & Norcross, J. C. (1990). Wheer are the Commonalities among the Therapeutic Common Factors? *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 21*(5), 372-378. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.21.5.372

Griffith Quality, Planning and Statistics. (2015). *Operation Student Success: Griffith's Student Retention Strategy 2012 - 2014.* Quensland: Griffith University.

Han , C.-w., Farruggia, S. P., & Moss, T. P. (2017). Effects of Academic Mindsets on College Students' Achievement and Retention. *Journal of College Student Development, 58*(8), 1119-11341.

Hassim, T., Strydom, C., & Strydom , H. (2013). Resilience in a group of First-year psychosocial Science Studentsat the North-West University (Potchefstroom CA). *WEI International Academic Conference Proceedings* (pp. 1 - 7). Antalya, Turkey: WEI International.

Holdcroft, A. (2007). Gender bias in research: how does it affect evidence based medicine? *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 100*(1), 2-3.

Hussain, I., & Sultan, S. (2010). Analysis of procrastination among university students. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 5*, 1897–1904.

Hutz-Midgett, A., & Hutz, C. (2012). Counselling in Brazil:Past, Present and Future. *Journal of Counselling and Development*, 238-242. doi:10.1111/j.1556-6676.2012.00030.x

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (2014). Cooperative Learning: Improving University Instruction by Basing Practice on Validated Theory. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, 25* (3-4), 85-118.

Jones, R. N. (2013). *Practical Counselling and Helping Skills: past and Current medical context of clients problems.* New York: SAGE.

Kader, F. A., & Eissa, M. A. (2015). The Effectiveness of Time Management Strategies Instruction on Students' Academic Time Management and Academic Self-efficacy. *International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences, 4*(1), 43-50.

Kamunyu, R. N., Ndungo, C., & Wango, G. (2016). Contributors to Students' Use of Counselling Services in Kenyan Universities. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 6*(12), 125-128.

Kastrani, T., Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, V., & Athanasiades, C. (2017). Women as Counselling and Psychotherapy Clients: Researching the Therapeutic Relationship. *The European Journal of Counselling Psychology, 6*(1), 138-161.

Kiarie, J. M., Sirera, A., & Mwenje, M. (2011). The Effect of Burnout on Teacher Counselors' Work Engagement. *Kenyan Guidance, Counselling and Psychological Association, 1*(1), 23 - 37.

Kim, I. (1998). Subjective Responses to Daylight, Sunlight and View in College Classrooms with Windows [Doctoral Dissertation, Texas A & M University, 1998]. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 58*, 2425.

kimemia , M., & Oketch, J. A. (2012, January). Proffessional Counselling In Kenya: History, Current Status, and Future Trends. *journal of Counselling and Development, 90*, 107-112. doi:10.1111/j.1556-6676.2012.00015.x.

Kirimi, G. J. (2011). Perceptions on the Role of Guidance and Counselling in the Management of Educational Wastage in Public Secondary Schools in Buuri District, Meru County, Kenya. *Unpublished MED Project*. Kenya: Mount Kenya University.

Kolo, A. G., Jaafar, W. M., & Ahmad, N. B. (2017). Influence of Psychosocial Factors on Student's Academic Performance in One of Nigerian Colleges of Education . *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 2*(1), 1-10.

Koseoglu, Y. (2013). An Application of the Self-Determination Theory- Academic Motivations of the First Year University Students for Two Successive Yaers. *journal of Emerging Trends in Education Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS), 4*(3), 447-454.

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*, 607-610.

Kyalo, P. M., & Chumba, R. J. (2011). Selected Factors Influencing Social and Academic Adjustment of Undergraduate Students of Egerton University, Njoro Campus. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 2*(18), 274-290.

Kylie, H. (2005). *The first year experience : the transition from secondary school to university and TAFE in Australia.* Camberwell: Australian Council for Educational Research .

Lau, L. K. (2003). Institutional Factors Affecting Student Retention. *Education, 124*(1), 126-136.

Lehman, Y. P. (2014). University Students in Crisis: University Dropout and Professional Re-selection. *Psychology, Teaching and Learning, 31*(1), 45-53.

Lemesa, D. (2018). Major Challenges and Alternatives in the Provision of Guidance and Counseling Services in Universities: A Comprehensive Literature Reviewed. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 8*(7), 12-18.

Letseka, M., & Maile, S. (2008). High University Drop Out Rates: a Threat to South Africa Future. *HSRC Policy Brief.* South Africa: Human Sciences Reaserch Council (HSRC).

Li, W. I., & Carroll, D. (2017). *Factors influencing university student satisfaction, dropout and academic performance: an Australian higher education equity perspective.* Perth: The University of Western Australia.

Lipson, S. K., Abelson, S., Ceglarek, P., Phillips, M., & Eisenberg, D. (2019). *Investing in Student Mental Health: Opportunities & Benefits for College Students.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Liu, W., Ji, J., Chen, H., & Ye, C. (2014, March). Optimal Color Design of Psychological Counselling Room by Design of Experiments and Response Surface Methodology. *PLoS ONE, 9*(3), 1-9. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0090646

Lotkowski, A. V., Robbins, B. S., & Noeth, J. R. (2004). *The Role of Academic and Non-academic Factors in Improving College Retention.* ACT Policy Report. Retrieved January 31, 2016, from http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/college_retention.pdf.

Lynch, M. F., Vansteenkiste, M., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Autonomy as Process and Outcome: Revisiting Cultural and Practical Issues in Motivation for Counseling. *The Counseling Psychologist, 39*(2), 286-302. doi:10.1177/0011000010388424

Macgregor, K. (2007). South Africa: Student drop-out rates alarming. Retrieved from https://jupiter.tut.ac.za/staffportal/file_store/files/593/southafricadropoutrate

Malefo, V. (2000). Psycho-social factors and academic performance among African women students at a predominantly white university in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology, 30*(4), 40 - 45.

Marcia, J. E., & Josselson, R. (2012). Eriksonian Personality Research and Its Implications for Psychotherapy. *Journal of Personality , 81*(6), 1-13. doi:10.1111/jopy.12014

Marshall, S., & Garry, M. (2006). NESB and ESB students' attitudes and perceptions of plagialism. *International Journal for Education Integrity, 2*, 26-37.

McGillivray, J. C., & Pidgeon, M. A. (2015). Resilience Attributes Among University Students: A Comparative Study of Psychological Distress, Sleep Disturbances and Mindfulness. *European Scientific Journal*, 33-48.

McLeod, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Counselling* (5 ed.). New York: Open University Press.

Meiberg, A. E., Bos, R. E., Onya, H. E., & Schaalma, H. P. (2008). Fear of stigmatization as barrier to voluntary hiv counselling and testing in South Africa. *East African Journal of Public Health, 5*(2), 49-54.

Mersha, Y., Bishaw, A., & Tegegne, F. (2013). Factors Affecting Female Students' Academic Achievement at Bahir Dar University. *Journal of International Cooperation in University, 15*(3), 135-148.

Mirjam, M., Michael, S., Katharina, B., Rolf, G., Timo, F., Naomi, Z., . . . Christian, C. (2017). Bright Light Delights: Effects of Daily Light Exposure on Emotions, Restactivity Cycles, Sleep and Melatonin Secretion in Severely Demented Patients. *Current Alzheimer Research, 14*(10), 1063-1075.

Molzahn, A. E., Kalfoss , M., Makaroff , K. S., & Skevington , S. M. (2010). Comparing the importance of different aspects of quality of life to older adults across diverse cultures. *Age and Ageing, 40*(2), 192-199.

Muola, J. M., Maithya, R., & Mwinzi, A. M. (2011). The Effect of Academic Advising on Academic Performance of University Students in Kenyan Universities. *African Research Review, 5*(5), 332-345. doi:dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrrev.v5i5.26

Murray, M. (2014). Factors Affecting Graduation and Student Dropout Rates at the University of Kwa Zulu- Natal in South Africa. *South African Journal of Science, 11*(12), 110.

Musika, F., & Bukaliya, R. (2015). The Effectiveness of Counselling on Students' learning Motivation in Open and Distance Education. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies, 2*(7), 85-99.

NCES. (2011). America's Youth: Transition to Adulthood. Retrieved January 31, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012026/chapter2_22.asp

Ndege, T. M. (2010). Students' Engagement and Student Retention in Moi University, Kenya. *Global Business and Economics Anthology. II*, pp. 247-257. Athens: Global Business and Economics Anthology.

Nelson-Jones, R. (2015). *Theory and Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy* (6 ed.). London: Sage.

Njoroge, M. M., Wang'eri, T., & Gichure, C. (2016). Examination Repeats, Semester Deferments and Dropping Out as Contributors of Attrition Rates in Private Universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research, 4*(3), 225-240.

Nunez, R., & Cooperrider, K. (2013). The tangle of space and time in human cognition. *Trends in Cognitine Sciences, 17*(5), 220-229.

Odes, E., Michelson, T. S., Locke, B., Olson, A. E., & Lee, D. (2009, May/June). The Effects of Colleeg Counselling on Academic Performance and Retention. *Journal of College Students Development, 50*(3), 305-319.

Odhiambo, J., & Onyango, S. (2008). *Statistics education in Kenya: Developments and challenges*. Retrieved May 30, 2018, from Strathmore University: http://www.strathmore.edu/research/images/docs/pubs/statistics-in-education.pdf

OECD. (2013). *"How many young people graduate from tertiary education?" In education at a Glance 2011: Highlights.* Paris: OECD Publishing.

Olowookere, E. I., Alao, A. A., Odukoya, J. A., Adekeye, O. A., & Agbude, G. A. (2015). Time Management Practices, Character Development and Academic Performance among University Undergraduates: Covenant University Experience. *Creative Education, 6*, 79-86.

Omonijo, D. O., Anyaegbunam, M. C., Nnedum, O. A., Chine, B. C., & Rotimi , O. A. (2015). Effects of College Roommate Relationships on Student Development at a Private University, Southern Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6*(6), 503 - 516.

Omonyi, M. B. (2016, November). History and Development of Guidance and Counselling: The Missing Dimension of Nigeria School Counselling Services. *International Journal of Education and Research, 4*(11), 413-424.

Orodho, J. A. (2014). *Techniques in Writing Research Proposals and Reports in Education and Social Sciences.* Nairobi: kanezje Publishers.

Ovuga, E., Boardman, J., & Wasserman, D. (2006). Undergraduate student mental health at Makerere University, Uganda. *World Psychiatry, 5*(1), 51-52.

Patel, P. A. (2015, September). An Introduction to Two-Way ANOVA. *International Journal of Pharmaceutical Research Studies*, 1-45.

Payne-Sturges, D. C., Tjaden, A., Caldeira, K. M., Vincent, K. B., & Arria, A. M. (2017). Student Hunger on Campus: Food Insecurity Among College Students and Implications for Academic Institutions. *American Journal on Health Promotion, 32*(2), 349-354.

Pearson, M., & Wilson, H. (2012). Soothing spaces and healing spaces: Is there an ideal counselling room? *Psychotherapy in Australia, 18*(3), 46-53.

Pidgeon, A., Rowe, F. N., Stapleton, P., Magyar, B. H., & Lo, Y. B. (2014). Examining characteristics of resilience among university students: An international study. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 2*(11), 14 - 22.

Pressley, P. K., & Heesacker, M. (2001). The Physical Environment and Counselling: A Review of Theory and Research. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 79*(2), 148-160.

Ragneskog, H., & Kihlgren, M. (1997). Music and Other Strategies to Improve the Care of Agitated Patients with Dementia: Interviews with Experienced Staff. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 11*, 176-182.

Redmond, B., Quin, S., Devitt, C., & Archbold, J. (2011). *A qualitative investigation into the reasons why students exit from the first year of their programme and UCD* . Dublin: University College Dublin.

Renuka, D. R., Devaki, P. R., Madhavan, M., & Saikumar, P. (2013). The effect of counselling on the academic performance of college students. *Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, 7*(6), 1086-1088.

Ricknson, B. (1998). The Relationship Between Undergraduate Student Counselling and Successful Degree Completion. *Studies in Higher Education, 23*(1), 95-102. doi:10.1080/03075079812331380522

Ruto, J., Manduku, J., & Kosgey, A. (2017). Determinants of Effective Guidance and Counselling Programmes in Public Secondary Schools in Kericho Sub-County, Kenya. *European Journal of Education Studies, 3*(11), 360-371.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and facilitation of Intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *american psychologist, 55*, 68 - 78.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2008). A self-determination Theory Approach to Psychotherapy: the motivational Basis for Effective Change. *Canadian Psychology, 49*(3), 186 - 193. doi:10.1037/a0012753

Saari, C. (2002). *The Environment: Its Role in Psychosocial Functioning and Psychotherapy.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Sabri, F. M., MacDonald, M., Masud, J., Paim, L., Hira, T. K., & Othman, M. A. (2008). Financial Behavior and Problems among College Students in Malaysia: Research and Education Implication. *Consumer Interests Annual, 54*, 166-170.

Saleh, A., & Bista , K. (2017). Examining Factors Impacting Online Survey Response Rates in Educational Research: Perceptions of Graduate Students. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation, 13*(29), 63-74.

Sanders, R., & Lehmann, J. (2018, October). An Exploratory Study of Clients Experiences and Preferences for Counselling Room Space and Design. *British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy , 19*(1), 57-65.

Sanders, R., & Lehmann, J. (2018). An exploratory study of clients' experiences and preferences for counselling room space and design. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research, 19*(4), 57-65. doi:10.1002/capr.12202

Sears, S. J. (2002). School Counselling Now and in the Future. *Professional School Counselling, 5*(3), 164-172.

Simon, R. W. (2002). Revisiting the Relationships among Gender, Marital Status, and Mental Health. *American Journal of Sociology, 107*(4), 1065-1096.

Simpson, A., & Ferguson, K. (2014). The Role of University Support Services on Academic Outcomes for Students with Mental Illness. *Education Research International, 2014*, 1-6.

Slack, M. K., & Draugalis, J. R. (2001). Establishing the internal and external validity of experimental studies. *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy, 58*(22), 2173-2181.

Sneyers, E., & Witte, K. D. (2017). The interaction between dropout, graduation rates and quality ratings in universities. *Journal of the Operational Research Society, 68*(4), 416-430.

Soda, J., & Bondai, B. (2015). Coping Strategies Employed by Students to Adress Stress Emanating from Social- Economic and Academic Challenges: A Study of Nyadire Taechers College in Zimbabwe. *Academic Research International, 6*(4), 339-352.

Songok, A., Yungungu, A., & Mulinge, P. (2013). Factors that Militate against Effective Guidance and Counseling on Students' Sexual Awareness, Attitude and Behavior in Schools. *American International Journal of Social Science, 2*(8), 109-114.

Stallman, H. M. (2012). University Counselling Services in Australia and New Zealand:Activities, Changes, and Challenges. *Australian Psychologist, 47*, 249–253.

Teijingen, E. R., & Hundley, V. (2002, June). The Importance of Pilot Studies. *PubMed, 16*(40), 35-36.

Terenzin, P. T., Springer, L., Yaeger, P. M., Pascarella, E. T., & Nora , A. (1996). First-Generation College Students: Characteristics, Experiences, and Cognitive Development. *Research in Higher Education, 37*(1), 1-22.

Thuryrajah, V., Ahmed, M. E., & Jeyakumar, R. (2017). Factors Determing the University Counselling Services Effectiveness. *Business and Economics Journal, 8*(4), 321.

Tuwei, C. P. (2014). Influence of Drug Abuse on Students Academic Performance in Public Univerasities. The case of Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi. Retrieved June 19, 2016, from Tuwei_Influence of drug abuse on students academic performance-1.pdf- adobe reader

Valdez, P., & Mehrabian, A. (1994). Effects of Color on Emotions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology, 123*, 394-409.

Vogel, L. D., Wester , R. S., Larson, & Larson, M. L. (2007). Avoidance of Counselling: Psychological Factors that Inhibit Seeking Help. *Journal of Counselling and Development, 85*, 410-422.

Wambu, G., & Fisher, T. A. (2015). School Guidance and Counselling in Kenya: Historical Development, Current Status, and Future Prospects. *ResearchGate, 6*(11).

Wambui, A. (2015). Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling Services in Secondary Schools in Kenya: A Case Study of Githunguri Sub-County in Kiambu County. *American Journal of Educational Science, 1*(4), 204-209.

Wangeri, T., Kimani, E., & Mutweleli, S. M. (2012). Transitional Challenges Facing University First Year Students in Kenyan Public Universities: A Case of Kenyatta University. *Interdisplinary Review of Economics and Management, 2*(1), 41-50.

Wango, G. (2015). *Counselling Psychology in Kenya: A contemporary Review of the Developing World.* Nairobi: KLB.

Watson, J. C. (2006). Addressing Client Resistance: Recognizing and Processing In-Session Occurrences. *VISTAS Online.* Alexandria, USA: American Counseling Asasociation.

Weaver, J. P., Chastain, R. J., DeCaro, D. A., & DeCaro, M. S. (2018, january). Reverse the Routine: Problem Solving Before Instruction Improves Conceptual

Knowledge in Undergraduate Physics. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 52*, 36-47.

Whyte, M. (2014). Lone working, self-efficacy and burnout: the potential moderating effects of reflecting team working in counselling settings. *Higher Diploma Final Year Project*. Dublin: Dublin Business School.

Wibrowski, C. R., Mathews, W. K., & Kitsantas, A. (2016). The Role of a Skills Learning Support Program on First-Generation College Students' Self-Regulation, Motivation, and Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 19*(3), 317-332.

Wibrowski, C. R., Mathews, W. K., & Kitsantas, A. (2016). The Role of a Skills Learning Support Program on First-Generation College Students' Self-Regulation, Motivation, and Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Thoery & Practice, 19*(3), 317-332.

Willys, W. (2017, November). Factors that Influence Students Perception of Counsellors Roles and Functions in Institutions of Higher Learning: A Case of Universities and Colleegs in Mount Kenya East Region. *Unpublished Thesis*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi.

World Health Organisation. (2013). *Counselling for Maternal and Newborn Health Care: A Handbook for Building Skills.* Geneve: World Health Organisation.

Yu, L., Shek, D. T., & Zhu, X. (2017). *The Influence of Personal Wellbeing on Learning Achieevment in University Students Over Time: Mediating or Moderating Effects of Internal and External University Enaggement* (Vol. 8). Hong Kong: frontiers in Psychology.

Yussuf, K. B. (2018, june). Does personalized Goal Setting and Study Planning Improve Academic Performance and perception of Learning Experience in a Developing Setting? *Journal of Taibah University Medical Sciences, 13*(3), 232-237.

Zavale, N. C., Santos, L. A., Manuel, L., Dias, M. C., Khan, M. A., Tostão, E., & Mondjana, A. M. (2017). Decision-making in African universities demands rigorous data: Evidence from graduation rates at Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique. *International Journal of Educational Development, 52*, 122-134.

APPENDICES

Appendix A1: Students' Questionnaire

Instructions: Respond to all items in the questionnaire. Base your response on what you think at this time. Try to assess yourself as honestly as possible rather than answering in the way you think would be desirable.

NOTE: Only one response is required in each statement.

Part One: Students' Demographic Information

1. What is your gender? Male
   Female
2. What is your age: _____

3. What is your marital status? Single
   Married
   Divorced/ Separated
   Widowed

Part Two: Students' Retention at University Scale developed and validated by Carvalho and Chima (2016).

Tick the extent to which you agree to the following practices in the university.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I know how to deal with upsetting problems that affect my studies.					
2.	I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling in this university.					
3.	Faculty members have been available to help me make course choices.					
4.	I am satisfied with my academic experience at this university.					
5.	I am confident that this is the right university for me.					
6.	I am satisfied with the quality of training I am getting in my programme of study.					
7.	I am sure if I transfer to another university of my choice, I will get better training than what I am getting currently.					
8.	I am seriously thinking of transferring to another university.					
9.	I am thinking of transferring from my current course to another course.					
10.	Given a choice, I could defer my studies to engage in other activities.					

11.	The course I am pursuing is too difficult.					
12.	I have lost interest in the course I am studying.					
13.	The programme I am studying has no direct link with my preferred career in future.					
14.	This university has little regard to students' welfare and I am very uncomfortable being a student at this university.					

Part Three: Academic Performance

Performance index = second semester Grade Point Average (GPA) - first semester GPA

Part Four: Challenges to Effectiveness Counselling Services

The following statements highlight challenges to effectiveness counselling in universities. Tick the response that you think is adequate against each statement.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Shortage of enough counselling materials					
2.	Lack of enough counselling staff.					
3.	Increased student enrolment.					
4.	I have a negative attitude towards seeking counselling help.					
5.	Sometimes influences from my peers prevent me from seeking counseling at the university.					

Part Five: Status of Counselling in University

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I find counselling rooms to be adequately furnished and comfortable					
2	Counselling rooms are located in private places ensuring me confidentiality					
3	Counselling rooms have adeguate space so that there is no sense of intrusion on my personal space.					

Source: Researcher

Appendix A2: Counsellors' Questionnaire

Instructions: The following questionnaire consists of items asking about aspects of counselling program and how it is being implemented in the university. It is meant to establish the effectiveness of counselling services in order to help university counsellors who are in charge of counselling to improve the program. Respond to all items on the questionnaire. Base your response on what you think at this time. Try to assess yourself as honestly as possible rather than answering in the way you think would be desirable.

Your response to the statements should be confined within the following sets: "Strongly Agree"; "Agree"; "Not sure"; "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree".

NOTE: Only one response is required in each statement.

Part One: Counsellors' Demographic Information

1. What is your gender? :
   Male
   Female
2. What is your age: _____

3. What is your marital status?
   Single
   Married
   Divorced/ Separated
   Widowed

4. How many years have you practiced counselling?
   Less than 3
   4-8
   9-13
   Above 14
5. What is the level of you training?
   Diploma
   Degree
   Masters
   Doctorate

Part Two: Challenges to Effectiveness Counselling Services

The following statements highlight challenges to effectiveness counselling in universities. Tick the response that you think is adequate against each statement.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Shortage of enough counselling materials					
2	Lack of enough counselling staff.					
3	Increased student enrolment.					
4	Majority of students have a negative attitude towards seeking counselling help.					
5	Influence by peers.					

Part Three: Status of Counselling in University

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Counselling rooms are adequately furnished and comfortable					
2	Counselling rooms are more private and confidential					
3	Counselling rooms have adeguate space so that there is no sense of intrusion on personal space.					

Appendix A3: University Counsellors' Interview Guide

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for coming.

The purpose of the session is to provide input to a PhD doctoral research on investigating the effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya. I hope that we will be able to gather information from you as a university counsellor. I will seriously consider your ideas even though due to some study limitations may not be able to act upon each and every perspective.

Interview Items

i. Challenges facing counselling Services

1. Please tell me the number of years (months) you've practiced as a university counsellor.
2. What challenges affect provision of counselling services in university?
3. How do you handle these challenges in order to be effectiveness as a university counsellor?
4. Do you think the methods you use to overcome these challenges are effectiveness?

ii. Counselling Status

5. Describe counselling facilities available in your institution.
6. Discuss the role of theory in counselling practice in universities.
7. Discuss the quality of training of counsellors in relation to counselling services they provide in universities.

8. Is the site of location of the counselling rooms appropriate in advancing counselling services in the university?
9. Are counselling services offered in university relevant to the needs of students?

iii. University Support towards the Counselling programme.

10. In what ways does the university administration support the counselling programme?
11. Rate the contribution given to the counselling department by the administration.
12. Explain ways in which the administrative structures benefit/hinder-counselling services.
13. What is your relationship with the university administrators?
14. In what ways does the university faculty benefit/hinder counselling services?

iv. R**etention Rate**

15. What are possible reasons why some students drop out of university?
16. Is the number of students dropping out of university alarming?
17. How has counselling service contributed to student retention in universities?

v. Students' Academic Achievement

18. Mention some of the reasons why students fail to perform well in their academics.

19. Which ways can counselling help students who do not do well in their academics improve?

Appendix A4: Students' Focus Group Discussion Guide

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for coming.

The purpose of the session is to provide input to a PhD doctoral research on investigating the effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate in universities in Kenya. We hope that we will be able to gather information from you as university students. We will seriously consider everyone's ideas even though due to some study limitations may not be able to act upon each and every perspective.

Ground Rules:

- Be honest. Your individual comments will remain confidential but will be compiled into a report.
- I will be recording the session in order to write my report but will not share the compact disk with anyone.
- Be respectful. Avoid personal attacks. If you disagree, please tell us but in a calm and respectful manner.
- Stay on the subject.
- Participate.

Focus Group Discussions Guide

i. Challenges facing counselling Services

1. What challenges affect provision of counselling services in university?
2. How would you like these challenges to be addressed?
3. Do you think counsellors are handling these challenges effectivenessly?

ii. Counselling Status

4. Describe counselling facilities available in the counselling centre in your institution.
5. Identify cultural issues that affect or influence counselling services in university.
6. Is the site of location of the counselling rooms appropriate in advancing counselling services in the university?
7. Are counselling services offered in university relevant to your needs as students?

iii. University Support towards the Counselling programme.

8. In what ways does the university administration support the counselling programme?
9. Explain ways in which the administrative structures benefit/hinder-counselling services.
10. What is your relationship with the university administration?
11. In what ways does the university staff part from counsellors benefit/hinder counselling services?

iv. Retention rate and academic achievement

12. What are possible reasons why you may drop out of university?
13. Is the number of students dropping out of university alarming?
14. How has counselling services contributed to your continuation in your studies in this university?

v. Students' academic achievement

15. Mention some of the reasons why students fail to perform well in their academics.
16. Which ways can counselling resolve reasons that make students not do well in their academics?

Appendix A5: Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determinant Table

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

N	S	N	S	N	S
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	5300	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	1000000	384

Appendix A6: Respondents' Informed Consent Form

My name is Jane Gathoni Nyutu. I am a Ph.D. student from Kenyatta University. I am conducting a research study on "The Effectiveness of Counselling Service on Academic Performance and Retention Rate among First Year Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kenya."

The information will be used by the universities to enhance counselling services in order to improve academic performance and retention rate among university students in Kenya.

Procedures to be followed

Participation in this study will require that I ask you some questions and I also observe you in order to understand your knowledge on counselling services offered at university. I will record the information from you in a questionnaire and also audio tape. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. Please remember that the participation in this study is voluntary. You may ask questions related to the study at any time.

You may refuse to respond to any question/s and you may stop being observed at any time. You may also stop being in the study at any time without any consequences to the counselling services you receive now and in the future.

Discomforts and Risks

Some of the questions you will be asked may bring a different awareness regarding the themes in this study and may make you uncomfortable. This may cause you to reflect over other current issues. If this happens, you may refuse to answer these questions if you so choose. You may also stop being observed at any time. The sessions you will participate in will last one hour each. There will be one session per week for 12 weeks. Should you wish to explore any issue that may come up, a counselling referral list will be provided.

Benefits

If you participate in this study, you will help us to learn how to provide effectiveness counselling services that can improve your academic performance and retention rate. In addition, participation allows you the opportunity to contribute to research that may positively affect future counselling practice in universities in Kenya.

Reward

If you agree to participate in this study, snacks will be provided and transport expenses will be reimbursed.

Confidentiality:

Note that only the principle researcher and one independent reviewer will have access to the audio and transcribed data. You will not be identified by name on any of the interview or questionnaire document or audio recording. Your confidentiality will be highly protected by identifying all documents by a code number. The documents will be kept in a

locked filling cabinet, separate from your contact information. Your name will not appear in any reports of the completed study. The digital information shall be protected by use of a password on the investigators computer. All data from the study will be kept for at least five years, in accordance with the guidelines. After that, all the information shall be shredded, computer files deleted, and digital files erased.

Contact Information

If you have any questions you may contact Dr. Ann Sirera on 0715457405 or Dr. Wilfrida Olaly on 0719761379 or the Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee Secretariat on, kuerc.chairman@ku.ac.ke, kuerc.secretary@ku.ac.ke, P.O. BOX 43844-00100 Nairobi, Tel: 8710901/12

Participant's Statement

The above information regarding my participation in the study is clear to me. I have been given a chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that my records will be kept private and that I can leave the study at any time. I understand that I will still get the same counselling services whether I decide to leave the study or not and my decision will not change the psychoeducation that I will receive from the researcher today or that I will get from any other counsellor from the university at any other time.

Name of Participant……..

_____ _____

Signiture or Thumbprint Date

Investigator's Statement

I, the undersigned, have explained to the volunteer in a language s/he understands, the procedures to be followed in the study and the risks and benefits involved.

Name of Researcher……..

_____ _____

Signiture or Thumbprint Date

Appendix A7: Counselling Activities for Experimental Group

Introduction

This is a one semester counselling programme for first year students to equip them with psycho-education skills. The programme will be carried out in 12 sessions of 1 hour each. Students will be taken through 1 session per week. The goal of this programme is to influence improved academic performance and retention rate.

Activities

Week/Session	Topic	Content	Activity
1	Group formation	Introduction Group expectations Group norms	Discussion Question & answer
2	Study skills	Time management Reading skills	Discussion Question & answer
3	Study skills	Problem solving skills Critical and creative thinking skills, decision making	Discussion Question & answer
4	Stress management	Symptoms of stress Causes of stress Coping skills	Discussion Question & answer
5	Stress management	Emotional intelligence/anger management	Discussion Question & answer
6	Attitude	Self-image Breaking out of comfort zone Values	Discussion Question & answer
7	Motivation	Motivational strategies	Discussion Question & answer
8	Social relationships	Teamwork Strategies for building rapport	Discussion Question & answer
9	Substance Use and abuse	Alcoholism Tobacco use and related drugs	Discussion Question & answer
10	Financial management	Living within your means	Discussion Question & answer
11	Career planning	Steps in planning your career	Discussion Question & answer
12	Building lasting habits	Steps to building lasting habits	Discussion Question & answer
13	Group termination	Evaluation Termination	Discussion Question & answer

Appendix A8: Kenyatta University Graduate School Research Authorization

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

OUR REF: C82/11137/08

Date: 27th April, 2017

The Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100,
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MS. JANE G. NYUTU REG. NO. C82/11137/08

I write to introduce Ms. **Nyutu** who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for Ph.D. Degree programme in the **Department of Psychology in the School of Humanities & Social Sciences.**

Ms. **Nyutu** intends to conduct research for Ph.D. Thesis entitled, entitle **"The Effectiveness of Counselling Services on Academic Performance and Retention rate of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kenya"**

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. LUCY N. MBAABU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

RM/cao

Committed to Creativity, Excellence & Self-Reliance

Appendix A9: Approval of Research Proposal

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: kubps@yahoo.com
dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 27th April, 2017

TO: Ms. Jane G. Nyutu
C/o Department of Psychology
Kenyatta University

REF: C82/11137/08

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

We acknowledge the receipt of your revised Research Proposal entitled **"The Effectiveness of Counselling Services on Academic Performance and Retention rate of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kenya"** as per recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 29th March, 2017

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

By copy of this letter, the Registrar (Academic) is hereby requested to grant you substantive registration for your Ph.D. studies.

Thank you.

REUBEN MURIUKI
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

c.c. Chairman, Department of Psychology
Registrar (Academic) Att; Mr. Likam
Supervisor

1. Dr. Ann Sirera
C/o Department of Psychology
Kenyatta University

2. Dr. Wilfridah Olaly
C/o Department of Psychology
Kenyatta University

RM/cao

Committed to Creativity, Excellence & Self-Reliance

Appendix A10: Research Clearance Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. JANE GATHONI NYUTU
of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 342-0
THIKA,has been permitted to conduct
research in *Kiambu , Nairobi Counties*

on the topic: *THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COUNSELLING SERVICES ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION RATE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA*

for the period ending:
19th June,2018

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/39108/17643
Date Of Issue : 3rd July,2017
Fee Recieved :ksh2000

.....
Applicant's Signature

.....
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
6. This Licence does not give authority to transfer research materials.
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No.A 14578

CONDITIONS: see back page

Appendix A11: Research Authorization

NATIONAL COMMISSION FORSCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY ANDINNOVATION

Telephone:+254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/17/39108/17643**

Date: **3rd July, 2017**

Jane Gathoni Nyutu
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"The effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kenya,"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kiambu and Nairobi Counties** for the period ending **19th June, 2018.**

You are advised to report to **the Vice Chancellors of selected Universities, the County Commissioners and the County Director sof Education, Kiambu and Nairobi Counties** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The Vice Chancellors
Selected Universities.

The County Commissioner
Kiambu County.

The Chief Executive Officers
Selected government agencies,

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

Appendix A12: Research Authorization from County Commissioner, Kiambu County

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
COUNTY COMMISSIONER, KIAMBU

Telephone: 066-2022709
Fax: 066-2022644
E-mail: countycommkiambu@yahoo.com
When replying please quote

County Commissioner
Kiambu County
P.O. Box 32-00900
KIAMBU

Ref. No: **ED.12/1/VOL.V/126**

13th July, 2017

Jane Gathoni Nyutu
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Reference is made to National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation letter Ref No. **NACOSTI/P/17/39108/17643** of **3rd July, 2017**.

You have been authorized to conduct research on "***The effectiveness of counselling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kenya at Kiambu County".*** The data collection will be carried out in ***Kiambu County*** *for a period ending* ***19th June, 2018.***

You are requested to share your findings with the County Education Office upon completion of your research.

J. A. RATEMO
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
KIAMBU COUNTY

Cc County Director of Education
KIAMBU COUNTY

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

The vice chancellors
Selected Universities

The Chief Executive Officers
Selected Government Agencies
KIAMBU COUNTY

All Deputy County Commissioners (***For information and record purposes***)
KIAMBU COUNTY

Appendix A13: Research Authorization from County Director of Education, Kiambu County

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Education

Telephone:Kiambu (office) 020-2044686
FAX NO. 020-2090948
Email:directoreducationkiambu@yahoo.com

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY
P. O. Box 2300
KIAMBU

When replying please quote

KBU/CDE/HR/4/VOL.II

13th July, 2017

Jane Gathoni Nyutu
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Reference is made to the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation letter Ref. No NACOSTI/P/17/39108/17643 dated 3rd July 2017.

The above named has been authorized to carry out research on ***"The effectiveness of counseling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kenya"*** for a period ending 19th June 2018.

Please accord her the necessary assistance.

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY
P. O. Box 2300-00900
KIAMBU

LEAH ROIKO
For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY

Appendix A14: Research Authorization from Regional Coordinator of Education, Nairobi Region

Republic of Kenya
MINISTY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING", Nairobi
Telephone: Nairobi 020 2453699
Email: rcenairobi@gmail.com
cdenairobi@gmail.com

When replying please quote

REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
NAIROBI REGION
NYAYO HOUSE
P.O. Box 74629 – 00200
NAIROBI

Ref: RCE/NRB/GEN/1/VOL. 1

DATE: 13th July, 2017

Jane Gathoni Nyutu
Kenyatta University
P O Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

We are in receipt of a letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation regarding research authorization in Nairobi County on "**The effectiveness of counseling services on academic performance and retention rate of undergraduate students in selected in selected universities in Kenya.**"

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted for a period ending **19th June, 2018** as indicated in the request letter.

Kindly inform the Sub County Director of Education of the Sub County you intend to visit.

RICHARD NJOROGE
FOR: REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
NAIROBI

c.c
Director General/CEO
Nation Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NAIROBI

Appendix A15: Authority to Collect Data at The University of Nairobi

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE - CHANCELLOR
(Research, Production & Extension)
Prof. Lucy W. Irungu B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D.

P.O. Box 30197-GPO.
00100,Nairobi-Kenya
Telephone: +254-20-2315416 (DI), 318262

Fax:0202317251
Email:dvcrpe@uonbi.ac.ke

UON/RPE/3/5 July 14, 2017

Jane Gathoni Nyutu
P.O. Box 342-01000
THIKA

Dear Gathoni,

AUTHORITY TO COLLECT DATA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

I refer to your request dated July 10, 2017 to collect data at the University of Nairobi for your PhD research in Counseling Psychology at Kenyatta University entitled: "***The Effectiveness of Counseling Services on Academic Performance and Retention rate of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kenya".***

I write to inform you that your request has been approved.

You are however required to share the findings of your study with the University of Nairobi by depositing a copy of your research findings with the Director, Library and Information Services on completion of your study.

LUCY W. IRUNGU
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
(RESEARCH, PRODUCTION AND EXTENSION)
&
PROFESSOR OF ENTOMOLOGY

Copy to: Vice-Chancellor
DVC, A&F
DVC, AA
DVC, SA
Principal, CHS
Chairman, Dept. of Psychology
Director, Library & Information Services

ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED

Appendix A16: Authority to Collect Data at Kenyatta University

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND OUTREACH

P.O. Box 43844 - 00100
Nairobi. Kenya
Tel. 254-20-810901 Ext. 026
E-mail: dvc-rio@ku.ac.ke

Ref: KU/DVCR/RCR/VOL.3/237

Jane Nyutu,
Dept. of Psychology
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

2nd October, 2017

Dear Ms. Nyutu,

RE: **REQUEST TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

This is in reference to your letter dated 10th July, 2017 requesting for authorization to collect research data at Kenyatta University on the topic *"The Effectiveness of Counselling Services on Academic Performance and Retention Rate of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kenya"* towards a PhD degree of Kenyatta University.

I am happy to inform you that the Vice-Chancellor has approved your request to collect data. It has been noted that your data collection targets students in the School of Medicine and Counsellors at the University Wellness Centre

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. F. Q. Gravenir
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Research, Innovation & Outreach
cc. Vice-Chancellor
Chairman, Department of Psychology
Director, Wellness Centre