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Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District, Uganda

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Abstract

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The specific objectives of the study were; i) To investigate the relationship between academic guidance & counselling and students' academic performance, ii) To assess the relationship between personal guidance & counselling and students' academic performance, and iii) To examine the relationship between career guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The study employed a correlational research design coupled with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Correlation analysis was employed to establish the strength, direction, and the significance of the relationship between guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The study found out that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between academic guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The study also found out that there is a moderately positive and significant relationship between personal guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. Additionally, the study found out that there is a weak positive and statistically substantial connection between career guidance & counselling on students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The study concludes that guidance and counselling in form of academic, personal, and advice on careers & counselling had a statistically substantial association with performance of students academically in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. Therefore, a significant increase in the different forms of guidance and counselling resultantly leads to an improvement in performance of students academically in government-aided secondary educational institutions within Kayunga district. This investigation recommends that the secondary schools' administrators and stakeholders should effectively promote guidance and counselling in the different aspects such as academics, personal, and career as this would play a significant role in enabling students achieve higher academic performance and develop skills that are valuable throughout their educational course and beyond in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

Keywords: Academic Guidance & Counselling, Personal Guidance & Counselling, Career Guidance & Counselling, Students' Academic Performance, Government-Aided Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Improving Students' academic achievement reflects a goal of every school thus every school is doing everything within the means to achieve that purpose. As such government aided secondary schools in Kayunga town council, Kayunga district, just like what is happening elsewhere worldwide, provide guidance and counselling services to safe guard the students against psychological threats. Guidance and Counselling is among the education services contained in the national policy of education.

Frank Parsons (1909) is often regarded as the father of guidance. He emphasized the importance of helping individuals make meaningful and informed career decisions based on their interests, abilities and values. Carl Rogers (1951) saw counselling as a process of facilitating personal growth and self-understanding. Rogers` person centered approach to counselling emphasized empathy, unconditional positive regard and genuineness in the counsellor client relationship.

Globally, early adolescence is a vulnerable age and it's also known as the age full of conflict. They are vulnerable to experiencing psychological problems in an effort to achieve their development. Often teenagers feel hopeless when facing problems because they think that adults do not understand their world. So they take it out on negative things such as getting involved in brawls (Primantoro, 2023), smoking, alcohol, and even drug abuse (Nurjan 2019). This causes teenagers especially generation Z to experience serious mental illness. At least 1 in 3 teenagers in Indonesia experience mental health problems, and 6.1% are aged 15years and over (Fadhilah et al, 2024). They need a guidance and counseling teacher who should be able to emphasize with the problems they are experiencing and help them get through their teenage years as well.

In the context of secondary schools in Africa, specifically Nigeria, appreciable progress has been recorded in setting up administrative and functional structures towards delivery of services within guidance & counseling in order to enhance personal, educational and career progress of students (Mwangi & Habil 2015). This is as a result of the growing knowledge on the benefits Among the counseling and advisory services to an overall development of the students and the learners within schools. This growing awareness has offered so many prospects for sustainable development of the guidance & counselling units and structures (Paolini, 2019).

In East Africa, there is increasing recognition upon this importance of guiding and counselling. The education ministry in Kenya developed a national school health policy that recognizes counselling services as an essential component of health promotion and disease prevention. This alone proves the importance of guidance& counselling. (Wambu 2015)

The conditions in present day Uganda that have created the need for guidance and counselling include peer pressure, social problems, family conflicts, poverty, and sexual pervasiveness. A study by Matovu (2020) examined the psychosocial effects of counselling on student's academic outcomes. The findings revealed that students who engaged in counselling session showed reduced anxiety and improved self-esteem, which led to better academic performance. Guidance and counselling is more important program in the Ugandan secondary schools in order to help the students to cope up with day to day psychological and social challenges.

In Kayunga district, like many regions in Uganda, students face several contextual challenges that impact educational outcomes therefore in Kayunga town council, government aided secondary schools are in need of such services of guidance & counselling because most of the residents in Kayunga town council are living below the poverty line and therefore these parents are unable to provide basic necessities to their children. High poverty levels result in absenteeism and low retention of students in schools, especially among girls (Owano, 2013) thus a need to counsel them not to engage in sexual permissiveness so as to improve the academic performance of students. Gender disparities, poverty, and cultural attitudes towards education can create barriers for students particularly girls (Walakira, 2022).

Statement of the problem.

Students perform better if they are well guided on personal, academic and career issues (Gordon,2020). If the learner is not comfortable, then that learner will not be able to concentrate hence his or her performance is expected to be low. Having been on ground because the researcher is a teacher, students experience problems such as bullying, drug abuse, inappropriate use of technology, homosexuality, anxiety depression and stress, relationships among others, its therefore necessary for guidance and counselling to meet societal needs hence minimizing cases of indiscipline and violence among students

Resources of unknown value are always destroyed and academic performance affected. Some schools use suspensions and expulsion where the student acts against the school rules and regulations yet it's necessary for this student to be given a hearing prior to suspension and expulsion. In spite of all the efforts put in by the school administrators and other education stakeholders to provide all the necessary materials required to ensure effective and efficient learning among the students of Kayunga town council Kayunga district, many were realized that their academic performance and achievement was below average. According to Beatrice (2023), she stressed that there is high youth population out of school and therefore high adult illiteracy in Kayunga district.

The absence of guidance & counselling in the present day schools leads to unprecedented rise in crime rate, increased dropout rate, increased violence, inappropriate use of technology, wrong career choice among others. Therefore, severe counselling and guidance is needed to make learning more meaningful hence improving the academic performance of students so that they can overcome career, academic and personal challenges.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

Specific Objectives

The investigation was directed by the subsequent particular goals:

i. To investigate the relationship between academic guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district
ii. To assess the relationship between personal guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.
iii. To examine the relationship between career guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

Study Hypotheses

The subsequent research hypotheses served as a guide to this investigation:

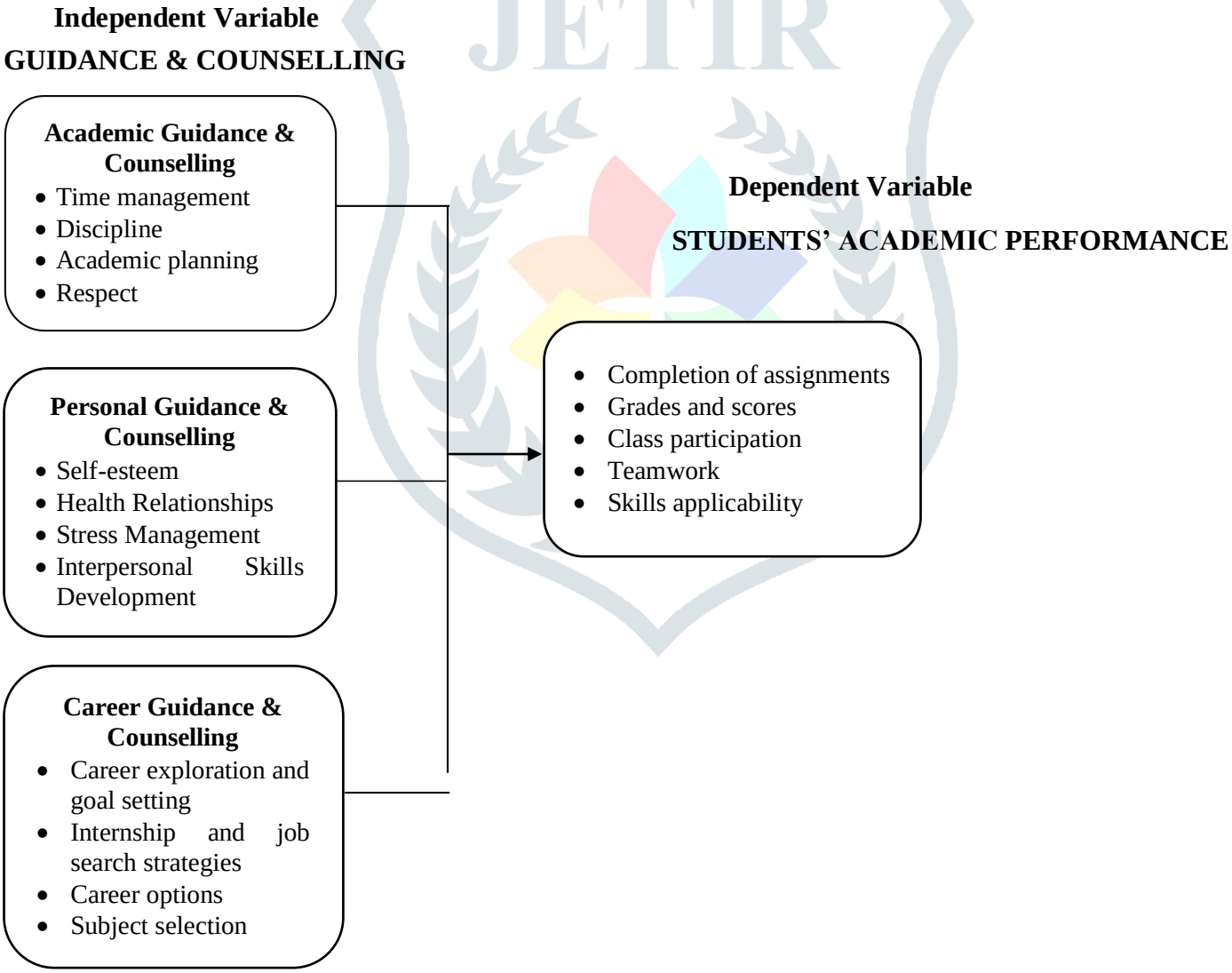
H_0: There is no significant relationship between academic guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

H_1: There is no significant relationship between personal guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

H_2: There is no significant relationship between Career guidance & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents a diagrammatic illustration on the association between Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance.



Academic Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance

Academic guidance and Counselling primarily focuses on assisting students in achieving academic success, personal developments and educational goals within an academic setting. Its main purpose is providing students

with the necessary tools, resources and strategies to excel academically. Such skills may include time management, goal setting, study skills, academic planning for academic excellence (Braddock, 2001). According to Hilton (2022), Counselling refers to the talking therapies which involve a trained therapist talking to their clients.

A study by Ghosh, K, & Ghosh, R, (2019) highlighted the significant impact of personalized academic counselling on students' academic success. The research suggests that tailored counselling helps students set realistic academic goals and improve their self –efficacy (Gosh & Gosh, 2019). Research by Conklin, T, & Tschannen-Moran , M. (2020) emphasizes the importance of educational planning and advising. Their work reveals that effective academic advising can lead to increased retention rates and improve students' academic outcomes.

According to Enock and Asogwa (2021) academic counselling services help students to give respect to their teachers and to recognize each other's differences, try to understand their significance, and then respond with respect, politeness and care leading to improved student's attendance. In the study by Amna and Akbar (2021), academic counselling of students in schools which transcend beyond classroom to also involve other school activities and programs positively impacts the learning process and performance of schools. According to Canute (2018) when learners receive academic counselling services, they exhibit respect for each other and their teachers, which creates an improved teaching and learning environment leading to good academic performance of students. Akhtar and Hussain (2021) found that students who received educational counselling services showed significant improvement in their academic performance. The study also found that students who received guidance services are more likely to have positive attitudes towards learning, attend school regularly, and engage in extracurricular activities. A study by Delgado et al. (2017) shows that the quality of guidance services was a critical factor in determining the impact of these services on academic achievement. That pupils who were given high quality advice services showed greater improvement in academic performance than those who received low-quality services.

Personal Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance

Personal guidance and counselling encompasses a range of supportive services provided to students to help them navigate personal, social, emotional and psychological challenges. This form of guidance aims to assist students understand themselves better, developing positive self-concepts, fostering healthy relationships, coping with personal difficulties and making informed decisions about their lives. It focuses on building self- esteem and confidence, managing stress and anxiety, dealing with social isolation or relationships challenges and promoting overall life challenges. According to Patel and Jones(2023), they emphasize the importance of personalized guidance in addressing individual students needs, thereby leading to improved grades and overall academic engagement.

Mertz, Eckloff, Johannsen and Quaquebeke (2015) in their study found that lack of personal counselling for students in schools is not only a get- away for stress, but it also damages their self- esteem, which may lead to unethical

behaviors thus affecting the students' academic progress. Dhanapala (2021) reported that counselling students leads to decreased absenteeism, creates a more positive and focused learning atmosphere, enhances trust and openness which are all virtues which can lead to improved teaching and learning.

Goal setting is another essential component in the counselling process. A meta –analysis by Roberts et al.(2024) demonstrates that students who set specific , measurable goals in collaboration with a counsellor showed significant improvements in both academic performance and career satisfaction. This aligns with earlier work by Zimmerman and Schunk (2019), which established that goal- setting theory is fundamental for motivating students in educational settings.

With effective guidance and counselling, the challenges and problems that students face that undermine their academic endeavors could be handled and solved. These problems need information, understanding, encouragement and guidance (Chirese, 2006). Once they are helped, they will deal with their huddles, they will adjust emotionally and socially and their academic performance will be enhanced (Nyaga, 2011). According to Kahveci (2023) personal counselling services are intended to improve the mood, treat mental illness, reduce stress and promote self -esteem and resilience, among other functions. This therefore implies that counselling services are the foundation for creating humane and ethical behaviors among students which positively impacts on the student's academic performance.

Career Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance

Career guidance focuses on helping students explore career options, make informed career decisions, develop career related skills and navigate on the job market. Its major goal is to assist students in identifying their interests, strength, values and goals related to their career aspirations. Research by Rojewski et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of career counselling in aiding students' academic performance. The authors found that structured career counselling programs significantly improved students' motivation and academic outcomes by aligning their academic choices with career aspirations. Similarly, a 2021 study by Barlow et al, re inforced this by demonstrating that students receiving individualized career guidance exhibited higher grades and enhanced engagement in their studies (Barlow, D,& Phillips,E, 2021)

Hooley and Watts (2023) emphasize that providing career related context to academic subjects makes learning more relevant and meaningful boosting student's performance and academic achievement. Career guidance assists in choosing appropriate subjects, ensuring that they align with their career goals and maximizing academic success. Career guidance helps students set clear academic goals aligned with their career aspirations leading to improved focus and academic performance. (Savickas,2005).

Research by Ali, S, & Topping, K.(2021) examined the connection link academic performance achievement and job counseling within a sample of secondary school students. The study found that students who participated in structured career counselling were more likely to set realistic academic goals, leading to enhanced performance in their studies.

Gati et al. (2017) suggests that career guidance has a positive impact on student's success with students who received career guidance being more likely to choose appropriate courses and subjects, align their education with their career goals, and achieve academic success.

Methodology

The study presents the methodology which the study employed in a bid to achieve the stated study objectives.

Research Design

A research design helps in the determination of the entire methodology that will be executed during the investigation project. Cooper and Schindler (2003) define a research design as a strategy researchers have to use when carrying out research. Therefore, this study employed a correlational research design coupled with both quantitative and qualitative approaches in an effort to collect results in a bid to examine the connection amongst students' academic achievement and guidance and counseling within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district, Uganda. Inferential statistics which included Spearman's Rank correlation was used in data analysis.

Descriptive research designs are recommended for studies which seek to ascertain a dependent variable's response to an independent variable (Bhandari, 2023) and this explains why this study employed this type of research design. This method was used because it is appropriate in gathering data from a large sample of respondents within a short period of time. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used

Target Population

As stated by Sunders, Cooper and Schindler (2003) this study populace refers to the entire study population, objects and study items from which a smaller sample can be selected.

This study has a sample size of two (2) schools, two head teachers, 8 teacher counsellors and fifty (50) teachers giving a total of 60 respondents. Head teachers and teacher counsellors were selected using purposive sampling technique. Simple random sampling design is ustilized towards drawing samples of these teachers from these two schools. Purposive sampling was chosen because the research required a sample that would provide rich information on the connection amongst students' academic achievement and guidance and counseling.

Data Collection Methods

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) data collection refers to the process of bringing order and meaning of information collected. The Likert scale was the primary research tool utilized to collect data for this investigation questionnaires Acquired and adjusted to align with the research goals. An interview guide was used in qualitative data collection from head teachers and teacher counsellors. Data collected is guided by research questions and objectives.

The above methods were adopted in an effort to obtain data from the respondents related to The connection among academic achievement of pupils and guidance and counseling within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

Data Processing and Analysis

Collected data was both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis were used. Data were analyzed using the statistical software for social sciences (SPSS), with the descriptive and correlation data analysis techniques being employed were adopted. Percentages, tables, and frequencies are examples of descriptive statistics that are used within analyzing data. Data from interviews were analyzed thematically so as to give an in depth meaning to supplement information from interview guides. But in order to ascertain a connection amongst guidance & counselling and performances of students academics within secondary government aided schools in Kayunga locality, this investigation employed a correlation analysis method.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher was permitted by Islamic University in Uganda to carry out the study as a requirement for master's degree. In an effort to uphold the ethical research standards, the investigator requested requesting a letter of introduction provided by center of post graduate studies of this Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) which introduced her to the head teachers in Kayunga district. This was followed by formally writing to them requesting must get approval to carry out an investigation in those institutions. In the process, the researcher made it clear to the respondents that the information they provided was to be kept private and utilized exclusively towards research.

According to Bandhari (2023) the privacy of the participants is paramount during any study therefore the researcher has to try to keep the identities and privacy of the participants anonymous so as to enable them express themselves without any fear.

Study Findings

The study findings presented in this section include; descriptive statistics on the demographic composition of the respondents and correlation analysis to provide answers to the study objectives.

Findings on the Demographic Compositions

The study assessed the demographic compositions of the respondents who engaged in the study from the selected government-aided senior educational institutions within Kayunga district plus the conclusions are accessible within figure 1;

Table 1: Demographic Composition of the Respondents

Demographic Composition			
Category	**Items**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Gender	Female	19	38.0
	Male	31	62.0
	Total	**50**	**100.0**
Age Grouping	25-30 years	6	12.0
	31-35 years	22	44.0
	36-40 years	14	28.0
	Above 40 years	8	16.0
	Total	**50**	**100.0**
Education Level	Certificate	5	10.0
	Diploma	12	24.0
	Bachelors	24	48.0
	Masters	9	18.0
	Total	**50**	**100.0**
Marital Status	Single	17	34.0
	Married	30	60.0
	Widowed	3	6.0
	Total	**50**	**100.0**
Period of Work at the School	1-3 years	8	16.0
	4-5 years	26	52.0
	Above 5 years	16	32.0
	Total	**50**	**100.0**

Source: Field data, 2024

This study findings in Table 1 suggest that the overwhelming 31 (62.0%) of the respondents who were engaged within this investigation are males and 19 (38.0%) of the respondents who were engaged in the study were females. The study findings also indicate that the biggest proportion 22 (44.0%) of the respondents were aged From 31 to 40 years old, then 14 (28.0%) of the participants who were aged 36-40 years, then 8 (16.0%) of the respondents who were aged above 40 years, and the least proportion 6 (12.0%) of the respondents were aged 25-30 years.

In addition, the study findings revealed that a bigger proportion 24 (48.0%) of the respondents had attained a bachelors' education level, followed by 12 (24.0%) of the respondents who had attained a diploma education level, then 9 (18.0%) of the respondents who had attained a masters' education level, and the least proportion 5 (10.0%) of the respondents had attained a certificate education level.

In respect to marital status, majority 30 (60.0%) of the respondents were married, followed by 17 (34.0%) of the respondents who were single, and a few 3 (6.0%) of the respondents were widowed. The study more so indicated that majority 26 (52.0%) of the respondents had worked with the different secondary schools over a span of four to five years, followed by 16 (32.0%) of the respondents who collaborated on behalf of different secondary schools for a duration greater than five years, and the least proportion 8 (16.0%) of the respondents collaborated on behalf of different secondary schools for one to three ages.

Findings on the Objectives of the Study

The outcomes are presented within this section with reference to the specific study objectives.

Relationship between Academic Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

The study sought to look at the connection amongst academic guidance & counselling and students' academic achievement in secondary government aided schools within Kayunga district. This relationship is examined with Spearman's Rank correlation analysis and these findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Findings on the Relationship between Academic Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

		Academic Guidance & Counselling	Students' Academic Performance
Academic Guidance & Counselling	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	50	50
Students' Academic Performance	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	.538**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	50	50

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

Source: Field data, 2024

The study fallouts within Table 2 showed that academic assistance and counseling and students' academic achievement had a strong, favorable, and substantial association within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district (r = 0.538, P-value = .000) at a .01 degree of importance.The findings imply that an increase in academic guidance & counselling strongly and significantly leads to an improvement in academic achievement of students within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

In regards to the impact of academic counseling and advice on pupils' academic achievement in government-aided senior educational institutions in Kayunga district, some of the key informants asserted that;

> *"...academic counsellors provide tailored advice and strategies that address individual student needs, helping students set realistic goals and develop effective study habits which might influence their academic performance."* **(Teacher Counsellor 07)**
>
> *"Counsellors connect students with resources such as tutoring services, workshops, and extracurricular activities that can enhance their learning experience and academic skills which can strike an improvement in the academic performance of students at the school."* **(Head Teacher 01)**

"Academic guidance & counselling enhances student academic planning. Counsellors help students choose courses that align with their academic and career goals, ensuring they meet prerequisites and graduation requirements efficiently which would influence students' academic performance at the school." **(Head Teacher 02)**

"...academic guidance and counselling fosters early intervention through regular monitoring and assessment where counsellors can identify academic or personal issues early on and intervene before they escalate, providing timely support and resources which might improve students' academic performance." **(Teacher Counsellor 01)**

"Academic guidance & counselling addresses emotional and social issues that may affect students' academic performance such as stress, anxiety, and peer pressure, helping students maintain a balanced and focused approach to their studies which would improve student academic performance at the school." **(Teacher Counsellor 06)**

Relationship between Personal Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

This investigation also sought to assess the connection amongst personal guidances & counselling and pupils' academic achievement within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The relationship was examined with Spearman's Rank analysis of correlation and these findings are displayed within figure 3.

Table 3: Correlation Findings on the Relationship between Personal Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

		Personal Guidance & Counselling	Students' Academic Performance
Personal Guidance & Counselling	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
	N	50	50
Students' Academic Performance	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	.470**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
	N	50	50

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

Source: Field data, 2024

The study conclusions within Table 3 exposed that there's moderately optimistic and substantial connection amongst personal guidance & counselling and performance of students academically within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district (r = .470, P-value = .001) at a 0.01 degree of relevance. The findings imply

that an increase in personal guidance & counselling moderately but significantly leads to an improvement in the academic achievement of pupils within government-aided senior educational institutions within Kayunga district.

In accordance to the effect of personal counselling & guidance upon students' academic achievement in government-aided senior educational institutions in Kayunga district, some of the key informants had this to say;

> *"Personal guidance & counselling helps students cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. By addressing these emotional challenges, students can better focus on their studies and perform academically."* **(Teacher Counsellor 04)**
>
> *"...personal guidance & counselling teaches students resilience and coping strategies to manage academic pressures and personal challenges, enabling them to maintain steady academic progress even in difficult times which would significantly influence students' academic performance at the school."* **(Teacher Counsellor 07)**
>
> *"Through personal guidance & counselling, counsellors often work with students to develop better time management and organizational skills, which are crucial for academic success. Effective planning and prioritization can lead to improved student study habits and academic performance."* **(Head Teacher 01)**
>
> *"Personal guidance & counselling can boost students' self-esteem and confidence. When students believe in their abilities, they are more likely to take on challenging tasks, participate actively in class, and perform better academically."* **(Head Teacher 02)**
>
> *"……through personal guidance & counselling, counsellors assist students in resolving interpersonal conflicts, whether with peers, family, or teachers. Reduced conflicts lead to a more conducive learning environment and better focus on academic tasks which might influence an improvement in the students' academic performance at the school."* **(Teacher Counsellor 05)**
>
> *"Personal guidance & counselling can address student behavioral issues that may hinder academic performance, such as procrastination, lack of discipline, or disruptive behavior, and replace them with positive behaviors and this can result into an improvement in students' academic performance at the school."* **(Teacher Counsellor 03)**

Relationship between Career Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

The study further required to examine the connection amongst guidance on careers & counselling and students' academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. The relationship was analyzed using Spearman's Rank correlation analysis plus these findings are displayed within Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Findings on the Relationship between Career Guidance & Counselling and Students' Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kayunga District

		Career Guidance & Counselling	Students' Academic Performance
Career Guidance & Counselling	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.239**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	50	50
Students' Academic Performance	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	.239**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	50	50

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

Source: Field data, 2024

The study conclusions within Table 4 discovered that there's a weak optimistic and statistically substantial relationship between career guidance & counselling regarding the academic achievement of pupils within government-aided senior educational institutions in Kayunga district (r = 0.239, P-value = 0.000) at a 0.01 importance level. These findings imply that an increase within career guidance & counselling slightly but significantly leads to an improvement in academic achievement of students within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

In relation to the impact of vocational counseling and coaching on students' academic achievement in government-aided senior educational institutions within Kayunga district, some of the key informants argued that;

> *"Career guidance counsellors assist students in understanding their strengths and interests, aligning them with appropriate career paths, which can increase motivation and academic engagement thus influencing an improvement in students' academic performance at school."* **(Head Teacher 02)**
>
> *"Career guidance helps students set clear, attainable career goals. Knowing what they are working towards can increase their motivation and commitment to academic achievement which may resultantly improve students' academic performance at the school."* **(Teacher Counsellor 05)**
>
> *"…career counsellors assist student in selecting courses that align with their career aspirations, ensuring they meet prerequisites and gain relevant skills, which can enhance their academic success and performance."* **(Head Teacher 01)**
>
> *"Career guidance & counselling often helps students identify key skills and competencies required for various careers. Students can then focus on developing these skills through their academic work, which*

might influence an improvement in students' overall academic performance at the school." **(Teacher Counsellor 07)**

"Career guidance and counselling can help students identify their interests and aptitudes early, allowing them to tailor their academic pursuits to align with their career goals, which can lead to better performance in subjects they are passionate about thus and improvement in the overall students' academic performance at the school." **(Teacher Counsellor 01)**

Conclusion

The study concludes that guidance and counselling in form of academic, personal, and Advice about careers & counselling had a statistically substantial association with academic achievement of students within government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district. Therefore, a significant increase in the different forms of guidance and counselling resultantly leads to an improvement in students' academic achievement within government-aided senior educational institutions in Kayunga district.

Recommendations

This investigation recommends that the secondary schools' administrators and stakeholders should effectively promote guidance and counselling in the different aspects such as academics, personal, and career as this would play a significant role in enabling students achieve higher academic performance and develop skills that are valuable throughout their educational course and beyond in secondary schools with government assistance in Kayunga district.

The investigation also recommends that a ministry of education and policymakers should design interventions, policies, and programs that better support and promote efficient student guidance and counselling aimed at enhancing student academic learning and overall well-being as this would improve students' academic outcomes in government-aided secondary schools in Kayunga district.

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