

Full Length Research Paper

Social guidance and counselling support services on the study habits of distance learners: A case of learners in Bachelor of Education programmes by distance learning of University of Nairobi, Kenya

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Distance learners in some studies have reported feelings of isolation and lack of direction in developing effective study habits. The purpose of this study is to establish the extent to which social guidance and counselling influence study habits of learners in Bachelor of Educational programmes by distance learning of the University of Nairobi. Data were collected using structured questionnaire. Simple random and stratified random sampling methods adopted to select the 327 participants from a target population of 2199. Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.76$ zero was attained as the reliability coefficient of the pre-test instruments. Simple and multiple linear regression and Pearson Correlation Coefficient models determine the predictor variable. Results show that social guidance and counselling mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297 were similar to composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. Therefore, the results of the study demonstrate that social guidance and counselling is critical in enhancing study habits of distance learners. The study recommends that education policy makers and universities should integrate social guidance and counselling in the curriculum to address myriad challenges facing distance learners in connection to their study habits.

Key words: Social guidance, counselling, study habits, support services, distance learners.

INTRODUCTION

The transition to university independence learning can be stressful for many distance learners globally resulting to psychological instability (Commission of Higher Education, 2015). The effects of isolation of distance learners combined with age, gender, income, marital status and educational background may prevent plausibility for developing sound study routine and consultation with the lecturer and peers (Simpson and

Gibbs, 2012). Besides, the body of literature reviewed indicates that provision of social guidance and counselling support services to distance learners is critical in creating a sense of belonging in order to manage isolation and disconnectedness for sound study habits (Moore and Kearsley, 2012). Social guidance and counselling is not taken as an integral part of the core business in African universities that offer distance

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education (Banda and Kaphesi, 2015). In Kenya, the utilization of social guidance and counselling support services in public universities is not sufficient (Wambugu, 2012). The success of Bachelor of Education programmes by distance learning of University of Nairobi in upgrading of academic qualifications to thousands of prospective teachers is not without study bottlenecks common to learners in distance education globally (Rambo and Oundo, 2010).

The learner support services as human element in distance education promote and maintain a strong and lasting inner drives for studying (Ukwueze, 2013). Distance education has developed through phases into mega open universities in America, Europe, India, China, and South Africa due to stronger learners' support services among them being social guidance and counselling (Julal, 2013). In these mega university technology-enabled learning environments, where e-learning scenarios, ubiquitous technologies, cloud computing, simulation, gaming, and personal learning environments have become the mainstream of passing information to distance learners and proving learners' support (Moore and Kearsley, 2012; Bimrose and Goddard, 2015). In addition, guidance and counselling learner support services like social guidance and counselling are given through online and face to face to thousands of distance learners (Bozkurt et al., 2015). In Africa countries like Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Tanzania most universities that offer learning and teaching through distance mode are struggling to update distance education into technology-enabled environment but internet connectivity and resource is a challenge (Eurydice, 2014; Hooley, 2015). The University of Nairobi is also struggling to embrace technology in its distance education (ODEL Manual, 2018).

Distance universities globally have issues of sustaining quality education, which is the bedrock of study habits (Lai-Yeung, 2014). There are reports in body of literature that distance learners have a problem of setting study goals, completing assessment in time and, good note and reading techniques (Ayodele and Adebisi, 2013). Distance learners report feeling of isolation and not belonging to scholarly communities and are not able to get involved in group study, and planned and sound study time (George, 2016). At University of Nairobi, the low progression and completion rate of learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning are due to inadequate study habits (Bowa, 2011). There is evidence in the empirical literature that distance learners require social guidance and counselling to develop social competence, sense of responsibility and healthy self-esteem (Tsikati, 2018; Lianos, 2015). Social guidance and counselling in distance education are critical in promoting communication skills and interpersonal skills for group study and setting personal goals. Social guidance and counselling for note taking, reading techniques, habits and completing assignment in

time, sound and planned study time (Gravani and Karagiorgi, 2014). However, this is not the case in distance education since distance learners lack the above attributes resulting to stagnation, low completion rate and drop out as propounded by Buraga and Caballero (2018). This study was based on principles of person centred principles of Rogers (1951) and a conceptual framework guided by three variables, namely: Social guidance and counselling support services (Independent variable), Study habits (dependent variable) and Learners' characteristics (moderating variable). The variables are depicted in Figure 1.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish how social guidance and counselling influence study habits of learners in the Bachelor of Education programmes offered through distance learning by the University of Nairobi.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Simple random and stratified random samplings were used to select the 327 participants from a target population of 2199. The list of distance learners in Bachelor of Education by distance of the University of Nairobi was obtained from registered learners in different parts, namely 2,3,4,5 and 6. Learners at different parts were stratified into five strata each for B.Ed. (Art) B.Ed. (Science) and stratified sampling technique to be used to select the required number of participants from each stratum part 2 (40) , part 3 (66), part 4, (63), part 5 (62) and part 6, (65) for Bachelor of Education(Arts) and parts 2 (5), part 3 (9) part 4 (7), part 5 (4) part 6 (6) for Bachelor of Education(Science) as presented in Table 1. The simple random sampling technique specifically the table of random numbers method was used. Simple random sampling was used to select 327 participants from serial numbers to be assigned to each learner on the register from 0001 to. 2199. Learners in part one were excluded because they had not done university examination.

To find the reliability of the research instruments, pilot testing was conducted among 41 participants. Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.76$ was attained as the reliability coefficient of the pre-test instruments for distance learners and university officials respectively. Simple and multiple linear regression and Pearson Correlation Coefficient models were used to determine the extent to which social guidance and counselling support services influenced study habits of learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning in the University of Nairobi.

Limitation of the study

The collection of data was slowed since participants could only be reached when they came to the learning centres during the holiday.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section entails analysis and discussion of

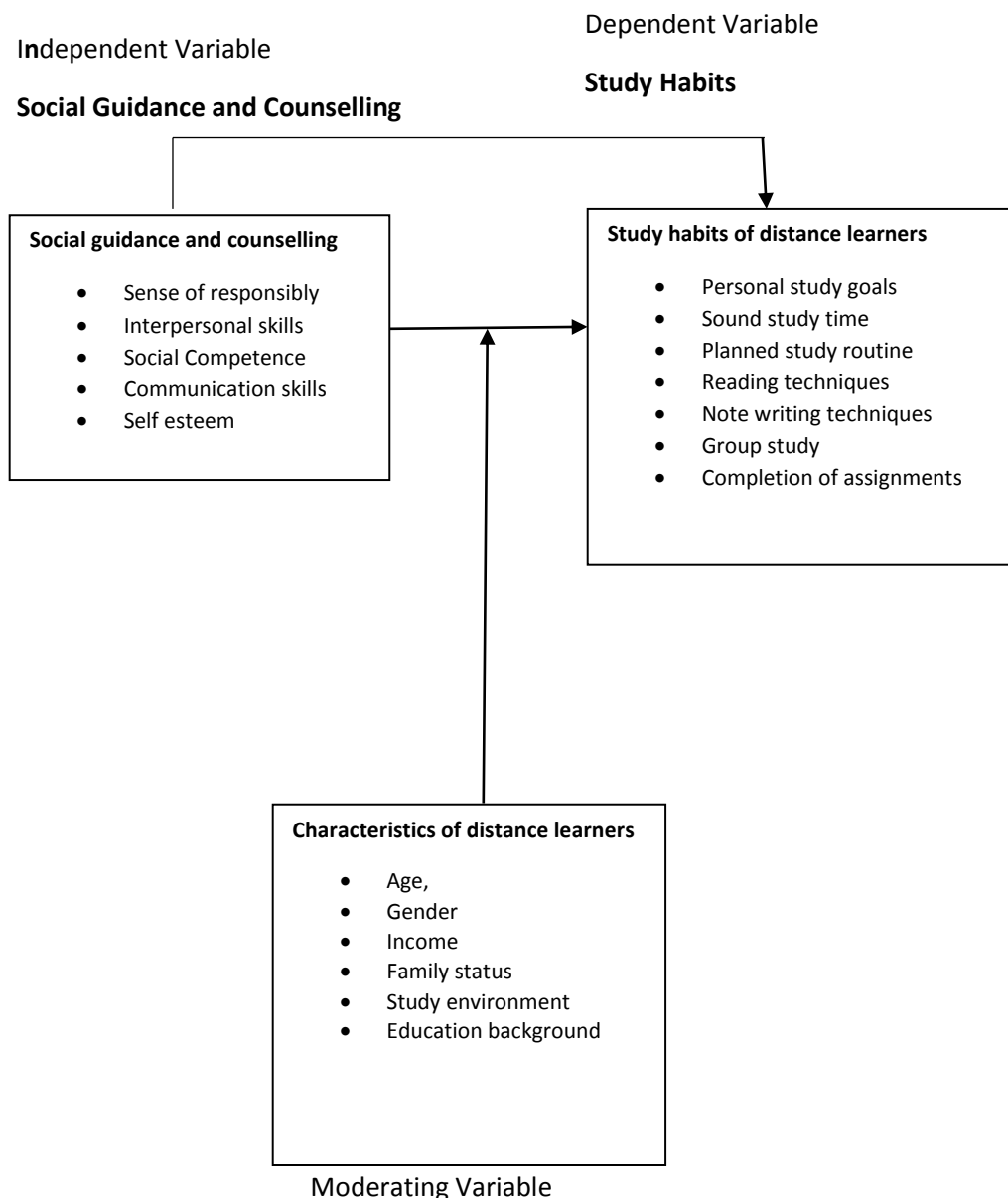


Figure 1. Conceptual framework showing relationship between social guidance and counselling and study habits.

demographic characteristics, influence of social guidance and counselling on study habits of distance learners, conclusion and recommendations.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The demographic characteristics of the learners in Bachelor of Education Programme by distance learning (part two to part six) considered by the study were gender, age group, education entry level, employment category, monthly income, number of dependents, finances issues affecting learners, year of enrolment, and

study environment (Table 2). Out of 319 respondents, 174(54.55%) were females and 145(45.45%) were males even when randomly selected. The implication of this result to the study is female distance learners, according to Bimrose et al. (2015), often lack sound study time due to several family-based and work-related burdens. Such learners need social guidance and counselling support services to set personal study goals as confirmed by study carried by Horzum et al. (2013). In addition, men in distance learning programme rarely seek social guidance and counselling for group study as indicated in ODeLmanual (2018). The distribution of the respondents by age indicated that most 108(33.9%) respondents part

Table 1. Sample Size for Distance Learners in Bachelor of Educational Programmes by Distance Learning of University of Nairobi.

Parts	B.Ed. (Arts)	Sample size B.Ed. (Arts)	B.Ed. (Science)	Sample size B.Ed. (Science)	Combined sample size
2	265	40	32	5	45
3	445	66	61	9	75
4	425	63	49	7	70
5	413	62	27	4	66
6	439	65	43	6	71
Total	1987	296	212	31	327

two to part six) were between 31 to 35 years old, 77 (24.1%) were between 19-25 years, 75(23.5%) were between 26 to 30 years, 34(10.7%) were between 36 to 40 years and 25(7.8%) were above 41 years. This result indicates that respondents were all adults (over 18 years of age) who would respond adequately to the items under investigation. The Implication of this result to this study majority falls between ages 31 to 35 that require social guidance for social confidence for planned study routine.

The result on the distribution of respondents (part two to part six) by marital status indicated that 186(58.3%) of the respondents (part two to part six) were married, 105(32.9%) were single, 12 (3.8%) were separated, nine (2.8%) were divorced, five (1.6%) were remarried and only two (0.6%) were widowed. The implication of this result is that most of the learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning are married with family responsibility that makes them to seek for social guidance, and counselling better communication skills to avoid conflicts with spouses. This argument was supported by response 'we need social guidance and counselling to handle our spouse who become problematic and do not support us in setting personal study goals (Respondent 67). The study results on the distribution of the respondents by education level indicated that out of 319, 162(50.7%) were PI holders, 86 (27%) had O level and 71(22.3%) were having diploma and above educational level. The implication of this result to the study is that distance learners with previous higher education qualifications do better than those with lower qualifications in line with Julal (2013)'s proposition. The study results on respondents (part two to part six) by place of residence indicated that out of 319 respondents 198(62.1%) were residing in rural areas, 121 (37.9%) were residing in urban areas. The finding of this study is inconsistent with Entwistle et al. (2000) that most distance learners live in rural crowded environments that negatively affect their study habits. In addition, they may also have no access to web resources. The result on the distribution of the respondents (part two to part six) by employment category indicated that majority 153(47.96%) of the respondents were employed by the government. 109(34.17%) were privately employed and

57 were employed by the community. The implication of his result to the study is that these learners need social guidance counselling for sound study routine to balance between work related issues and studying,

The result on the distribution of respondents by monthly earnings indicated that out of 319 respondents, 119(37.3%) of them were earning a monthly income between Ksh. 21,000 to Ksh. 30,000; 72(22.6%) earning less than 10,000 a month; 65(20.4%) earning a monthly income of Ksh. 11,000 to Ksh. 20,000 and 63 (19.7%) earning over Ksh. 31,000 on a monthly basis. The result is inconsistent with Rambo (2008) who suggested large number of learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning is low-income earners who may spend a lot of time looking for money at the expense of their studies and seeking for social guidance, and counselling services. The result on the distribution of the respondents by number of dependants indicated out of 319 respondents, 139(43.6%) had one to three dependents, 61(19.1%) had none and over five dependents respectively. While, 58(18.2%) had four to five dependents. The result is inconsistent with Fajonyomi (2012)'s finding that most of the distance learners have dependents who make it difficult for them to develop sound study time. The result on the distribution of the respondents on the basis whether study environment was conducive or not out of 319 respondents, 205(64.3%) were of the view that their study environment was not conducive to study. while 114 (35.7%) were of the view that the study environment was conducive. The implication of this result to the study is that most distance learners read at home in crowded environments that negatively affect their study habits as stated by Entwistle et al. (2000).

Influence of social guidance and counselling on study habits of distance learners

The participants responded to Items (indicators) of social guidance and counselling on the Likert scale of 1-5, where strongly agree (SA) = 5. Agree (A) =4 Undecided (U) =Disagree (D) = 2 and strongly disagree. (SD)= 1.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of learners in Bachelor of Education programme by Distance learning (n=319).

Characteristics	n(f) frequency	(%)
Gender		
Male	145	45.45
Female	174	54.54
Total	319	100
Age(years)		
19-25	77	24.1
26-30	75	23.5
31-35	108	33.9
36-40	34	10.7
41 and above	25	7.8
Total		100
Marital status		
Single	105	32.9
Married	186	58.3
Separated	12	3.8
Divorced	9	2.8
Widowed	2	0.6
Remarried	5	1.6
Total	319	100
Education level		
Form 4	86	27.00
P1	162	50.70
Diploma and above	71	22.30
Total	319	100
Place of residence		
Rural	198	62.10
Urban	121	37.90
Total	319	100.0
Employment category		
Government	153	47.96
Community	57	17.87
Private	109	34.17
Total	319	100.0
Monthly income(Ksh.)		
Less than 10,000	72	22.6
11,000- 20,000	65	20.4
21,000-30,000	119	37.3
31,000 and above	63	19.7
Total	319	100
No. of dependants		
None	61	19.10
One to three	139	43.60
Four to five	58	18.2
Above 5	61	19.1
Total	319	100.0

Table 2. Contd.

Affected financially		
Yes	250	78.4
No	69	21.6
Total	319	100
Year of enrolment		
2	45	14.1
3	71	22.3
4	68	21.3
5	66	20.7
6	69	21.6
Total	319	100
Study environment		
Yes	205	64.3
No	114	35.7
Total	319	100

The results are presented in Table 3.

Social guidance and counselling and interpersonal skills

Indicator (1) 'Social guidance and counselling helped me to develop interpersonal skills' had a mean of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 1.312. The results indicate that out of 319 participants 58(18.1%) of them strongly disagreed, 40(12.5%) disagreed, 34(10.7%) of them were undecided on whether or not social guidance and counselling helped them to develop interpersonal skills. On the other hand, 153(48%) agreed with the statement while 34(10.7%) strongly agreed. The results show that the item mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of 1.312 were below the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of the result to the study is that social guidance and counselling does not significantly influence development of interpersonal skills for group discussion. The result contradicts Lianos (2015)'s study finding that social guidance empowers learners to develop interpersonal skill to consult lectures and peer in matters of study at distance. Indicator (2) 'Social guidance and counselling has helped me to retain good relationship with my peers' had a mean of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 1.315. Out of 319 respondents, 54(16.9%) strongly disagreed, 45(14.1%) disagreed, 44(13.8%) of them were undecided on whether or not social guidance and counselling have helped them to retain good relationship with their peers. On the other hand, 134(42%) agreed with the statement and 42(13.2%) of them strongly agreed. The results show that the item mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of

1.315 were below the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.2. The implication of the results to this study is that social guidance and counselling does not significantly influence the retention of good relationship with peers These results are inconsistent with Wambugu (2012) who suggests that this could be true since not all learners receive all type of guidance and counselling due to their large numbers, lack of time and fewer professional student counsellors.

Social guidance and counselling and sense of responsibility

Indicator (3) 'Social guidance and counselling has assisted me to develop safety and survival skills' had a mean of 3.27 and a standard deviation of 1.277 and was the highest amongst the twelve indicators. Out of 319 participants, 43(15.4%) strongly agreed, 141(44.2%) of them agreed; while 53(16.6%) strongly disagreed, 44(13.8%) disagreed and 38(11.9%) of them were undecided. The item mean score of 3.27 and standard deviation of 1.277 were slightly below the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of this finding is that social guidance and counselling modestly influences the development of safety and survival skills amongst learners for sound study habits. Indicator (4) 'Social guidance and counselling has helped me develop a sense of responsibility' had a mean score of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 1.269. Out of 319 participants, 51(16%) strongly agreed, 144(35.1%) agreed, 51(16.0%) disagreed, 39(12.2%) strongly disagreed and 34(10.7%) were undecided on whether social guidance and

Table 3. Influence of social guidance and counselling on study habits of distance learners.

Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Std. dev
Social guidance and counselling helped me to develop interpersonal skills.	34(10.7%)	153(48%)	34(10.7%)	40(12.5%)	58(18.1%)	3.20	1.312
Social guidance and counselling has helped me to retain good relationship with my peers.	42(13.2%)	134(42%)	44(13.8%)	45(14.1%)	54(16.9%)	3.20	1.315
Social guidance and counselling has assisted me to develop safety and survival skills	43(13.5%)	141(44.2%)	38(11.9%)	53(16.6%)	44(13.8%)	3.27	1.277
Social guidance and counselling has helped me develop sense of responsibility.	51(16%)	144(45.1%)	34(10.7%)	51(16%)	39(12.2%)	3.37	1.269
Social guidance and counselling services has helped me to develop social competence	47(14.8%)	142(44.5%)	32(10%)	48(15%)	50(15.7%)	3.28	1.320
Social guidance and counselling has enabled me to develop better self esteem	46(14.4%)	146(45.8%)	33(10.2%)	54(17.1%)	40(12.5%)	3.33	1.267
Social guidance and counselling has helped me to achieve positive attitude towards study.	52(16.3%)	142(44.5%)	29(9.1%)	47(14.7%)	49(15.4%)	3.32	1.328
Social guidance and counselling has helped me develop better communication skills.	47(14.6%)	140(43.8%)	34(10.7%)	56(17.7%)	42(13.2%)	3.29	1.284
Social guidance and counselling has empowered me to develop self-confidence in my studies	39(12.2%)	144(45.1%)	42(13.2%)	43(13.5%)	51(16%)	3.24	1.289
Social guidance and counselling has helped me to respect others.	46(14.4%)	144(45.1%)	36(11.3%)	38(11.9%)	55(17.2%)	3.12	1.355
Social guidance and counselling has helped me to develop self-awareness.	49(15.4%)	144(45.1%)	36(11.3%)	45(14.1%)	45(14.1%)	3.34	1.29
I seek social guidance and counselling to overcome feelings of isolation issues	47(14.7%)	142(44.5%)	48(15.0%)	32(10.0%)	50(15.7%)	3.28	1.329
Composite mean						3.29	
Composite standard deviation							1.297

counselling had helped them develop a sense of responsibility. This shows that the item mean score of 3.37 and standard deviation of 1.269 were above the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of this finding is that social guidance and counselling positively promote sense of responsibility for self-regulated study. Indicator (10) 'Social guidance and counselling has made me to respect others' had a mean of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 1.29. Out of 319 participants, 46 (14.4%) strongly agreed, 144(45.1%) agreed while 55(17.2%) strongly disagreed and 38(11.9%) disagreed. A few others 36(11.3%) were undecided on whether social guidance and counselling had made them to respect others. The item mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 1.29 were above the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of this finding is that social guidance and counselling was perceived to positively

influence learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning University of Nairobi respect to each other that is adequate for group study. This is in line with Cort et al. (2015)'s study finding.

Social guidance and counselling and social competence

Indicator (5) 'Social guidance and counselling services have helped me to develop social competence' had a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.32. Out of 319 participants 47(14.7%) strongly agreed, and 142(44.5%) agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 50(15.7%) strongly disagreed, 48(15.0%) disagreed while 32(10%) of them were undecided on whether social guidance and counselling services have helped them to develop social competence. Further

analysis shows that the mean score was 3.28 and standard deviation of 1.32, which were slightly below the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication is that social guidance and counselling services were perceived to moderately influence the development of social competence. This finding supports the finding of Gedviliene (2014) that learners need social competence to deal with challenges that come with sound self-regulated study routine. Indicator (12) 'I seek social guidance and counselling to overcome feelings of isolation' had a mean score of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.329. Out of 319 respondents, 47(14.7%) strongly agreed, 142(44.5%) agreed, 50(15.7%) strongly disagreed, 32(10.0%) disagreed. A substantive number, 48 (15%) were undecided on whether they seek social guidance and counselling to overcome feelings of isolation. Results show that the item mean score of 3.28 and standard deviation of 1.29 were slightly below the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication is that social guidance and counselling appear to be moderately perceived to influence feelings of loneliness in the Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning of University of Nairobi. This can enhance feeling that they belong to a scholarly community and consult peer and lecturers. This finding concurs with Moore and Kearsley (2012)'s suggestion that feelings of isolation and not belonging to scholarly community can negatively affect sound study time.

Social guidance, counselling and self-esteem

Indicator (6) 'Social guidance and counselling have enabled me to develop self-esteem' had a mean of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 1.267. Out of 319 participants 46(14.4%) strongly agreed and 146(45.8%) agreed with the statement while 54(16.9%) disagreed and 40(12.5%) strongly disagreed. Another 33(10.3%) of them were undecided on whether social guidance and counselling had enabled them to develop self-esteem the item mean score of 3.33 and standard deviation of 1.267 were above the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication was that social guidance and counselling was seen to positively influence development of self-esteem that helps distance learners set personal study goals. This finding supports the finding of Foster et al. (2017) that when learners feel less valued socially, they may not set personal study goals. Indicator (7) 'Social guidance and counselling has helped me to develop positive attitude towards study' had a mean of 3.32 and a standard deviation of 1.32. Out of 319, 52 (16.3%) strongly agreed and 142(44.5%) agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 49(15.9%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 47(14.7%) disagreed and 29(9.10%) were undecided as to whether social guidance and counselling have helped them to achieve

positive attitude towards study. The indicator's mean score of 3.32 and standard deviation of 1.328 were above the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication is that social guidance and counselling were perceived to positively influence study attitude of distance learners. This result contradicts Wango (2015)'s study that reveals that distance learners do not seek guidance and counselling due to negative attitude.

Social guidance and counselling and communication skills

Indicator (8) 'Social guidance and counselling have helped me develop better communication skills' had a mean of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 1.284. Out of 319 participants, 56 (17.6%) strongly agreed, 140(43.9%) agreed, 42(13.2%) strongly disagreed, 47 (14.7%) disagreed while 34(10.7%) were undecided as to whether or not social guidance and counselling had helped them develop better communication skills. This item mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.284 were more of the same as composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of the finding to the study is that social guidance and counselling is perceived to positively influence the development of better communication skills. The finding agrees with Cort and Anderson (2015) finding that distance education cannot help distance learners to master communication skills. Indicator (11) 'Social guidance and counselling has helped me to develop self-awareness' had a mean score of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.329. Out of 319 participants, 49(15.4%) strongly agreed, 144(45.1%) agreed, 45(14.1%) strongly disagreed and the same number 45(14.1%) disagreed. A few 36 (11.3%) of them were undecided on whether social guidance and counselling have helped them to develop self-awareness. The item's mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 1.29 were above the composite mean score of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.297. The implication of the result to the study is that social guidance and counselling is perceived by the respondents to positively influence development of self-awareness, which is the cornerstone in setting personal study goal. Such arguments are supported by Lianos (2015)' study

One respondent reported the following:

'...It is true that social guidance and counselling is offered at University of Nairobi especially during orientation. Some lecturer and administrators do give us a chance to share with them social issues to sort out study difficulties. We are able to meet other learners whom we do not meet often. However, most of us are preoccupied with work and family commitment that takes away our time to seek for social guidance and counselling as much as we are

aware that it can improve our study habits'... (Respondent 10).

However, another respondent blamed the student counsellor for inadequate guidance and counselling support services.

'...When we come during tutorial sessions in main learning centres to seek for social guidance and counselling, the student counsellor always refers us to course coordinators or administrators who may not have the adequate guidance and counselling counselling skills...'. (Participant 100).

However, lecturers provide social guidance and counselling, chaplain and support staff (Respondent 302).

Correlation analysis of social guidance and counselling and study habits of distance learners

Pearson correlation coefficient adopted to test the relationship between social guidance and counselling and study habits of Bachelor of Education Programme by distance learning. This was done at 95% level of confidence. Several characteristics of social guidance and counselling versus study habits were analysed; Social guidance and counselling helped me to develop interpersonal skills (Item 1; $r = 0.855$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$), Social guidance and counselling have helped me to retain good relationship with my peers (Item 2; $r = 0.916$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have assisted me to develop safety and survival skills (Item 3; $r = 0.906$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have helped me develop sense of responsibility (Item 4; $r = 0.914$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling services have helped me to develop social competence (Item 5 $r = 0.926$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have enabled me to develop self-esteem (Item 6 $r = 0.913$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have helped me to achieve positive attitude towards study (Item 7 $r = 0.906$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have helped me develop better communication skills (Item 8, $r = 0.875$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have empowered me to develop self-confidence in my studies (Item 9, $r = 0.846$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have made me to respect others (Item 10, $r = 0.839$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); Social guidance and counselling have helped me to develop self-awareness (Item 11, $r = 0.918$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); I seek social guidance and counselling to overcome feelings of isolation issues (Item 12, $r = 0.879$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$); The results obtained are indicated in Table 4.

Regression analysis of social guidance and counselling influence on study habits of distance learners

Simple linear regression adopted to investigate how social guidance and counselling influence the study habits of distance learners in Bachelor of Education programmes by distance learning of the University of Nairobi. Table 5 presents the regression model summary table on the social guidance and counselling influence on the study habits of distance learners in Bachelor of Education programmes by distance learning of the University of Nairobi.

The model summary table suggests that there is a positive correlation ($R = 0.953$) between social guidance and counselling and the study habits of distance learners in Bachelor of Education programmes by distance learning of the University of Nairobi and these are predicted by the regression model. This results contradict Bowa (2008) studies that suggest that there are significant relationships between social guidance and counselling academic performance of learners pursuing Bachelor of education (arts) by distance learning. The ANOVA results indicated that ($F\text{-statistics} (1,317) = 3132.444$ is significant at $P\text{ value } 0.000 < 0.05$). The implication to this study is that the regression model results in significantly better prediction of influence of social guidance and counselling on study habits of learners in Bachelor of Education programme by distance learning of University of Nairobi. The regression ANOVA output statistics results are shown in Table 6. The regression model for social guidance and counselling was $y = 0.074 + 0.931X_2$. The implication to this study is that for each indicator of social guidance and counselling support services, study habits of distance learners marginally changed by 0.931 unit. The regression coefficients results are in Table 7.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Therefore, the findings of the study confirm that social guidance and counselling are critical in enhancing study habits of distance learners for quality education. The study recommends that all universities providing distance education should provide effective social guidance and counselling in order to improve the study habits of distance learners. Mentorship and social skills training should be given to lectures and university officials dealing directly with distance learners. Online social guidance and counselling should be improved to enhance study habits of distance learners. The University of Nairobi officials should ensure the integration of social guidance and counselling as an integral part of the curriculum, in order to address the myriad challenges facing distance learners in connection with study habits. Distance learners should also be encouraged to put into practice

Table 4. Correlations of social guidance and counselling and study habits of distance learners.

Statements of social guidance and counselling	Study habits of distance learners	
Social guidance and counselling helped me to develop interpersonal skills	Pearson correlation	0.855**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have assisted me to develop safety and survival skills	Pearson correlation	0.906**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have helped me to retain good relationship with my peers	Pearson correlation	0.916**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling services have helped me to develop social competence	Pearson correlation	0.926**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have helped me to develop sense of responsibility	Pearson correlation	0.914**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have enabled me to develop esteem	Pearson correlation	0.913**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have empowered me to develop self confidence in my studies	Pearson correlation	0.846**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have helped me develop better communication skills	Pearson correlation	0.875
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have helped me to develop self –awareness	Pearson correlation	0.918**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Social guidance and counselling have made me to respect others	Pearson correlation	0.839**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
I seek social guidance and counselling to improve my self-esteem issues	Pearson correlation	0.906**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	
Social guidance and counselling have helped me to achieve positive attitude towards study	Pearson correlation	0.906**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319
Study habits of distance learners	Pearson correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	319
Social guidance and counseling(overall correlation)	Pearson correlation	0.953**
	sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	319

Table 5. Regression model summary table of the social guidance and counselling and study habits of distance learners.

Model summary				
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.953 ^a	0.908	0.908	0.385

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Guidance and counselling

Table 6. An ANOVA of the regression of social guidance and counselling and study habits of distance learners.

ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	463.559	1	463.559	3132.444	0.000 ^b
1	Residual	46.912	317	0.148		
	Total	510.470	318			

a. Dependent Variable: Study habits of distance learners
b. Predictors: (Constant), social guidance and counselling

Table 7. Coefficients for the Regression of Social Guidance and Counselling and Study Habits of Distance Learners.

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.074	0.059		1.255	0.210
	Social guidance and counselling	0.931	0.017	0.953	55.968	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Study habits of distance learners

various social guidance and counselling strategies provided, in order to counter act any emerging issues that may negatively influence study habits.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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