Students' Perception on the Effects of Individual Counseling on their Inter-Personal Relationships: A Case Study of Marist International University College, Nairobi

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine sstudents' perception of the effects of individual counseling on inter-personal relationships at MIUC, Nairobi. The study was guided by two theories - cognitive and person-centred theories of counseling, and sought to address the following research objectives. First to determine students' perception of individual counselling at Marist International University College, and secondly to investigate how students perceive the effects of individual counselling on their inter-personal relationships. The study employed a mixed method research design specifically descriptive and convergent parallel designs. Target population consisted of undergraduate students and counselors of MIUC. Findings revealed a strong positive correlation between individual counseling and inter-personal relationships (r> 0.5, p-value < 0.5), at 0.05 level of significance. The themes that emerged from qualitative data results were varied perceptions of individual counseling and perceived positive effects of individual counseling on inter-personal relationships. The study recommended to have, in each institution of higher learning, a quality and functional guidance and counseling office or department where students' with inter-relationship problems can be given the necessary attention and follow up that his or her relationship problems.

Key Words: Psychology, Individual Counseling, Inter-relationship, Undergraduate, Student, University, Researcher and Key Informant.

Introduction

The human person is a social being, free to act and make decisions in his or her surroundings. It is impossible therefore, to separate the human person from the environment, because it is the environment, which helps to shape his or her perception of the world (Valeria, 2014). The individual is born into a family which is the first environment or group that the human person interacts with. From this social cell, the person acquires the values, behaviours and ways of thinking which in turn defines the person's perception of the self, others and the world (Valeria, 2014).

The human person often-times faces some challenges in order to understand

and cope with his or her environment and circles of inter-relationships. In some cases the individual is unable to comprehend the values, the behaviours, the thinking processes, the models and other elements that define his or her world view and decision making processes. It is in this respect that individual counselling becomes most crucial to the human resource development of every society.

Individual Counselling (sometimes called "Individual Psychotherapy") therefore is a process through which a client enter into a therapeutic relationship with a trained counsellor or psychologist – in a very secure, humane, confidential and professional environment – to explore their feelings, beliefs and behaviours, work through challenging experiences, point out key areas that need change in their lives, good understanding of oneself and others, set realistic and achievable individual goals, and work towards the achievement of the desired change (Eremie, 2015). Going by that definition, it then means that counselling involves a process of human interaction that encompasses the client's thought process, emotional make-up, and behaviour.

According to Counselling Tutor (2018) over the years, human beings have always found comfort in sharing their problems or telling their story to one another. This gives weight to the old saying that "problem shared is problem halve solved". This provides universal truth about human inter-relationships: that when things get difficult or when we have to make decisions in our life, sometimes we need someone to listen and hear our story so that we can get a better idea of our options. According See and Kok-Mun (2010) over the last ten years, there is a growing realization that counselling is an important profession in Malaysia as the society becomes more modern and urbanized. This is reflected in the importance given to counselling in Malaysia's workplaces, health care centres and of course, in schools.

According to English (2012) individual counselling can help someone to form new outlook and life skills. This helps the person to be free from recurrent patterns of self-criticism, depression, anxiety, relationship issues, substance abuse, as well as have psychological strength to manage any form of addictive behaviours. Individual Counselling also have the capacity to help people regain lost personal esteem, learn to make right decisions and take personal responsibility for their actions and move on with life; rather than getting stuck. This will help the person to find ways of relating to psychological and physical pain so that unavoidable suffering brings joy and strengthens one's life purpose rather than sadness and failure. This means that individual counseling and psycho-therapy can help people develop good relationships by enhancing attitudes which help a person to reach one's sense of purpose and fulfilment in life.

In the same line of thinking, Nweze and Okolie (2014) agrees with English that individual counselling assist people to know themselves by discovering their desires, interests and capabilities in a bid to prepare their own goals and create strategies for realizing those goals. People seek counselling or therapy for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from dealing with unexpected challenging life events to dealing with various psychological problems or simply desiring greater self-knowledge and personal growth/development (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology Counseling Center, 2018) as well as for reasons of re-establishing

relationships with others, especially with friends, family members and/or strangers.

A study carried out in the United States of America by Bike, Norcross, and Schatz (2009), established that 55% of psycho-therapists sought psychotherapy primarily for personal reasons as compared to 10% entering for professional reasons and 35% for both personal and professional reasons. The most common presenting problems were marital conflict (20%), depression (13%), and anxiety (12%). Other problems - such as career concerns, family-of-origin difficulties, and the need for self-understanding - each composed between 3% and 5% of the sample. This research also indicated that more than 90% of counsellors' related improvement in behavioural, cognitive and affective dimensions, to personal commitment to counselling as compared with 3% or fewer who reported some level of deterioration, while ninety-two percent stated that their counselling therapy was not harmful in any way.

Rupande and Tapfumaneyi, (2013) argue that the counselling profession is a relatively new profession in Africa. However, counselling services have traditionally been provided by non-professionals. Traditional counsellors in Africa have always been the elderly or mature close relatives such as uncles, aunts and close family friends. However, the underlying truth remained that a counsellor is a trusted confidant who is capable of assisting individuals with their personal problems (Rupande & Tapfumaneyi, 2013). Today's enlarged socio-economic environment has necessitated that multi sectorial counselling services be availed hence the emergence of professional counselling in Africa (Rupande and Tapfumaneyi, 2013). According to Pearson Mylab Mastering (2012), that professional counselling today encounters within its practice clinicians who still focus on the avoidance of problems than the promotion of growth and wellbeing. He maintained that the profession is much more than that. The focus on wellness, development, mindfulness, meaningfulness, and remediation of mental disorders is the hallmark of counselling for individuals, groups, couples, and families across the life span.

There are many challenges facing schools in Kenya at the moment. Reports of youth drug abuse, socially unacceptable sexual relationships, poor study habits, teenage pregnancies, truancy, juvenile delinquency, and serious misunderstandings between teachers and students are common in Kenyan educational institutions (Atemi, 2000; Kariuki, 2004). In addition, increased school violence, school strikes, school burning, and HIV / AIDS pandemic orphaned students are among the myriad problems facing Kenyan schools. (Kariuki, 2014). In addition, breakdown of cultural norms, rising unemployment rates, and overloaded curriculum have been cited as the causes of continued violence in schools in the country (Buku & Mwanzia, 2014; Karanja & Bowen, 2012). These issues lead students to seek guidance and counselling services while they in school, while other severely affected students are send to rehabilitation and treatment centres (Karanja & Bowen, 2012).

As a result of the many challenges facing students, guidance and counselling programmes was and implemented for all Kenyan schools. What is not clear however, is how the student counselee and the general student body perceive individual counselling. This is very important because the procurement of individual counselling by students' will depend on how they perceive it. The underlying question

is whether students perceive counselling as something worthwhile or something which cannot help them address their psychological problems and school related issues. This study therefore, is conducted against this background to examine the effects which individual counselling has on students' inter-relationships with special reference to undergraduate students of Marist International University College.

Statement of the Problem

Globally, individual counselling has been an important response to helping people address various psychological problems. This is evidenced in different studies, for instance, in a study by Nyaegah (2011) and also Onderi and Makori (2013) who report that there is significant evidence that individual counseling produces positive results even with difficult learners. Furthermore, it was established in literature that counseling has been a remedial strategy for disruptive leaner behaviour in British schools (Nyaegah, 2011). In addition, Kok, et al. (2012), observed that guidance and counseling gained momentum in countries like Malaysia where it was considered as a panacea for curbing some social evils such as drug addiction, trauma, depression, delinquency and indiscipline in schools.

At Marist International University College, students' inter-relationship issues are not uncommon – including poor student – teacher relationship, poor student – administration relationship, poor student – student relationships. This is in-spite of the college administration and management's effort to curb it. These emerging students' relationship issues are of great concern to parents as well as the college management. For example, 15 students out of 455 (30%) who joined the college within the 2017/2018 academic year left the college due to various inter-relationship issues source/

If individual counselling is to be appreciated and procured by students', then the effects which poor inter-relationships exerts on students' college life need to be addressed. If this is not addressed, there is a high likelihood that the unaddressed emotional and psychological inter-relationship issues will lead to low retention and completion rate as well as poor academic performance of students. For this reason, the researcher proposes to examine the effects which individual counselling has on students' inter-relationships at MIUC. In doing so, it is expected that the integration of counselling services into MIUC curriculum will help improve students' retention and completion rates.

Objectives of the Study

i. To determine students' perception of individual counselling at Marist International University College, Karen.
ii. To investigate students' perception of the effects of individual counselling on their inter-relationships at Marist International University College, Karen.

Literature Review

Students' Perception of Individual Counseling

The perception of students towards individual counseling services is a very important factor in understanding why they procure or refuse to procure it. This is because counseling is a helping relationship which can become positive or negative depending on the way it is perceived and received. The global rationale is that if the individual perceives counseling in a very positive way, the outcome of the counseling relationship will be positive; and the outcome will be negative if the perception is negative. This means that the way the individual in a counseling relationship perceives counseling has tremendous influence on its outcome. Research has shown that people who are positive about counseling procure it while those with negative perception of it did not.

In his research, Terri (2012) conducted a study at St. Catherin's University Minnesota, USA to assess factors influencing college students' involvement in counseling services. Six factors were considered in the study including: culture, gender and stigma, knowledge and experience, accessibility and fear. The sample size was 46 college students and questionnaire was used to gather data. Using descriptive statistics, data was analyzed. Study results showed that each of the six factors had a significant impact on students ' use of counseling services, but the way and extent to which the students were affected by each factor was not consistent with previous studies. The study recommended an increase in the hour of the college counselors ' availability as well as further research to be carried out on the six factors studied from the findings.

The result of the present study however, differed from Terri (2012). This is because individual counseling and psychotherapy were viewed by some students of MIUC as uncomfortable, upsetting, risky and generally tough for them to engage in which are completely different from Terri (2012) six factors. This contrast shows that students perceive and procure individual counseling from a variety of internal and external factors. For instances, students may be fearful of disclosing personal information about themselves with a counselor whom they perceive as a stranger, or feel embarrassed if their social circle becomes aware that they are seeing a therapist. Likewise, students may not want to discuss subject of emotional nature for fear of re-experiencing deeply painful emotions from others among others.

In Kenya, a study by Mwangi and Otanga (2015) which adopted an ex-post facto research design was conducted at Shanzu Teachers College in Mombasa County. The target population was 402 and the sample size of 167, arrived through systematic sampling technique. Data for the study was collected using questionnaire. Result revealed that the majority (86 %) of students in the institution perceived guidance and advisory services in a very positive manner. Further findings showed that while the demand for assistance was low, students had a positive perception role of guidance and counseling services. It was recommended that departments of guidance and counseling take advantage of the positive perception and attitudes of students and that all teacher trainees undergo helping service training.

This can be attributed to the assessment and appreciation of the students

of the guidance and counseling services offered in their college and the ability of the school administration and counselors to discharge these services. Such positive perception of guidance and counseling services enabled students to develop a positive attitude towards providing guidance and counseling services and seek counselors ' assistance whenever necessary. For this reason, Mwangi and Otanga (2015) explained that one of the main challenges faced by counsellors is the negative perception of guidance and counseling programs by students. Their reason is that the decision to seek assistance is associated with factors including varying cultural and family backgrounds to the presenting issue/s, including: awareness of the provision of counseling services, as well as the cost implications associated with seeking counselling.

In summary, literature reviewed of the first research objective showed that students' perception of individual counseling in general are either positive or negative which can be attributed to the various subjective individual factors including age, sex, socio-economic status, educational level among others. The first objective of this study was to investigate the perception of students at MIUC towards the present study was designed to investigate perception of individual counselling services in the college.

Perceive the effects of individual counselling on their inter-personal relationships

The second objective of this was to investigate the perceived effects of individual counseling on students' inter-personal relationship. Literature reviewed on this subject showed on a global level, both positive and negative perception of the effects of individual counseling on students' inter-personal relationships. For instance, the American Counseling Association (2007) conducted a study on the effectiveness of school individual counseling among university students' in Missouri state of the USA. The study made use of 153 school counselling interventions and 16,296 students. The meta-analysis of this data revealed that schools with a well implemented counseling program model had students who reported that (a) they had earned higher grades, (b) their education better prepared them for inter-relationships, (c) their school made more career and college information available to them, and (d) their school had a more positive atmosphere (greater sense of belonging and belonging). From this study, we can say that when there is a quality and functional counselling programme in schools', students' tend to relate better as a result of that good feeling of safety and belongingness.

In addition, Kartika (2016) conducted a study on the effects of counseling on student self-development and career development in Indonesia. It was a purely qualitative study. The sample size for the study was 30 (10th) grade students and 30 (12th) grade students, who were purposely selected from five schools. Data was gathered through a one-on-one counseling sessions that lasted for one hour for each student. Findings established that after the counselling, the students showed that they were more knowledgeable of their strengths and weaknesses in inter-relationships; they were able to identify their inter-relationship problems and prioritize the problems to be solved, as well as identified the goals and steps that should be taken to achieve it. The 12th grade students were more certain of

their choice of academic pursuit towards university education after counselling. Despite the positive impact that the individual counseling had on students, findings from the same study revealed that students still faced difficulties in creating the key performance indicators to evaluate the success of the action taken. From these findings, the study recommends that the students be given counselling and needed guidance periodically to help them overcome the dilemma and build independent skills to solve their relationship and career problems (Kartika, 2016).

In another study carried out in Iran by Andaroon, Kordi, Kimiaei and Esmaeily (2017) on the effects of individual counselling on fear of childbirth in primiparous women. This study was conducted in 2015/16 fiscal year, on 90 primiparous women with gestational ages of 28–30 weeks, who presented themselves at health-care centers in Mashhad, Iran. The individuals were randomly divided into two groups: intervention and control. The intervention group received the counseling program individually during three sessions, and the routine care was given to the control group. Data was collected using the Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire. The data were collected at recruitment during 34–36 weeks of pregnancy and were analyzed using SPSS version 16 software and the statistical tests: Chi-square and t-test was carried out and $P < 0.05$ was considered to be significant. The result shows that during weeks 34–36 of pregnancy, there was a significant difference between the mean scores for fear of childbirth in the intervention group *39.733 ± 17.085* and control group *65.666 ± 15.019*, respectively. The study hence, showed a significant difference between the two groups ($P < 0.001$). From the result, it is evident that counselling is effective in reducing fear of childbirth in a way that the level of fear of childbirth in primiparous women was significantly lower in women who were counselled before childbirth than the control group. These results indicate that individual counseling has tremendous positive effect on individuals who receive it.

In Africa, similar studies have been conducted such as the study by Guyit, Akwaji and Akos (2016) on the role of counselling services in understanding the characteristics and aetiology of learning disabilities among primary school pupils in Nigeria. Findings show that individual counseling offer the following benefits: helping parents to understand and to accept their child's problem; reduces anxiety stemming from apprehension about the psychological and educational development of their child; parents can discover that they are not alone; other parents have similar problems and have found solutions; helping parents to realize that they are an integral part of their child's learning, development, and behavior, they can learn to perceive their children differently and to deal with their problems more effectively; and helping parents learn about discipline, communication skills, behavioural management, parent advocacy, special education legislation, social skills development, helping one's child make friends, home management, and college and vocational opportunities (Guyit et al., 2016).

Another study was contacted by Gatua, Sindabi and Chepchieng (2015) in Nakuru County, Kenya to determine the impact of guidance and counseling services on the behaviour modification of students in the selected urban and rural secondary schools. The study adopted descriptive cross-sectional research design in order to collect information based on the current status. The study population

consisted of form four students from 24 Urban and rural secondary schools. Simple random was used to select 336 students while 45 school administrators and 45 school counsellors were selected through purposive sampling technique. Quantitative data and qualitative data were collected through survey questionnaire and interview schedule respectively. Pilot study was carried out to test the internal consistency of the instruments; and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.8 reliability coefficient was obtained. This shows that the instrument's internal consistency is reliable. Descriptive statistical techniques involving the use of frequencies and percentages were employed for data analysis.

Findings showed that guidance and counseling services have great impact on student's adjustment to emotional and social life. The study concluded that to ensure smooth adjustment of students' social and emotional life, guidance and counseling services are needed. This will help improve their inter-personal relationship style in Nakuru County public secondary schools. The study further concluded that guidance and counseling play key role towards the promotion of good in secondary schools. This was achieved when students are helped in knowing how to control their emotions like fear and anger towards the building of a harmonious environment for teaching and learning.

From the above literature review, it is evident that inter-relationships among students are significantly influenced or affected by individual counseling therapy. The question is true for MIUC or will it be different. In this case therefore the second objective of the current study was to assess the effect of individual counseling on inter-relationships among undergraduate students' of MIUC.

Research Methodology

Research design and methods of data collection

A mixed research methodology was used in the study. The study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research methods. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010), mixed method enables the researcher to select and integrate appropriate techniques to investigate the phenomenon under investigation. Specifically, the study used convergent parallel design which is one of the research designs used in mixed method researches. Convergent parallel research design incorporates in a single study both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Both data sets were (where possible) used for descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Two instruments were used to collect data, namely a survey questionnaire for quantitative data and an interview guide for qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2014). The aim of using mixed research methods was to make it possible for the researcher to have both quantitative and quantitative data on the phenomenon under investigation (Lwoga, 2009). This design provided space for both in-depth qualitative explanations and the quantitative statistical data needed to answer the study's research objectives.

Population and sample size

The target population of this study included all MIUC and University counsellors' undergraduate students. The university has a total of 453 undergraduate students' and two counsellors (Marist International University College Records, 2018). This data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Population Distribution 2017/2018 Academic Year

Departments	Male	Female	Total
Education	110	86	196
Business Administration	58	84	142
Arts and Social Sciences	50	65	115
Counselling		2	2
Total	**218**	**237**	**455**

The researchers also used purposive sampling design to sample two (2) school counsellors. Systematic sampling was used to sample 203 students. This sample comprised of students with individual counseling experience (72) and those without the experience (131). By employing systematic sampling method the first kth element was selected at random and all other elements were selected systematically according to a predetermined pattern. The sample size (n) of students who responded to the questionnaire was thus obtained by selecting the first 3rd kth element of the population (N) and every 3rd unit thereafter; where n is the sample size, kth is the class interval and N is the total population. The sampling frame is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Sampling Matrix for all Study Participants

Target Group	Population (N)	Sampling Procedure	Sampling Size (n)	Data Collection Procedure
MIUC		Purposive	1	
Counselors	2	Purposive	2	Semi-structured interview
MIUC Students	453	Systematic Sampling	203	Questionnaire
Total	**455**		**205**	

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research instruments. Interview guide was used to collect qualitative data whereas questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. All quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

program for windows version 21. On the other hand, qualitative data derived from open ended questions and interview guides were analyzed using thematic analysis technique. Codes were used to represent the different participants interviewed and consequently employed in the reporting of qualitative data. The codes and characteristics of interviewed participants is presented in Table 3

Table 3

Codes and characteristics of interviewed participants

Code	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Department
S – 1	Male	20 yrs	1st year	Education
S – 2	Female	23 yrs	2nd year	Business Administration
S – 3	Male	25 yrs	3rd year	Arts and Social Sciences
S – 4	Female	28 yrs	4th year	Education
C – 1	Female	42 yrs	MA	Psycho-spiritual counseling
C – 2	Male	55 yrs	PhD	Psycho-spiritual counseling

Response Rate

The sample size of the study was 205 (100%) participants, which included 203 students who responded to the questionnaire for quantitative data and 2 participants who participated in the interview schedules for qualitative data. Two hundred and three (203) questionnaires were administered for quantitative data and all were dully filled and returned. All the six participants for interview schedules for qualitative data responded, including 2 counsellors and 4 students. The four students who participated in the interview were also inclusive of the 203 students who responded to the questionnaire. In total 205 participants participated in the study. This gave a response rate of 100% which was considered sufficient for data analysis following the recommended minimum of 50% by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013). This means that the sample size is proportional and representative enough of the population.

Discussion and Findings

Students Perception of Individual Counseling

The first research question of this study sought to establish student's perception of individual counselling at MIUC Nairobi. In order to address this question properly, students were required to respond to 8 questions designed to elicit their perception on individual counselling on a likert scale of 1 to 5. Table 5 shows the percentage and mean distribution of student's perception of individual counseling.

Table 5

Students Perception of Individual Counseling (n = 203)

STATEMENT	SD (1)	D (2)	NS (3)	A (4)	SA (5)		
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students need counselling and guidance in the area of interpersonal relationships	6(2.9)	8(3.9)	2(1.0)	90(43.9)	99(48.3)	4.31	.907
Individual counselling is better provided by professional counsellors than teachers, parents and significant others	6(2.9)	8(3.9)	1(0.5)	91(44.4)	99(48.3)	4.31	.902
When experiencing crisis at the college, students' usually seek counselling services	14(6.8)	33(16.1)	9(4.4)	97(47.3)	52(25.4)	3.68	1.209
Students' voluntarily seek counselling while in school	9(4.4)	17(8.3)	7(3.4)	96(46.8)	76(37.1)	4.04	1.066
Students' feel uneasy going to a counsellor for counselling	33(16.1)	88(42.9)	20(9.8)	40(19.5)	24(11.7)	2.66	1.294
I feel that all personal problems should be discussed with a counsellor during counselling	19(9.3)	49(23.9)	36(17.6)	65(31.7)	36(17.6)	3.44	3.111
Certain problems should not be discussed with a counsellor during counseling	18(8.8)	77(37.6)	31(15.1)	48(23.4)	31 (15.1)	2.99	1.254
Counselling therapy equip students in the handling of their own issues/ problems.	6(2.9)	9(4.4)	7(3.4)	79(38.5)	104(50.7)	4.30	.945

High percentages were observed from all the questions. The mean score distribution however, indicates that majority of the students have positive perception of individual counseling and as such were in support of individual counselling. This shows that they perceive it as a tool capable of enhancing great and good inter-relationships amongst students.

The highest mean score (4.31) recorded was from the students' conviction that individual counselling and guidance is needed in the area of inter-personal relationships at MIUC. This is probably because students' agreed that individual counseling is a helpful tool for better inter-personal relationships. This result supports Carl Rogers person centered theory (one of the theories that inform this study) which maintained that people are essentially capable of self-direction since they have the capacity and the potential to understand and direct their lives, particularly in solving their own difficulties and problems. This shows that majority of the students were capable of seeking individual counseling voluntarily. Since students' freely and willingly procures individual counseling services, it is expected that MIUC will experience serene and cordial inter-personal relationship atmosphere.

From the discussion so far, it very evident that majority of the respondents have a positive perception towards individual counseling programmes at the MIUC and are therefore in support of it. The findings are in line with Carl Rogers person centered theory used in CBT counseling and psychotherapy; where the counselor is expected to be empathic, congruent and show unconditional positive regard to clients. The findings and the theory therefore encourages students to procure individual counseling whenever the need arises. This is because it provides students' with knowledge and skills needed in the handling of various psychological problems and difficulties especially inter-personal relationship problems. This finding is in agreement with the meta-analysis studies on individual counseling and psychotherapy outcome in the Washington state of the USA, by Smith and Glass (2017). They found that in general, inter-personal relationship cases among students' which received counseling treatment did better than untreated cases in about seven out of ten cases.

Perceived effects of individual counselling on students inter-relationships

The second research objective of the study sought to determine the perceived effect of individual counselling on inter-relationship among students of MIUC. To determine this, students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with regards to statements measuring the perceived effects of individual counselling on students inter-relationships.

Table 6

Perceived effects of individual counselling on students inter-relationships (n = 203)

Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	NS (3)	A (4)	SA (5)		
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Through individual counselling students' learn how to manage behaviour that could jeopardize good inter-personal relationships	13(6.3)	8 (3.9)	15 (7.3)	128 (62.4)	41(20.0)	3.83	1.060
Counselling helps students cope with problems in family inter-relationships	10(4.9)	10(4.9)	14(6.8)	111(54.1)	60(29.3)	3.98	1.000
Through Counselling services, problems within students inter-relationships are reduced	8(3.9)	9(4.4)	16(7.8)	107(52.2)	65(31.7)	4.03	.962
Counselling equips students on how to control or manage their emotions in a relationship	10(4.9)	7(3.4)	12(5.9)	74(36.1)	102(49.8)	4.21	1.080
Counselling helps students to cope with sudden changes in their relationship with others	10(4.9)	6(2.9)	11(5.4)	89(43.4)	89(43.4)	4.37	2.959
Counselling helps students to behave according to their school relationship expectations	10(4.9)	12(5.9)	14(6.8)	99(48.3)	70(34.1)	4.01	1.043
Through school counselling services, students are able to understand the importance of good inter-relationships	11(5.4)	12(5.9)	14(6.8)	96(46.8)	72(35.1)	4.00	1.069
The provision of counselling services in school helps to improve students' inter-relationships	9(4.4)	11(5.4)	10(4.9)	90(43.9)	85(41.5)	4.13	1.031

Table 6 shows the percentage and mean distribution of the perceived effects of individual counseling on inter-relationships among students at MIUC. The highest mean score (4.37) and lowest mean score (3.83) distribution shows that majority of students agree that individual counselling has more positive effects than negative effects. This means that counselling is considered to be a very important tool towards improvement of inter-personal relationships among students at MIUC. The highest mean score of the perceived effect is 4.37 (*SD = 2.959*). This is highly indicative of the fact that the increased use of individual counseling has been effective in helping student cope with sudden changes in their relationship with others.

This is in agreement with the study of Kartika (2016) in Indonesia, which showed that after individual counselling therapy, students showed that they were more knowledgeable of their strengths and weaknesses in inter-relationships; they were able to identify their inter-relationship problems and prioritize the problems to be solved, as well as identifying the goal and steps that should be taken to achieve it.

These positive effects are attributed to the increased school engagement in individual counseling services which promotes productive student inter-personal relationship experiences and enhance cordial relationships within the school community. These positive effects also help students to behave according to their school relationship expectations. This result indicates that individual counselling is a very important service towards the achievement of good attitudes and behaviour in the college.

Similarly, the lowest perceived mean score effect is 3.83 (*SD = 1.060*) which claim that through individual counselling students' learn how to manage behaviour that could jeopardize good inter-personal relationships. This item may have yielded low result because students use considerable amount of time in procuring individual counseling therapy that could help in the acquisition and maintenance the skills acquired. This result indicates that students are aware of the benefits of counselling services at MIUC since it helps them to manage their inter-relationship issues. This is consistent with Gatua, Sindabi and Chepchieng (2015) who conducted a study to determine the impact of guidance and counseling services on the behavior modification of students.

Findings revealed that guidance and counseling services have a statistically significant impact on the social and emotional adjustment of students in both rural and urban secondary schools. The study concluded that guidance and counseling services play a major role in enhancing social and emotional adjustment among students, which helps them improve their interrelationships in public high schools in Nakuru County. It is expected that from the aforementioned findings, MIUC may carry out a survey to determine the impact of counseling services from inception.

The counselors' perceived effects of individual counseling on students' inter-relationships to include a greater sense of belonging to the college community, serene and happy relationship with others, respects for others, social and emotional adjustments and good sense of purpose among others. This is consistent with an earlier study by Gatua, Sindabi and Chepchieng (2015) on the impact of guidance and counseling services on the behavior modification of students in the selected urban and rural secondary schools of Nakuru County, Kenya. From these results, it can be said that guidance and counseling helps to promote good behaviour among students. This is because it helps in the modification of students' behaviour through assisting the students in knowing how to control their emotions; such as fear and anger thus improving their relationships by creating a harmonious environment for students to stay and learn together.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned findings, the researcher has drawn the following conclusions. On the first research objective, the study concludes that students' who procure individual counseling are more cordial and effective in their inter-personal relationships. This is because the results of both the quantitative and qualitative data collected points to the fact that individual counseling is very much appreciated and perceived as a very important tool in shaping inter-personal relationship attitudes at the college. On the second research objective, the study concludes that students' who address their personal psychological problems by seeking professional individual

counselling are able to sustain good inter-personal relationships. Furthermore, the study that individual counseling has more positive effect on students' who procure individual counseling. Lastly from the findings, the study concludes that students' who procure individual counseling in order to solve their inter-personal relationship issues are better equipped with inter-relationship skills.

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the study recommends that, it is important for learning institutions to establish counselling departments and provide adequate funding, employ qualified school counselors in order to build and sustain quality and functional counseling services. This will help improve and ensure great inter-personal relationships amongst students in the Kenya institutions of higher learning. Secondly, it is important to broaden the scope of counseling programmes in learning institutions like peer counseling and behaviour modification programmes among others, so as to be able to accommodate the psychological and emotional needs of all students irrespective of status, ethnic or racial backgrounds. Thirdly, the study recommends that a well structured orientation should be put in place in the area of guidance and counseling for newly admitted students. This will enable them become acquainted with the college counseling programmes very early as they begin their studies at the college.

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