

Perceptions of Quality of Students' Welfare Services in a University in Kenya

Elizabeth L. Sadera, Edward K. Tanui, Augustine M. Kara

ABSTRACT

Students' welfare services entail those essential services that aim at promoting the physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of learners in an institution. In universities, the services include but are not limited to catering, guidance and counseling, sports and recreation and health care services. The quality provision of these vital services contributes to the wellbeing of the students, improved learning outcomes, students' satisfaction, and loyalty. Despite the financial challenges that public universities in Kenya are currently experiencing, they are required to provide quality welfare services that meets or even surpasses students' expectations. This study examined perceptions on the quality of student's welfare services in a public university in Kenya. Specifically, perceptions on the quality of catering, health care, guidance and counseling, and sports and recreation services were examined. The study used a mixed method research design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for analysis. The target population constituted 2640 students in their third year of study. Using Kothari (2004) formula, a sample size of 332 students was determined and students' questionnaire (SQ) applied to collect data. Four (4) heads of departments participated as key informants and were interviewed. A pilot study involving 33 students (10.0% of the sample size) from one of the Schools in the University was used to determine the reliability of the SQ using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of reliability. The school was exempted from the main study. The overall reliability coefficient of the SQ was 0.895. The study found that catering services were the best rated ($M=3.55$; $SD=1.01$) by the students, followed by guidance and counseling services ($M=2.90$; $SD=1.02$); and health care services ($M=2.53$; $SD=1.01$). Quality of sports and recreation services were rated below average ($M=2.45$; $SD=1.09$). It was found that the University was constrained in providing quality welfare services due to the ever-growing students' population that strained existing facilities and personnel. The University had funding challenges to sufficiently meet some of the indicators of quality students' welfare services. The study made recommendations on specific areas for consideration by the University management.

Keywords: catering, guidance and counseling, health care, quality, sport and recreation services, welfare services.

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I. INTRODUCTION

University education plays a key role in preparing graduates who are expected to contribute to economic, industrial, and social development. Universities are therefore expected to expose students to learning environments that equip students with desirable skills, values, and attitudes to meet the current and future needs of society. Society, including students who are the primary customers, expect universities to provide quality education service experience that reflects value for the funding by respective governments and fees paid by the students. As such, delivery of quality education service is not only essential and important but a critical parameter of education service excellence (Kaur & Amanpreet, 2020; Sohail & Hasan, 2021). Consequently, universities should be sensitive to customers' perceptions of service quality because it has a bearing on their competitive

advantage confronted with the ever-growing competition for students to enroll into academic programs on offer. Enrolled students influence future recruitment efforts through positive word of mouth communication to potential students on the service experience in a university (Mwiya, 2017). Service quality has a bearing on the sustainability of universities with a superior education service enhancing their reputation and customers' loyalty (Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017). Although there is no consensus on the various components of education service quality among scholars, students' welfare services have been identified as a salient parameter of service experience in universities (Kara *et al.*, 2016; Kaur & Amanpreet, 2020; Mwiya *et al.*, 2017; Viraiyan *et al.*, 2016).

Students' welfare services entail essential services that aim at promoting the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of learners in an institution. In universities, the components of students' welfare services include but are not limited to sports

and recreation, catering, guidance and counseling, and health care services. Quality provision of these vital services helps to maintain and enhance the wellbeing of the students, improve learning outcomes, students' satisfaction, and loyalty (Musonda, 2015; Serhan & Serhan, 2019). According to Lugosi (2019), catering services enable students to satisfy their basic needs of food and water thus having the required energy to attend classes and learn. The catering spaces also facilitate positive social interaction among the students. Ocansey (2018) underscores that students' access to quality guidance and counselling experiences in universities makes them confident of their new environment and improves their outlook for the future. Effective guidance and counseling services also help students to address personal psychosocial issues that interfere with their wellbeing and academic success. Yeravdekar and Yeravdekar (2014) assert that the period that students spend in universities is a life stage characterized by transition to independence in decision making away from their families. Consequently, the period affects the development of long-term behaviors that also affect their health and wellness. Alkhawaldeh (2017) therefore stressed the need for universities to invest in quality health care services as a strategy for meeting students' physical and mental health needs which if not sufficiently met, may adversely affect academic achievement. Dustin *et al.* (2017) underscores the vital role of sport and recreation services in managing stress and anxiety among students, nurturing leadership, and management skills, increasing emotional control, fostering lifelong health and fitness, and improving grade point averages.

Existing literature suggests that students' welfare services have received varied attention from higher education service providers (International Students Survey, 2021; Mokoena & Dhurup, 2017; Sohail & Hasan, 2020). In Australia, a continent which over the years has maintained a reputation as a destination for quality higher education, International Students Survey (2021) found that 71.0% of the students were satisfied with the quality of students' welfare services in the universities. The finding implies that universities in the continent focused on providing superior welfare services considering its role in enhancing students' satisfaction, retention and better learning outcomes. Leslie (2015) reports that in the United States of America, universities have mainly focused on academic reforms at the expense of students' welfare services. In India, Dinesh (2015) contends that public universities face the dual problem of lack of buildings as well as poor student support services. Most of the public universities are operated from rented buildings. According to Kaur (2016) about 20.0% of the universities in India lack basic facilities such as libraries and adequate hostel facilities. Consequently, the study found that the majority of the students were not satisfied with the quality of students' welfare services provided by the universities. In Africa, Musonda (2015) study in a university in Zambia found that students had low ratings of the quality of welfare services. There was a general lack of students' satisfaction, and this was likely to affect the achievement of the goals and objectives of the academic programs the students were pursuing. Mushonga *et al.* (2015) study in a public university in South Africa found that students' level of satisfaction with welfare services was low. Similarly, Ejeh *et al.* (2016) study

in Nigeria found that although students' welfare services were available in institutions of higher learning, most of these services were not up to the recommended standards.

In terms of provision of the specific dimension of students' welfare services of interest to the current study, existing empirical studies reveal that the perceived quality of the services vary across institutions. Alkhawaldeh (2017) study on utilization of health care services among university students in Jordan found that the majority of students were satisfied with the quality of health care services provided. However, there were concerns with the availability of prescribed drugs, medical staff-student relationship, inadequate referral services and long waiting time for treatment. Yeravdekar and Yeravdekar (2014) study in higher education institutions in India reported that in some institutions, there was neither a doctor nor a nurse present to attend to the students upon visiting the clinic. This implies that there was no medical practitioner to attend to students when they sought medical care from the medical facilities in the institutions. A study by Ekpoh (2018) in universities in Nigeria found that students were satisfied with the delivery of health services in their institutions. Specifically, they were satisfied with availability of doctors, operating hours, time spent waiting to see a doctor, and health information programs. The students were dissatisfied with drug dispensation and emergency services. Ocansey (2018) study in universities in Ghana found that uptake of guidance and counselling services among students was adversely affected by physical appearance of guidance and counseling facilities, counselor behavior, client mistrust, poor publicity for the services, social stigmatization for those seeking counselling services, and lack of follow-up on participants. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that students expected ambient guidance and counseling facilities, counseling personnel who inspire trust and confidence, empathy from their peers upon seeking guidance and counseling services, and a service that has follow up mechanisms to ensure successful guidance and counselling interventions.

Lee *et al.* (2016) study on perceptions of international students towards a cafeteria in a university in Malaysia found that the majority of the international students were not satisfied with their service. Among the factors that highly influenced the students' perceptions include food quality and choices, ambience of facilities and the service received from the cafeteria attendants. Price was not a significant factor for the students. Serhan and Serhan (2019) contend that cleanliness, dining room, environment, comfort level, operating hours and days, atmosphere, and capacity had significant effects on satisfactions and revisit intentions in a catering facility. A study by Kovács *et al.* (2020) in fourteen (14) institutions of higher learning in Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia and Serbia found that leisure time sporting activities were not present in the institutions hence minimizing physical culture among the students. The institutions restricted their recreation and sports provisions to only physical education classes required by law. Abdullah and Mohamad (2016) study in two universities in Malaysia found that the universities were still lacking in recreational facilities and quality operation - factors that could attract the students to be physically active. Inadequate facilities also discouraged female students from participating in sports and

recreation facilities because of sharing with male students.

Maasai Mara University is a public university in Kenya which is also certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It was chartered in the year 2013. The University is located in Narok Town, Narok County. It is the successor to Narok University College (NUC), which started in 2007 as a constituent college of Moi University. The College took over the then existing Narok Teachers Training College. The University offers certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate programs in different fields of study (Maasai Mara University, 2019). As captured by the Kenya Economic Survey (KNBS, 2020), the University population for the 2019/2020 academic year was 8,538 students up from 4,436 students in 2013/2014 (RoK, 2016). This translates to 92.3% growth in students' enrolment over a period of six (6) years. In the University strategic plan for the year 2019 to 2024, the University outlines the various challenges it encountered during the implementation of the 2014-2019 strategic plan. The challenges were listed but not limited to inadequate funding from the exchequer, inadequate infrastructure/resources, change in Government policy which affects funding and reduced income streams due to diminishing number of privately sponsored students (Maasai Mara University, 2019). Universities Standards and Guidelines in Kenya requires universities to provide students' welfare services that are commensurate with the student population. Universities are required to provide a health unit, student common rooms with indoor recreation facilities, outdoor recreation facilities in form of games or sports facilities, catering facilities and guidance and counseling services commensurate with the students' population (CUE, 2014). Diminishing internal and external sources of funding for the University has a bearing on the quality of students' welfare services provided in the institution. This study therefore explored perceptions of the quality of welfare services provided to students in the University.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to:

- 1) Examine perceptions of quality of catering services provided to students in the University.
- 2) Establish perceptions of quality of health care services offered to students in the University.
- 3) Determine perceptions of quality of guidance and counseling services offered to students in the University.
- 4) Explore perceptions of the quality of recreation and sports services offered to students in the University.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed method research design. The design is a procedure where both qualitative and quantitative data is collected and analyzed at a single point in time in order to understand a research problem (Creswell, 2012). The target population of the study was 2640 third year undergraduate students out of whom 332 were sampled. Four (4) key informants who included heads of catering section, medical services, guidance, and counseling and finally, sports and recreational services at the University participated in the study. Data was collected from the students using a Students' Questionnaire (SQ). Interview guides were used for the heads of departments. The questionnaire was piloted on third year undergraduate students in one of the five schools in the University. The pilot study involved 40 students. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability for the SQ was 0.895. The questionnaire was therefore considered reliable for the main study. Data from SQ were analyzed using descriptive statistics while content analysis was applied for data from the key informants.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Perceptions of Quality of Catering Services Offered to Students in the University

The first objective of the study was to examine perceptions of the quality of catering services offered to students in the University. Data on students' perceptions of catering services were collected on a five-point Likert and Likert type scale where: 1=strongly disagree (SD), 2=disagree (D), 3=not sure (NS), 4=agree (A) and 5=strongly agree (SA). The frequency and percentage of student's ratings of each of the items in the scale were computed. The cumulative frequency and percent of the students who disagreed (both SD and D) and agreed (both A and SA) was determined in order to establish the overall pattern of ratings on each of the items. The composite mean of all the items in the scale was computed to determine the perceived quality of the services. The findings are presented in Table I.

The results summarized on Table I show that most 141 (48.8%) of the students disagreed with the statement that there were adequate number of serving points in the mess while only 125 (43.2%) agreed with the statement. It was therefore evident that the students' cafeteria did not have an adequate number of service points. The finding implies that students waste a lot of their time queuing at the serving points. This may affect their scheduled classes as they wait to be served. The students may also choose to seek catering

TABLE I: STUDENTS' RATING OF THE QUALITY OF CATERING SERVICES

Statement	Rating					Cumulative	
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A
There are adequate number of serving points in the mess	80 27.7%	61 21.1%	23 8.0%	74 25.6%	51 17.6%	141 48.8%	125 43.2%
Hygiene is observed in serving of food	18 6.2%	16 5.5%	24 8.3%	137 47.4%	94 32.5%	34 11.7%	231 79.9%
The quantity of food served is enough	53 18.3%	58 20.1%	42 14.5%	79 27.3%	57 19.7%	111 38.4%	136 47%
The dinning environment is good	4 1.4%	23 8.0%	32 11.1%	133 46.0%	97 33.6%	27 9.4%	230 79.6%
The pricing of food is affordable	28 9.7%	40 13.8	22 7.6%	76 26.3%	123 42.6%	68 23.5%	199 68.9%

n=289 (100%); Mean (M)=3.55; Std. Deviation (SD)=0.94.

services off-campus hence the University loses catering revenue to external service providers. Table I also shows that the majority 231 (79.9%) of the students were of the opinion that hygiene was observed while food is served at the mess. This implies that staff in the catering department understood the importance of observing high levels of hygiene while serving food. This may encourage repeated purchase by the students since they perceived that food safety and hygiene were observed.

Most 136 (47.0%) of the students agreed that the portion of food served was adequate while only 111 (38.4%) disagreed with the statement. The finding suggests that although some students were satisfied with the portion of food served, there were students who perceived the portion as inadequate. The department should therefore improve the portion of food served so as to sufficiently meet energy requirements for all the students and encourage repeat purchases. Conspicuously, 14.5% of the students reported that they were not sure whether the portion of food served in the mess was adequate. The findings imply that there were students who were not regular users of the mess. Most likely, their catering needs were met outside the University. The University should devise strategies to ensure that their catering services are attractive to all the students.

Asked whether the dining environment was conducive, most 230 (79.6%) of the students agreed with the statement while only 27 (9.4%) disagreed. The finding implies that the catering department ensured that the catering environment created a comfortable atmosphere for the students. Such an environment facilitates social and intellectual interaction among the students (Lugosi, 2019). On whether the pricing of food is affordable, a majority of 199 (68.9%) of the students agreed with the statement while 68 (23.5%) disagreed. The results concur with Chong *et al.* (2017) who also noted that most public universities ensure that food is subsidized and quite affordable for the students. The overall results ($M=3.55$; $SD=0.94$) convey that the students had above average rating of the quality of catering services at the University.

In order to collaborate with the findings from the students on the quality of catering services in the University, opinions sought from the head of the catering department were analyzed. Asked whether there were adequate number of serving points in the mess, the head of catering department observed:

I can say that our main challenge, which we have not effectively addressed, is the number of service points at the cafeteria. The number of students is sometimes overwhelming, especially during examination time when they have no time to go elsewhere to look for food. This forces many of them to go away without getting served because of time. We are very limited in terms of the number of staff and hence it makes it difficult to give the required quality service to the students.

Evidently, findings from the students and comments from the head of catering services convey that the number of serving points in the mess were not commensurate to the number of students demanding catering service. This may have been caused by limited cafeteria space compared to the increasing students' population. The University is also strained in terms of staff adequately meeting the increasing

demand for catering services. The failure of the University to have effective catering services may therefore explain the increasing number of makeshift eateries adjacent the University. The findings concur with Were (2017) who observes that the current catering facilities in public universities in Kenya cannot cope with the students' population due to the ever-increasing demand for university education.

Asked whether hygiene was observed in the catering services, the head of the department responded:

The university has ensured that the level of hygiene at the mess is up to standard, and I believe it is one of the good things that the university has tried to maintain in the catering facility. The students complain of other issues as mentioned earlier but they have no major issues with the level of hygiene.

The head of catering department further observed:

Hygiene is paramount in catering services or anywhere food is prepared to avoid cases of food poisoning and diseases. The university has a comprehensive cleaning program where the mess is cleaned twice a day. The utensils are washed using hot water and detergent, the catering staff are always provided with the right protective gear, and it is mandatory for them to undergo requisite health test to continue serving here.

Comments from the head of the department confirm that hygiene was observed in the cafeteria. According to Yugang and Wen-Hwa (2021), hygiene standards in university canteens play a key role in ensuring the safety of the food being sold to customers. It helps avoid food safety incidents caused by humans.

Asked whether the food portions served to students were adequate, the head of the catering department observed:

The food served to students can be said to be enough because it is based on the quantity that can sustain an average young person. Although there are students who aren't satisfied with one portion of food, we encourage them to buy double portions. There are also some who find the portions measured to be a lot and they normally request a smaller portion. As a department, we ensure that we follow the nutrition guidelines and especially in making sure that the food is well balanced.

The response from the head of the department supported the students' opinions regarding the quantity of food served. Evidently, some students were satisfied with the food portions served while others were not. It would be important for the catering department in the University to capture the needs of the majority of the clientele in terms of the portions of food served. Asked whether the pricing of food was fair for the students, the head of catering department reported:

The prices of food are very friendly for the students, and they have not complained. Previously, there were complaints about the quality and portions of the food served but the department takes all measures to solve the problem.

The response from the head of the catering department confirms the findings from the students that prices in the mess were affordable. Serhan and Serhan (2019) contend that students have restricted financial resources and when food service is fairly priced, students continue using the university cafeteria and not any off-campus food service operators.

B. Perceptions of Quality of Health Services Offered to Students in the University

The second objective of the study was to establish perceptions of the quality of health care services offered to students in the University. Students' ratings of the items measuring the quality of health care services in the University were summarized on Table II. Majority 189 (65.4%) of the students indicated that the prescribed drugs were not always available. This implies that students incurred additional costs purchasing drugs outside the University. Some students may not afford the drugs and their medical needs may remain unattended or even worsen. The quality of health services has in the past been one of the reasons why students strike and cause damage to university facilities. Table II also conveys that a portion 133 (46.1%) of the students disagreed with the statement that medical staff were always available to serve the students. Consequently, students took a long time waiting for the services and sometimes had to seek medical checkups elsewhere. Such experiences may contribute to students' negative attitude to the staff at the clinic and also the University in general.

Asked whether there is prompt checkup upon seeking services at the health care unit, 145 (50.2%) of the students disagreed with the statement. The results imply that the facility has a challenge in providing prompt medical attention to the students. Consequently, students waste a lot of queuing for the service, or their medical conditions may aggravate due to lack of prompt service.

The study also found that 127 (44.0%) of the students agreed with the statement that the staff at the clinic are kind and responsive. The finding therefore implies that there were interpersonal interaction constraints between the students and some staff at the health care unit. This was likely to negatively impact students' perceptions of the services of the University in general and the clinic in particular. A student, or indeed a prospective student or parent, would view the member of staff dealing with them as representing the values and attitudes of the institution towards its customers. The majority 169 (58.4%) disagreed with the statement that the health unit disseminates health care information to students regularly. This implies that students might not know how the clinic operates and the services offered in the clinic. The overall results ($M=2.53$; $SD=1.01$) revealed that indeed, students had moderate rating on the quality of health care services

provided by the university.

In order to collaborate findings from the students on the quality of health care services in the University, opinions sought from the head of health services were analyzed. The results from the interview with the head of the health facility revealed varying views on most of the indicators earlier discussed. On the issues of availability of drugs required by the students, the head of the health unit observed:

Most of the drugs that are always prescribed to the students are available in the store. Although at times we encounter situations of lack of these drugs. This is always attributed to a delay in the procurement process and purchasing by the University management. For students who have health conditions that are not easy to manage at the university because they require specialized treatment, we always refer them to other hospitals at their own cost. The cost of health in the country is very high. We try to ensure we give the best to the students, but our budgets are strained.

Although the interview transcript contradicts findings from the students, it is evident that there were times when the drugs were not available. This was attributed to delays in the procurement process and inadequate funding to meet all the medical needs of the students. Shagaya (2015) warns that shortage or lack of drugs in a health unit is an indicator of a serious failure in management of health provision. As such, the University should address internal procurement issues that deny students access to prescribed drugs. Asked whether the health unit disseminates health care information to students regularly, the in-charge health services reported:

The students are always inducted in their first year of study on how the health clinic operates. We also ensure that students get a chance to participate in any program planned by the university. Students are always free to get the information they need to ensure that their health is well. However, students have an attitude about the staff at the clinic and hence are not ready to share their health concerns and this affects the effectiveness of service delivery.

Although the statement contradicts the opinion of the majority of the students that the health unit did not disseminate health care information to students regularly, it was notable that the University held sessions with first year students to orient them on the services available at the clinic. The clinic also has an open-door policy where students could visit and seek any information concerning their health.

TABLE II: STUDENTS' RATING OF THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Statement	Rating					Cumulative	
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A
Prescribed drugs are available for students	137 47.4%	52 18.0%	52 18.0%	32 11.1%	16 5.5%	189 65.4%	48 16.6%
Medical staff are always available for students	71 24.6%	62 21.5%	77 26.6%	46 15.9%	33 11.4%	133 46.1%	79 27.3%
There's prompt checkup upon visit at the health care unit	86 29.8%	59 20.4%	79 27.3%	36 12.5%	29 10.0%	145 50.2%	65 22.5%
Staff in the clinic are kind and responsive	68 23.5%	34 11.6%	60 20.8%	80 27.7%	47 16.3%	102 35.1%	127 44%
The health unit disseminates health care information to students regularly	118 40.8%	51 17.6%	56 19.4%	39 13.5%	25 8.7%	169 58.4%	64 22.2%

$n=289$ (100%); Mean (M)=2.53; Std. Deviation (SD)=1.01.

However, it may be inferred that there were strained student-staff relationships with some staff at the clinic and this caused students to have a negative attitude towards the facility. This defeats the essence of the open-door policy because some students may not seek the information even when there are staff to serve them. The students can only have the courage to seek information about their health if they have confidence in the staff operating the facility.

Provision of health information has also been supported by a study carried out by Higher Education South Africa (2009). In the study it was noted that the health facilities in institutions of higher learning are important as they help in giving advice and information to students on various matters like awareness on health issues and wellness programs that are available. However, students will only seek this information if they have trust in the staff and the staff are available when they require them. Alkhawaldeh (2017) advises that gaps in service delivery among staff in a health unit may be remedied through in-service training in communication skills. This helps the staff to develop an understanding of students' health needs and showing an empathetic attitude that will improve students' utilization of the services.

Asked whether students receive prompt checkup upon visiting the clinic, the head of the health services noted:

Students are always served upon arrival. Sometimes there is a little delay because of inadequate workforce. On average, a student takes less than 20 minutes to get a response from the medical team. Sometimes, students are just impatient. Again, most students always come expecting to have instant medical check without following the set procedures at the health clinic.

Findings from the students conveyed that they did not get prompt medical attention upon visiting the clinic. According to the transcript, the delay in receiving prompt service was as a result of inadequate medical personnel at the clinic. It also appears that some students did not have adequate information on the procedure to follow when seeking services at the clinic. This reinforces earlier findings that the clinic does not effectively and regularly disseminate health care information to students. Consequently, some students were not aware of the procedure to follow while seeking services at the clinic. Results from the students and the key informant convey that the University was constrained in providing prescription drugs to students, shortage of staff to serve the students leading to longer waiting time, inadequate dissemination of healthcare information, and poor people skills among some staff in the clinic. The findings concur with Alkhawaldeh

(2017) study in a university in Jordan. The students expressed reservations with service waiting time, insufficient health information, unfriendly attitude of health care employees and medication shortage.

C. Perceptions of Quality of Guidance and Counselling Services Offered to Students in the University

The third objective of the study was to establish perceptions of the quality of guidance and counselling services offered to students in the University. Students' ratings of the items measuring the provision of the service in the University are summarized on Table III.

The results summarized in Table III show that a portion 127 (43.9%) of the students agreed with the statement that there are opportunities for individual counseling. Consequently, most of the students disagreed or were not sure whether there were opportunities for individual counseling. The finding implies that some students in need of individual guidance and counselling services were not aware of the existence of the services in the University. Only 124 (42.9%) of the students agreed with the statement that the University offers opportunities for group/peer counselling. The majority of the students therefore disagreed or were not sure that there were opportunities for group/peer counseling. The finding therefore implies that there are limited opportunities for group and peer counseling in the University. The majority 146 (50.5%) of the students disagreed with the statement that there are mechanisms for identifying students in need of counseling services. This implies that the University had not established adequate mechanisms for identifying students in need of guidance and counseling services. Institutions with a customer focus are required to plan, coordinate, direct, and provide a broad range of services that help students to realize their sense of belonging in an institution. A study by Stukalina (2012) argues that rather than responding to issues after they have already happened students will highly depend on administrators who proactively deal with the issues affecting students. This implies that having a good relationship with the students and establishing systems to identify students in need of psychosocial support has a very great impact on the success of the counseling program at the university.

Only 58 (20.0%) of the students agreed with the statement that there was follow-up on students who received counselling services. This shows that in most cases, the students did not adhere to the follow up sessions upon first visit for counseling. This could be attributed to the concerned students feeling that their issues had been addressed hence absconding from the scheduled follow up program. When students fail to adhere to the follow up schedules, the

TABLE III: STUDENTS' RATING OF THE QUALITY OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

Statement	Rating					Cumulative	
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A
There are opportunities for individual counseling	46 15.9%	37 12.8%	79 27.3%	63 21.8%	64 22.1%	83 28.7%	127 43.9%
University offers opportunities for group/ peer counseling	50 17.3%	43 14.9%	72 24.9%	67 23.2%	57 19.7%	83 32.2%	124 42.9%
There are mechanisms for identifying students in need of counseling services	92 31.8%	54 18.7%	75 26.0%	42 14.5%	26 9.0%	146 50.5%	68 23.5%
There is follow up on students who attend counseling	60 20.8%	41 14.2%	130 45.0%	31 10.7%	27 9.3%	101 35%	58 20%

n=289 (100%); Mean (*M*)=2.90; Std. Deviation (*SD*)=1.02.

counselors also fail in their mandate as they do not follow up on the students to find out how they are progressing. The study also established that besides the university having few staff to handle the counseling sessions for the students, the students did not seek the services when in need. This was also noted by Cheruiyot and Simatwa (2016) who indicated that students need to find time and seek assistance from counsellors other than waiting for too long before they get assistance. The overall results ($M=2.90$; $SD=1.02$) convey that the students had a fair rating of the quality of guidance and counseling services in the University.

In order to collaborate findings from the students on the quality of guidance and counselling services in the University, opinions sought from the head of guidance and counseling services were analyzed. Asked whether there are opportunities for individual counseling services for the students, the head of guidance and counselling services reported:

The university offers very effective guidance and counselling services through the dean of the student office. Students who visit our office are always counseled individually depending on their unique specific cases. Peer or group counselling is always done. Sometimes we are forced to call the parents of some students to help us solve problems. In cases involving two students, both are summoned. However, most students don't seek this service and they just suffer with their problems. In some cases, their friends have come on their behalf and after constant consultation they are able to convince their friend to come and get assisted.

The statement collaborates finding from the students that existing opportunities for guidance and counseling services in the university were not optimally utilized. Most of the students did not seek the services either because they were not aware of the existence of the services, or they did not value guidance and counselling services. The students may also not seek the services out of fear of exposing their problems to the counsellors. Asked whether there are mechanisms for identifying students in need of counselling services in the University, the head of counseling services observed:

Most of the time, students are referred here by the dean of student's office and other departments. Students are created to the students on the importance of guidance and counseling services in the University. During orientation period for the first-year students, they are always informed on the existence and function of the office. In addition, during lectures for example, observation is always done by lecturers on students who seem to be having problems that require guidance and counselling. Such cases include students suspected to be abusing drugs and substances, frequent absenteeism, and late comers.

The response from the key informant seemed to suggest that most cases of students in need of guidance and counselling services were identified by the dean of the students' office. The office worked closely with students' representatives to identify students who required the services. However, the University did not have elaborate structures for

identifying the students and ensuring they were assisted. Asked whether there was follow up on students who attend counselling, the key informant noted:

When we take in a student for counselling, we expect them to strictly adhere to the set program and ensure that they present themselves when needed. Sometime the number of students in need of the services is overwhelming compared to the staff that we have, and this makes it difficult to constant follow up. Students are called to the office to explain their progress. To some extent, we involve our friends and the parents when the student fails to follow up on the progression of the sessions. Our main challenge has been limited staff.

The statement from the key informant appeared to collaborate findings from the students that there was inadequate follow-up on students who seek counselling services. Although there were attempts to ensure compliance with the set counseling schedule, the University did not have an adequate number of counselors to meet the demands of the ever-increasing students' population.

Findings from the students and the head of guidance and counselling services convey that though the University had functional guidance and counselling services, uptake from the students was low due to lack of awareness on the existence and importance of the services to the students. The finding resonates with Seyoum (2011) study in Ethiopia which found that students did not have sufficient knowledge on the kind and the extent of guidance counselling services offered in the universities. In the current study, uptake of group/peer counselling was also low probably due to ineffective structures to ensure successful implementation. The University also lacked effective structures for identifying students in need of counselling services. A shortage of specialized counsellors commensurate with the ever-increasing students' population also affected implementation of follow up program for the affected students.

D. Perceptions of the Quality of Sports and Recreation Services in the University

The fourth objective of the study was to establish perceptions of sports and recreation services offered to students in the University. Students' ratings of the items measuring the provision of the service in the University are summarized on Table IV.

The results summarized on Table IV show that the majority 163 (56.4%) of the students disagreed with the statement that there were adequate opportunities for sports for students at the university. The results convey that there are limited sporting activities for the students, and this denies most of them a chance to participate. The majority 166 (57.4%) of the students disagreed with the item that there are enough outdoor activities for the students. In addition, a high percentage 157 (54.4%) of the students disagreed with the statement that there are adequate indoor games at the university. The findings imply that both indoor and outdoor sporting activities were available but inadequate. The findings concur with Mbirithi (2013) study in selected public universities in Kenya which found that the available sports and recreational services were inadequate as to meet the needs of the growing students' population hence negatively impacting on the

TABLE IV: STUDENTS' RATING OF THE QUALITY OF SPORTS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Statement	Rating					Cumulative	
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A
There are adequate opportunities for sports for students	106 36.7%	57 19.7%	17 5.9%	48 16.6%	61 21.7%	163 56.4%	109 38.3%
There are adequate outdoor activities	105 36.3%	61 21.1%	37 12.8%	48 16.6%	38 13.1%	166 57.4%	86 29.7%
There are enough indoor activities	95 32.9%	62 21.5%	48 16.6%	42 14.5%	42 14.5%	157 54.4%	84 29%
There are qualified trainers for the students	131 45.3%	48 16.6%	57 19.7%	21 7.3%	32 11.1%	179 61.9%	53 18.4%
All students have access to sports and recreation facilities	109 37.7%	79 27.3%	32 11.1%	36 12.5%	33 11.4%	188 65.0%	69 23.9%
Gender is a key consideration setting up recreation facilities	101 34.9%	53 18.3%	58 20.1%	35 12.1%	42 14.5%	154 53.2%	77 26.6%
Sports facilities are well maintained	118 40.8%	56 19.4%	36 12.5%	52 18.0%	27 9.3%	174 60.2%	79 27.3%

$n = 289$ (100%); Mean (M)=2.45; Std. Deviation (SD)=1.09.

quality of university education being provided. On whether there were qualified trainers for the students, a majority of 179 (61.9%) of the students disagreed with the statement. The results imply that the University did not have adequate number of sports trainers to guide students on the various sporting activities that were available, or the students were interested in. lack of competent trainers could also affect the development of sports and recreating activities in the University due to lack of expert advice.

A majority 188 (65.0%) of the students disagreed with the statement that all students have access to sports and recreation facilities in the University. This implies that the sporting and recreation facilities available in the University were not adequate and did not match the students' needs. It was also noted that a high number 154 (53.2%) of the students disagreed with the statement that gender was a key consideration setting up recreation facilities in the University. This implies that the facilities were inadequate to cater for the combined needs of both the male and female students. The results summarized on Table IV further show that a majority 174 (60.2%) of the students disagreed with the statement that sports facilities are well maintained. This may be attributed to inadequate funding for maintenance and the fact that the facilities were in use throughout the year. Poorly maintained facilities are a threat to students' health due to incidences of injuries and this may discourage students' participation. Overall, students had a below average rating ($M=2.45$; $SD=1.09$) of the quality of sports and recreation services in the University.

In order to collaborate findings from the students on the quality of sports and recreation services in the University, opinions sought from the head of sports and recreation services were analyzed. Asked whether there were adequate opportunities for sports for students in the University, the key informant noted:

I have observed that students are not interested in the sports activities because there are many different sports available but most of the students show very little interest in participating. Few students are involved in football, volleyball and basketball while other sports have very few interested students. I think students don't just want to play anymore. Sometimes spend the whole day on the field and the students don't come.

Asked whether the University provided a variety of indoor and outdoor games, the head of sports and recreation services observed:

We provide a variety of both indoor and outdoor sporting activities. Examples of outdoor activities that we offer now are but are not limited to football, hockey, athletics, netball, volleyball, handball, and basketball. For indoor sports we have badminton, table tennis, scramble, darts among others.

From the statements, it is noted that the University had a variety of both indoor and outdoor sports activities, but few students were interested in participating. Upon further probing on possible explanations for students' disinterest in sports, the head of sports and recreation services observed:

I might say that most students live outside the university, and this might be a factor contributing to their lack of knowledge of what is available and what is not available in terms of both indoor and outdoor sporting activities. We are also working on concerns raised by the students on the need to provide new sports and recreation activities in line with students' needs in the 21st century.

From the transcript, it may be inferred that one of the reasons for students' lack of interest in utilizing available sports and recreation facilities is that most of the students live outside the University. Consequently, they may not use the facilities since students normally go back to their places of residence outside the University upon completing their scheduled classes. However, it was notable that the University was planning to introduce new extracurricular activities which may be attractive to the students in the 21st Century. The findings concur with Abdullah and Mohamad (2016) study in a university in Malaysia. They reported that though universities were allocating financial resources for the development of sports and recreation facilities, students were not fully utilizing available facilities suggesting that they were not physically active. This may be a pointer of inadequate sensitization and awareness among the students on the value of sports and recreation activities to their healthy lifestyle which is a prerequisite for success in academics (Dorata, 2018). Failure to factor in emerging sports and inadequate sports and recreation facilities may also discourage students from participating.

Asked whether the University had qualified sports trainers for the students, the head of sports and recreation services observed:

This has been a major challenge to this department as we have no adequate manpower to train the students on the various sports activities. We only have one trained personnel, and this strains him as he cannot attend to all the students' needs.

From the interview transcript and in line with findings from the students, it is evident that the University has an inadequate number of staff trained in sports. This implies a need for additional sports personnel to train and mentor the students who are interested in sports. Asked whether there was gender consideration in the provision of sports and recreation facilities in the University, the key informant responded:

The facilities provided do not meet the needs of both female and male students. We are really strained because, for example we only have one soccer pitch, basketball pitch and this do not cater these needs. At times, students have to agree on who to use the pitches at specific times. I can say that currently all the facilities at the university are overstretched.

From the response, it is noted that gender was not a consideration in the provision of sports and recreation services in the University. Similar opinions were also expressed by the students. According to Abdullah and Mohamad (2016), moral reasons may compel female students to show reluctance in sharing sports and recreation facilities with male students. They may experience a general feeling of discomfort sharing a facility that is fully occupied by male students.

V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the University was constrained in providing quality students' welfare services due to the ever-growing students' population that strained existing facilities and personnel. The University had funding challenges to sufficiently meet some of the indicators of quality students' welfare services.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendation were made:

- 1) The University's management should prioritize budgeting for additional staff to commensurate with the growing students' population. Special focus should be on professional counselors and games tutors.
- 2) The University management should address procurement issues that deny students access to prescribed drugs.
- 3) The dean of students' office should regularly sensitive students on the value of guidance and counselling services and sports/recreation services in terms of their wellbeing and academics.

- 4) The University management should conduct a needs assessment on sports and recreation needs of the students to guide strategic provision of the services.
- 5) The University should consider opening the cafeteria for longer hours to avoid congestion during the scheduled operation hours.
- 6) The dean of the students' office should develop a program for identifying students in need of counselling services and tracking the beneficiaries to ensure successful intervention.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As the authors of this paper, we declare that we do not have any conflict of interest.

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