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## Student access to the National University of Equatorial Guinea: prior guidance needs

### *El acceso del estudiantado a la Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial: necesidades previas de orientación*

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## Abstract

The absence of guidance in the Equatoguinean educational system dates back to the Spanish colony. Today, guidance is recognized as a right of all students. The objective of the research of this article is to diagnose the guidance needs of university students in Equatorial Guinea, prior to their access to the university, and thus, to present the results to the educational authorities in case they believe it is convenient to design proposals for the implementation of guidance services in this student population. A quantitative, non-experimental, exploratory-descriptive approach was used through a survey. The study sample is composed of 404 students of the National University of Equatorial Guinea. The instrument for the collection of information is a questionnaire of university orientation needs of the students elaborated for this purpose. The descriptive results show that there is little information regarding the choice of career, as well as a variety of academic problems and dissatisfaction with current studies. This would mean that this group of students presented needs of academic-professional orientation in the choice of their university career, and academic and personal needs during their studies at the university. The results of this research reveal a concern for attending to the needs and difficulties faced by Equatoguinean students throughout their university education.

## Keywords

Diagnosis of needs, Equatorial Guinea, guidance, reasons for choice, university students.

## Resumen

La ausencia de la orientación en el sistema educativo ecuatoguineano data desde la colonia española. En el día de hoy, la orientación se reconoce como un derecho de todo alumnado. El objetivo de la investigación de este artículo es diagnosticar las necesidades de orientación en estudiantes universitarios de Guinea Ecuatorial, previas a su acceso a la universidad, y así, presentar sus resultados a las autoridades educativas por si creen conveniente diseñar propuestas de implantación de servicios de orientación en esta población estudiantil. Se utilizó un enfoque cuantitativo no experimental, exploratorio-descriptivo, a través de una encuesta. La muestra del estudio está compuesta por 404 estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial. El instrumento de la recogida de información es un cuestionario de necesidades de orientación universitaria del alumnado elaborado para este fin. En los resultados descriptivos se constata que existe poca información respecto a la elección de la carrera, asimismo, de la carrera matriculada, se presenta diversidad de problemas académicos, y de insatisfacciones con los estudios actuales. Lo anterior significaría que este grupo de estudiantes presentaba necesidades de orientación académico-profesional en la elección de su carrera universitaria, y necesidades académicas y personales durante sus estudios en la universidad. Los resultados de esta investigación revelan una preocupación por atender las necesidades y dificultades que enfrentan estudiantes ecuatoguineanos a lo largo de su formación universitaria.

## Palabras clave

Diagnóstico de necesidades, estudiantes universitarios, guinea ecuatorial, motivos de elección, orientación educativa.



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## 1. Introduction

The work presented analyzes the reality of 404 students of the National University of Equatorial Guinea enrolled in the 2013-2014 academic year in one of the university courses taught by the institution. The problem of study lies in the analysis of the transition to the first year of university and their integration into the institution. It puts the focus on the decision-making process and on the accompaniment for the choice of studies. There is a lack of guidance and support from the previous educational stages, as well as in the first moments in the institution of higher education. The relevance of the topic lies in the need to establish guidance services in the educational system to accompany students from the concept of lifelong education, under the protection of the country's educational laws, which today have not yet crystallized either in the educational institutional culture or in the guidance practice.

Guidance should be present, both in classroom practice, from the teacher's own role (academic tutoring) and in the institution's policy with tutorial action plans by degrees and/or centers and university guidance services (career tutoring). The laws of the country itself and of the institution under analysis so stipulate in their guidelines, in line with international policy. Guidance should facilitate the process of transition and adaptation of the student at the University, offer students information, guidance and resources for learning, advise students in the configuration of their curricular itinerary - paying attention to each specific reality - as well as facilitate access to the world of work or the continuation of studies, in an increasingly complex and changing society where decision making will be vital in the management of personal and professional careers (Pantoja-Vallejo, et al., 2020; Romero-Rodríguez and Figuera-Gazo, 2016). For this, it will also be key to think about the figures that should appear in this intervention model: tutors or mentors, faculty, students, expert agents, as well as the work dimensions to be incorporated as a priority according to the current needs of the university community (Fernández-García et al., 2019; Llanes et al., 2017; Martín et al., 2020; Pantoja-Vallejo et al., 2021).

The article is divided into five sections. The first section deals with the state of the art on the problem under study, analyzing the concept of orientation and the three dimensions that make it up: academic, professional and personal. It analyzes other similar research to contextualize the object of study in the country and university chosen. Subsequently, the methodology (quantitative), sample and information collection strategy (questionnaire) are explained, as well as the data collection procedure and its subsequent treatment. The third point describes the results according to the specific objectives of the study. The discussion triangulates the theoretical framework of the article and the results found in the research, giving an account of the orientation needs for the group under study. Finally, the conclusions, limitations and prospective of the study are shown, which show the need to continue working in this line of intervention.

### 1.1 Guidance in the Equatoguinean education system

The absence of guidance in the Equatoguinean educational system dates back to the Spanish colonial era. The research of this article aims to diagnose the guidance needs of university students in Equatorial Guinea that highlight the need to implement guidance services for this student population.

Nowadays, guidance has become a necessary activity at all educational levels, not only because it is considered a basic indicator of quality, but also because it provides students with help at different stages of their comprehensive training process (Álvarez and Bisquerra, 2012). Dutercq et al. (2018) indicate that "lifelong educational and vocational



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information and guidance (IOPS) are today more present than ever at the center of educational policies in industrialized countries". He already explained that IOPS would be positioned as the "backbone" of any educational system. Not to consider it would be to evolve as a castaway without a compass (Bomda, 2021). Álvarez-Pérez and López-Águilar (2017) indicate that guiding students continuously to achieve control of their formative process and plan their professional project has become a major challenge of current education. Gil-Beltrán (2002) "justifies the importance of university guidance in international meetings on the subject and in the very principles of the creation of FEDORA (Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique) which works exclusively in the university field" (p. 3).

The issues addressed by the authors cited above present the idea that no person should be left out of receiving the information and guidance necessary to survive in this era of worldwide globalization. In 2007, the first working session on Academic and Vocational Guidance in the Higher Education System: Bachelor, Master and Doctorate (LMD) was held in Yaudé. Experts from Belgium and France participated in this work. In March 2008, on the occasion of the International Day of La Francophonie, L'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie organized in Yaoundé a round table on the following theme: Higher Education Orientation in the LMD system. In recent years, countries such as Congo, Niger, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Cameroon, Gabon, among others, have insisted on the importance of introducing educational reforms at the baccalaureate level to include guidance as a key element of the training system (a step prior to the subsequent transition to the LMD system), and to make it an integral part of the education system.

The Government of Equatorial Guinea, among the agreements adopted at the First National Conference on Education (General Education Law of Equatorial Guinea, 2007 and 2019) would state that Educational Guidance should be one of the priorities to be implemented in the country throughout the education system, based on the concept of lifelong education. In reference to the above, Law No. 5/2007 contemplated articles referring to the academic and professional orientation of Equatoguinean students (arts. 14; 44,3; and 148). Article 113 of the Statutes of the National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE) (1995) also contemplates the right of university students to receive the benefits granted by the Vocational Guidance and Student Welfare Service. However, despite the relevance of guidance in the international context, and the existence of legislation at the national level, guidance continues to have little interest in educational policies in our country, which translates into its absence in the educational system. Meanwhile, there are constant social, educational and labor changes at the national and international level that imply the need to include guidance counselors to help Equatoguinean students to face possible difficulties throughout the educational system, which in some way contribute to work on integration, permanence and progress in the educational system (Sánchez-Escobedo et al., 2005).

It is therefore suggested that diagnosis and guidance should go hand in hand. That is to say, any guidance intervention design, whether preventive or specific, must start from the diagnosed needs of the population whose problems are to be improved.

## 1.2 Diagnostic of Educational Guidance Needs (DNOA)

Educational guidance is defined by Rodríguez-Espinar (1993) as "the sum total of planned experiences offered to students aimed at achieving their maximum development" (p. 15). The personal, scholastic and professional aspects merge interactively in a holistic conception of their personality. In the university context Vieira and Vidal (2006) define educational guidance as "the process of helping university students in academic,



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professional and personal aspects in the context of higher education institutions" (p. 19). These two definitions reveal important aspects for understanding educational guidance as a process of help directed to the student in a holistic manner, that is, attending to all facets of his or her development. They emphasize the academic, personal and professional aspects of the student.

There are different approaches to the concept of need. Moreno-Cámara et al. (2015) understand it as "a subjective assessment that reveals a gap between a desired state of the person and the actual state, from which the action of "impulse" can be derived to correct this situation" (p. 34). As for the term diagnosis, it has different meanings. Granados and Mudarra (2010) consider it as "an activity in search of knowledge of a situation in order to establish whether or not they present certain deficiencies that demand guiding interventions" (p. 27). Based on the previous meaning, the diagnosis of university students' needs is the information obtained from an analysis or evaluation about their formative process at the university (difficulties, aptitudes, needs, among others). According to Alfonso and Serra (2016) it is necessary to "start from an individual and group diagnosis of the students that make up each of the groups of students accessing higher education in their academic year." (p. 37) In this way, their potentialities that can be exploited in their professional training will be detected, and the problems or insufficiencies to act on them.

### 1.3 Research on counseling needs analysis among university students

There are studies that have highlighted some of the orientation needs in university students.

García-Ripa et al. (2018) analyzed the motives of study choice in university students. They found differentiated groups of students, making their classification aimed at the design of guidance actions according to their motivations and needs in a given context. Santana and García (2009) analyzed the difficulties in the process of making academic-professional decisions in high school students. The results evidenced a feeling of uncertainty in the students with respect to the suitability of their academic-vocational decisions. Salmerón et al. (2014) evaluated the university orientation needs of Moroccan students seeking access to Spanish universities. In the results, only 18.6% of the respondents admit to have clearly chosen their university career, almost 30% have doubts about their future profession. Villafañe et al. (2011) analyze the academic, personal, social and vocational needs of international students. The findings revealed needs mostly in the academic and vocational areas. They recommend working with these needs, as they can affect their academic performance and even their emotional health. Sánchez-Herrera et al. (2005) analyze the need for guidance in the university context of Extremadura. In the results, these students mainly demand orientation in professional issues. Santana et al. (1997-1998) (Cited in Salmerón et al., 2014), analyze the conditions of the transition from secondary to higher education, and the adaptation to university of new students. It was detected that a significant percentage had received little or no information about the studies and subjects they were going to take (86%), or had little knowledge about the training itineraries of the degree (91%) and were unaware of the professional opportunities of the studies they were taking (57%).

The results obtained from these studies explain the demand for guidance interventions by university students in the professional, academic and personal spheres, and make this type of action increasingly necessary (Amor, 2012). It is found in the international university context that the needs presented by students are met through the guidance services present in higher education centers (Alfonso and Serra, 2019; Moreno-Yaguanay, 2019).



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In our national context, studying for the first time the university guidance needs of the student body was difficult to delimit. However, taking into account the state of the art of this topic in the international context, we dare to approach our research. The diagnosis of needs considers three moments of university student life along the lines of García-Félix et al. (2014): a) Before entering university, the student's needs are considered as follows.

## 2. Methodology

This study used a method based on a quantitative approach focused on observable aspects susceptible to quantification (Río-Sadornil, 2005), which makes possible the statistical treatment of the data of the study variables (Camarero et al., 2010). It is exploratory in scope, the problem of the study is addressed for the first time in our country (Hernández et al., 2010), and descriptive, since the level of knowledge sought with the research does not attempt to offer broad answers to the question of the problem, but to analyze it and base it on a base of empirical data that allow the formulation of new work proposals that have an impact on the specific aspects detected in the description of the results obtained (Morales, 2013).

The objective of the research in this article is to diagnose the guidance needs of university students in Equatorial Guinea, in order to present the results to the educational authorities in case they believe it is convenient to design proposals for the implementation of university guidance services in this student population.

This general objective is worked in practice from operative objectives.

- 1º. Describe the profile of the sample participating in the study.
- 2º. To know the previous knowledge of the students before choosing a university career.
- 3º. To analyze the motives for choosing a university course.
- 4º. To find out the students' perceptions about their current university studies.

### 2.1 Research design, population and participant sample

The study was carried out using a non-experimental, ex-post-facto design through a survey. In fact, the independent variables that are supposed to cause the students' orientation needs are not manipulated, because their effects have already occurred in their day. The characteristics of the study variables cannot be observed directly, but through questions to the student body, which we believe can provide us with this information at specific moments of university life (García-Llamas et al., 2001). The population under study is composed of 5,795 UNGE students from the 2013-2014 academic year. Information provided by the Directorate of Academic Affairs. From this population, we selected 600 students as the invited observation sample in our research (Callejo et al., 2010; Corbetta, 2010). Their selection was by multistage probability sampling (García-Llamas et al., 2001).

The final participating sample was 404 students (67.7% of the selected sample) (sampling error of 4.7% in relation to the population under study). The sample extension was checked with specific formulas. One of the finite population formulas found in Camarero et al. (2010). Being the population of (5,795), with an expected error (5%), confidence level (95%), so the Z is (1.96) rounded to 2, ( $p=0.5$ ) and ( $q=1-p=0.5$ ), an extension of  $n=382$  was obtained. With these same data we checked in the Fisher, Arkin and Colton Table found on the web: with a population of 5,000 the  $n$  was equal to 370, and in a population of 6,000,  $n=375$ ,



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being 5,795 between 5,000 and 6000. Our uncertainty about student participation caused the sample to be increased by 600 students. In the end, the actual number of participants exceeded the  $n$  calculated in the formulas. In view of this situation, we accepted the information provided by the 404 subjects.

The distribution of this sample was based on the following criteria: sex, age, career and course.

Sex: Males 273 (67.6%) and 131 (32.4%) females.

Five-year age group: 21 to 25 years (239, 59.2%), 26 to 30 years (80, 19.8%), 16 to 20 years (57, 16.6%), and over 30 years (18, 4.5%). Total 404 (100%).

Career: Engineering (116, 28.7%), Political Science (73, 18.1%), CC. Economics (56, 13.9%), Law (54, 13.4%), Teaching (44, 20.9%), Environmental Sciences (30, 7.4%), Business Administration and Management (16, 4.0%), Education (15, 3.7%).

First year: First (111, 27.5%), Second (168, 41.6%), Third (125, 30.9%). Five-year age group: 21 to 25 years (239, 59.2%), 26 to 30 years (80, 19.8%), 16 to 20 years (57, 16.6%), and over 30 years (18, 4.5%). Total 404 (100%).

Career: Engineering (116, 28.7%), Political Science (73, 18.1%), CC. Economics (56, 13.9%), Law (54, 13.4%), Teaching (44, 20.9%), Environmental Sciences (30, 7.4%), Business Administration and Management (16, 4.0%), Education (15, 3.7%).

Year: First year (111, 27.5%), Second year (168, 41.6%), Third year (125, 30.9%).

## 2.2 Instrument development

The instrument used to collect information in our research was an ad hoc questionnaire. According to Torrado (2004), the questionnaire is the most common technique in needs assessment and, according to Ruíz (2009), questionnaires are very useful instruments for data collection in the field of education. Our instrument is composed of 45 closed questions of different formats in which the following were analyzed: students' prior knowledge for choosing a university course (information received from the course enrolled), the reasons for choosing the course, and students' perceptions of their current studies, focusing on orientation needs (see Table 1).



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Dimensions	Number Question	Information
Personal data, work and academic situation	1-6	Collects data on gender, age, employment status, economic status, career and course. Nominal and discrete measurement
Previous knowledge of university career choices	7-15	Collects university information on: high school choice, own university careers, academic abilities, prior to career choices. Rating scale measurement
Academic and professional information received from the enrolled course of study	16-19	Collects the information received by new students about academic information in general in the first year of their degree and professional opportunities. Measurement on a rating scale
Academic difficulties	20-30	Gathers information on the organization and habits of university academic work. Measurement in rating scale, among other formats
Perception about the studies they are pursuing at university.	31-40	Gather opinions of students about the studies they are taking at the university. Measurement on a rating scale, among others
Assessments of the need for university orientation.	41-45	Gathers opinions of the student body about the need for orientation in university education. Measured on a rating scale

Table 1. Questionnaire of University Orientation Needs of Students in Equatorial Guinea (Author).

The following steps were followed in the process of developing the questionnaire:

Bibliographic review of the elaboration of the instrument in Education and Social Sciences in general: (Callejo et al., 2010; Corbetta, 2010; García-Llamas et al., 2001; Río-Sardonil, 2005; Sánchez, 1999). The first version of the questionnaire is elaborated by copying questions from the "Cuestionario de Necesidades y Servicios de Orientación Universitaria en la Comunidad de Madrid" addressed to University Students" (Sánchez, 1999). We added other questions necessary for our research. Content analysis of the questionnaire with respect to the relevance and clarity of the questions and the language and instructions by Spanish experts (García-Llamas et al., 2001). Two Spanish experts offered to help us in this phase and provided many corrections and orientations for the improvement of the instrument. Pilot application of the questionnaire. This application was carried out with a small sample of 50 teacher training students in Malabo, in order to identify and eliminate possible problems in its elaboration (Rio-Sadornil, 2005): language comprehension, motivation towards the instrument, time to answer, among others. The results were positive, except for the response time, which was longer than expected. Minor modifications were introduced. Reliability analysis as internal consistency of the questionnaire in global correlations of the 35 questions in scales from the SPSS program obtaining a Cronbach's



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Alpha value of 0.768. According to Morales (2013) the questions measured in scale provide consistent reliability results. Alpha values higher than 0.7 are considered sufficient in some of the documents consulted.

### 2.3 Statistical treatment of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was applied to each group of students during the months of February to May 2014 during school hours, after prior authorization from the directors of the centers that had been previously selected and the acceptance of the collaboration of the teachers of the previously selected groups. A schedule and timetable were established for the collection of information in each Faculty and University School.

During the application, the questionnaires were distributed by systematic randomization in each group or course of students. In the case of professors who did not want to lose their class hours, once the questionnaires were distributed, they were taken to be answered at another time, and most of them were not recovered.

Once the questionnaires that we considered valid had been selected, we proceeded to register, organize, codify and summarize the information in a data matrix. It should be noted that the data file was set up by a computer scientist. The subsequent analysis of the matrix data was carried out according to the type of variables (Pérez-Campanero, 1991). These analyses focused on: a) univariate descriptive analyses (Morales, 2007) using tables of absolute frequencies and percentages, with their respective figures (distributing the results among the different values of a single variable) and b) descriptive analyses using statistics of central tendency: mean, median and mode. It should be clarified here that these are not numerical variables; these analyses were carried out in some questions with valuation level responses.

All the above process of information processing and data analysis was carried out with the SPSS statistical program in its version 15.0 for Windows.

## 3. Results

The descriptive results are presented below in relation to the objectives - linked to the dimensions of the questionnaire - of the study.

### 3.1 Results of knowledge prior to choosing a university career

Among the specific objectives of this dimension was to analyze the students' prior knowledge for choosing a university career, based on the following variables: university information on their high school option, information on other careers of interest, information on the subjects of the career of their choice, and knowledge of their own academic abilities. The responses are expressed on a scale of 1 to 5. The distribution of the responses is shown in Table 2.



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INFORMATION	Did not have information	Had little Information	Acceptable information	A lot of information	Lots of information	Total
Baccalaureate Option	65 16.1%	158 39.1%	115 28.5%	27 6.7%	15 3.7%	404 100%
Other careers of interest	75 18.6%	176 43.6%	111 27.5%	17 4.2%	25 6.2%	100%
Knowledge of career subjects	133 32.9%	149 36.9%	88 21.8%	19 4.7%	15 3.7%	100%
Own academic skills	47 11.6%	97 24.0%	132 32.7%	57 14.1%	71 17.6%	100%

Table 2. Distribution of frequencies and percentages of information prior to university career choices.

As can be observed and contrasted in Table 2, the majority of the students in the sample indicate having chosen their university studies with little information on all the variables proposed: (39.1%) on their choice of high school, (43.6%) on other careers of interest, (36.9%) on the subjects of the careers chosen, and (24.0%) on their own academic abilities.

Some unexpected impressions from the questionnaires confirm this lack of information throughout the student journey.

I believe that the disorientation or the lack of information with which we arrive at the Faculties makes us make many mistakes, because they do not inform or put circulars in the Departments indicating what is taught in that Faculty and one comes and is surprised when one cannot go back. Recommendation: that the Faculties inform the students of what subjects and what things will be required throughout their careers, so that one knows where one is getting into, and not to get into it blindly (Respondent 61. Environmental Sciences).

### 3.2 Results of the reasons for choosing a university course of study

To know the possible motives that lead students to choose certain courses in order to be able to classify them according to these motives will help in the decision making process for future orientation actions. To this end, students were asked to rate the level of influence of the following motives for choosing their university studies: financial benefits, secure job, my skills, the value of my knowledge, vocation, pleasing my family. The answers are expressed on a scale of 1 to 5.

As can be seen and verified in Table 3, the highest average given by the sample to the reasons for influence belongs specifically to: the value of the knowledge of the chosen studies, and the concept of secure work (3.21 and 3.23). This is followed by the means of: my skills are related to my chosen studies, and financial benefits (3.12 and 3.04). On the other hand, the least influential motives are: vocation and pleasing the family (2.83 and 2.44). The median is relatively equal for all the influence motives, except for vocation and



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pleasing the family. The distribution of responses is bimodal, with the maximum (Mo =5) corresponding to secure work and economic benefits. Thus, extrinsic motivations outweigh extrinsic motivations in the choice of studies (see Table 3).

<i>MOTIVES</i>	Economic benefits	Safe work	Value of your knowledge	My skills	Vocation	Pleasing the family
Valid	404	404	404	404	404	404
Mean	3.04	3.23	3.21	3.12	2.89	2.44
Median	3	3	3	3	3	2
Mode	5	5	4	3	1	1

Table 3. Distribution of means, medians, and modes of reasons for influence on college career choice.

Other reasons for the choice or the specificity of some of them were given by the respondents in their qualitative assessments in the questionnaire.

I came to Malabo to enter a certain career, but due to lack of places I enrolled in another one. So, this sometimes makes us fail in higher education (Respondent 16 - Agricultural Engineering).

The reason for enrolling in the career I am studying was because the one I really like is not studied in Equatorial Guinea (...) I had to choose the one I am studying as plan B (Respondent 178. Agricultural Engineering).

### 3.3 Student perceptions about the studies they are pursuing at the university

The objective of this dimension was to find out the students' perceptions about their current university studies. Among the questions in this dimension we have: What decision would you make if you could choose university studies again, with four response options: choose my current studies again, choose other university studies, choose non-university studies, I do not know what decision I would make.

In Figure 1, we can observe and contrast a slightly higher percentage of the answer to choose my studies again (41%) given by the total number of students in the sample in reference to the 38% who say they would choose other university studies, 12% think they would opt for non-university studies, and the remaining 9% doubt the decision they would make.



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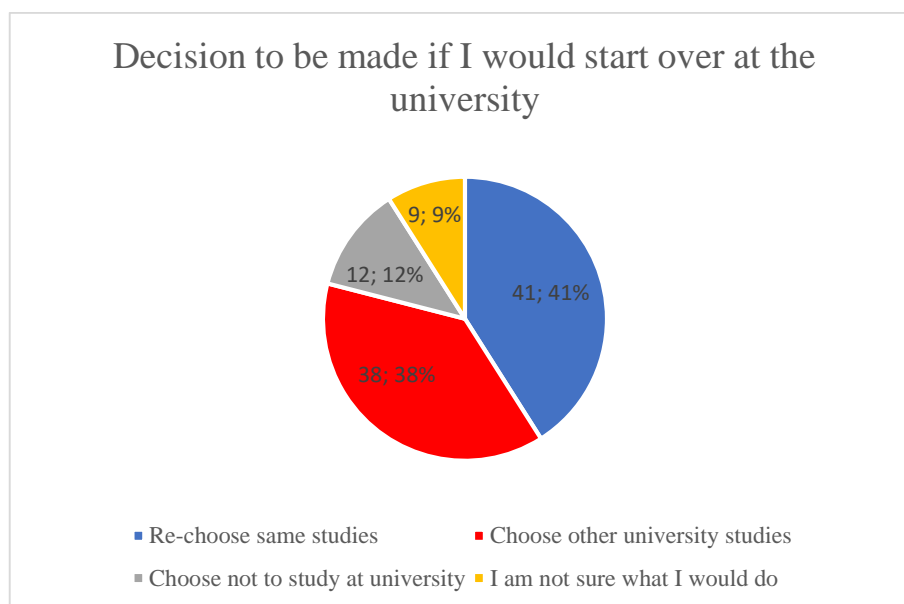


Figure 1. Distribution of percentages of the decision to be able to choose university studies again. Source: (Author)

From the empirical results, textual impressions related to personal orientation not expected from the questionnaires and, in aspects not contemplated in our research, were added.

What would make me not be able to finish my studies is because of the disease. I have had testicular inflammation for 10 years (Respondent 57. Pedagogy).

I have personal and tutor problems that cause me stress, anxiety and depression. In fact, when I am in class I cannot concentrate and follow the classes, I only think about these problems (Respondent 178. Agricultural Engineering).

I do not live with my parents and this affects my studies because I do not live well with them and I have to work harder to study (Respondent 371. Law).

Ma'am, I am a student of Petroleum Technology at UNGE, I participated in your questionnaire. It is said that crude oil has lost value, what do I do now with my career? (A graduate student, years later, I have been a student at UNGE).

Other questions in this dimension were: do you have thoughts of wanting to drop out of college because of failure? are you studying the career you were really interested in? Figure 2 shows that 45.8% say yes compared to 54.2% who do not study their preferred career.

In terms of thoughts of dropping out due to failure, 39.1% say yes compared to 60.9% who do not have these thoughts of desires to drop out of college due to failure.



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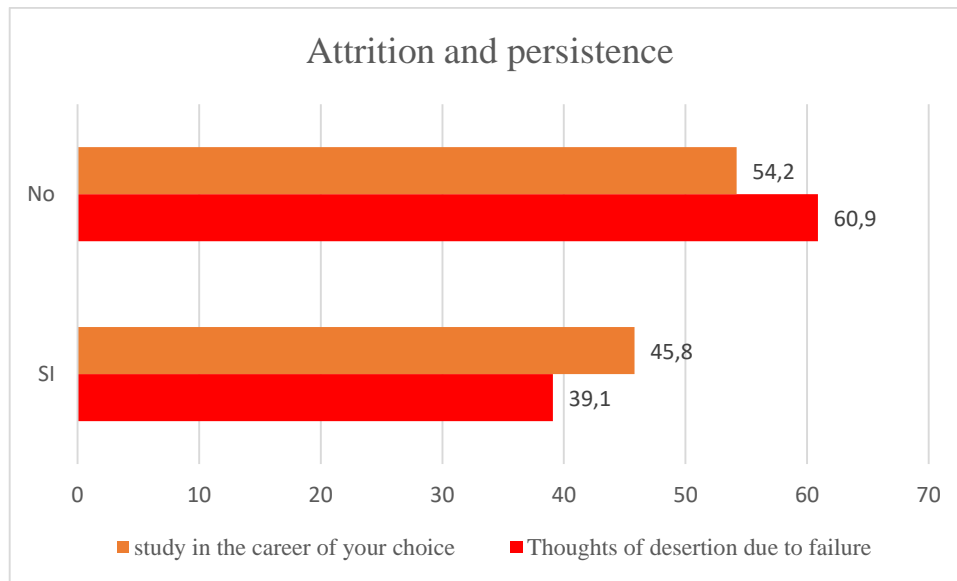


Figure 2. Percentages of dropout thoughts and studies preferred career. Source: (Author)

In addition, the students' assessment of the need for guidance in university education was specifically studied.

The question on the valuation of the need for university guidance in the following aspects: in the high school cycle, choice of university careers, university learning, academic itineraries, professional guidance and personal guidance. The responses are expressed on a scale of 1 to 5. In the data in Table 4, it can be observed and contrasted that the majority of participants value university guidance as "very necessary in all the variables proposed. This is followed by the responses of necessary and quite necessary. On the other hand, those who say that it is not necessary or not necessary at all obtain very low values.

Need	Nothing	Little	Fairly	Required	Much needed	Total
High School	24(5.9%)	66(16.3%)	77(19.1%)	82(20.3%)	155(38.4%)	404(100%)
Choosing a career	26(6.4%)	50(12.4%)	60(14.9%)	83(20.5%)	185(45.8%)	404(100%)
Apprenticeship	24(5.9%)	59(14.6%)	68(6.8%)	78(19.3%)	175(43.3%)	404(100%)
Itinerary	25(6.2%)	52(12.9%)	74(18.3%)	91(22.5%)	162(40.1%)	404(100%)
Professional	33(8.2%)	49(12.1%)	51(12.6%)	86(21.3%)	185(45.8%)	404(100%)
Staff	33(8.2%)	71(17.6%)	81(20.0%)	74(18.3%)	145(35.9%)	404(100%)

4. Table 4. Assessment of the need for university orientation

#### 4. Discussion

In view of the results obtained in relation to prior knowledge for choosing university education (see Table 2), a large proportion of the students in the sample choose their careers without sufficient information for making this decision. Hence, the group of students consulted presented demands for training, information and academic-professional



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orientation. These results have some similarities with those obtained by Salmerón et al. (2014) and Álvarez and Álvarez (2021).

The results found in relation to the motives that led them to opt for one or another university education show that the respondents valued, in the first instance, a part of their personal motives (my aptitudes, the value of knowledge), and their professional (secure job) and economic motives. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in this case are evenly matched in determining the choice. In fact, in the fashion study, extrinsic motivations are perhaps more relevant for taking this step. Data in partial agreement with other studies such as that of Llanes et al. (2021) or Conde-Vélez et al. (2022). In contrast, vocation and family have little presence in the choice of studies. Some of these results are similar to those obtained by Cortés and Conchado (2012) and Santana and García (2009). All these motivation profiles point to the need for guidance for students to clarify the different aspects of the career they are motivated to pursue, thus facilitating more free choices.

Both the results obtained on the decision they would make, if they had to choose education again, and on the current feelings that could lead them to drop out or continue are worrying. Specifically, the data obtained on whether they would choose the same studies again in the first instance shows the importance of including guidance and accompaniment programs between educational stages. As well as the results found on the large number of students who indicated that among their future options would be to drop out of their studies, either due to academic failure or because of a lack of preference in relation to the career studied. This data again shows the importance of personal orientation or academic-professional reorientation at this university level (Álvarez and Álvarez, 2021; Álvarez et al., 2011).

From the results obtained in relation to the assessment of the needs for university guidance, it is clear that this group of students feels, demands and values the need for guidance at the different stages of university studies. Results that coincide with research such as those of Sánchez (1999), Sánchez-Herrera, et al., (2005) or Rodríguez-Álvarez (2015) where studies demand orientation throughout their university journey.

## 5. Conclusions

According to the results of the research presented above, we can determine that:

In general, the greatest demands of the student body in this research are related to academic orientation, vocational orientation, professional orientation, personal orientation, and professional academic reorientation, before and during university studies. In relation to prior information for choosing a university career, the students in the sample lack sufficient information for this decision. Regarding this situation, the students in the sample suggest that the Faculties and University Schools provide them with this information. In relation to the reasons for the choice of studies, those of a personal, professional and economic nature stand out. Vocation and family have practically no influence on these decisions. This means resolving the information needs by a guidance professional in all aspects of the career according to each motivational profile.

The needs for information and academic and professional orientation of the career enrolled also stand out in the case of students who are entering university for the first time. The opinions of the students about the studies chosen at the time show personal dissatisfaction with these studies. Other demands for personal orientation are highlighted in the textual impressions of the questionnaires (physical health, social health, psychological health). Aspects not considered in our research will be taken into account in future research.



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The high valuation of the need for university guidance in the results implies the level of need for guidance services felt by this group of students. The country has people with university training in school guidance and psychopedagogy, and they do not work as guidance counselors, despite the potential demand for their services in educational centers. Only the government and international organizations working on university guidance can make possible the implementation of these services in the student population in Equatorial Guinea.

The lack of background studies on the subject in our country has been an important turning point to contextualize the research to the context of analysis. However, this diagnostic research is already considered a reference framework for future research on the problem studied, from different methodologies and fields of study. The next studies to be carried out will deal with: a) The design of proposals for the creation of University Guidance Services in the UNGE, b) The design of proposals for the creation of Guidance Departments in the National Secondary Schools of Malabo and, c) A pilot study of collaborative work between the UNGE and the Guidance Departments created in the Secondary School, for the guidance in the processes of election of university degrees to students who will continue their studies at the university. The creation of a line of research on the problems of Guidance in Equatorial Guinea will also be taken into consideration so that students can carry out their undergraduate work on this subject. Although the data were collected in the 2013-2014 academic year, given the contextual events in the country and in the world arising from different economic and health crises, no progress has been made on guidance since the beginning of this study. Today, more than ever, it is still valid at the National University of Equatorial Guinea the data presented to continue on the path of orientation.

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