

**INFLUENCE OF SELECTED PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES ON
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG FIRST YEAR STUDENTS IN
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, NAIROBI COUNTY**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY, RELIGIOUS
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DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my original work and has not been presented in any other university.

Signed Date.....

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This research thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is devoted to my family, who have provided consistent support in the trials of college and life as a whole. I am grateful to have a family like this. In addition, the thesis is for my siblings, who have always worked hard to achieve everything.

Last, but not least, I devote this work to my friends who found the notion very difficult, but had to accept it. I hope that they are inspired by this work.

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ABSTRACT

University students face numerous psychosocial challenges that contribute to poor academic performance. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students at Kenyatta University. The study was guided by three objectives: to examine the influence of relational factors on academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, to determine the influence of emotional stability on academic performance, and to identify strategies that can be used to help the first-year students to overcome psychosocial challenges affecting their academic performance. Social Learning Theory and Cognitive Behavioral Theory were used to explain the study variables. The study adopted a descriptive survey design whereby stratified sampling technique was used to select 560 respondents who were first-year students at Kenyatta University. Data were gathered by the use of an interview guide and a questionnaire. Content validation was used to determine the study tools' validity. The Cronbach value of at best 0.6 was used to determine reliability. Using SPSS version 23, data were analyzed using standard deviation and displayed in the type of tables and charts. The research found that first-year students face multiple difficulties concerning relational and emotional issues. Some of the most common problems in the study were time, workload, expectations for the two cohorts, balancing relationships with peers, meeting academic performance expectations, freedom of choice in course selection, and personal inhibitions such as feelings of loneliness and depression among others. The study further found that interventions addressing these psychological challenges had already been put in place. These were psychological evaluations, time-bound treatment, emotional support, personal development groups or external psychological services, and social integration for addressing relationship difficulties. This is done by encouraging students to engage in any academic, cultural, and sporting activities. The University also offers orientation programs for first-time students. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs in place, the University has taken measures to widen the scope of their focus in the future by providing programs during the orientation week for first-year students to get to know each other. It was recommended that a comparative study on public universities and private universities should be conducted to investigate how psychosocial factors influence academic performance among first years.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
EC	Emotional Competence
EI	Emotional Intelligence
GPA	Grade Point Average
IQ	Intelligence quotient
KU	Kenyatta University
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology
NACOSTI	National Council for Science and Technology
PSFs	Psychosocial factors
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, 1 out of 10 (20%) of the young people joining University is likely to encounter at least one psychosocial challenge. These psychosocial challenges are likely to pose a significant threat to academic performance. Half-lifetime people experience psychosocial disorders such as stress-related disorders, for example, anxiety, panic, adjustment, and depression among others that may start by the age of fourteen, and 75percent by the age of twenty-four (World health Organization [WHO], 2017). Studies done in Canada and the USA have shown that psychosocial challenges among the students joining universities are increasing (Jellinek et al., 2015).

In African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, and Tanzania, the scenario of psychosocial challenges and In comparison to developed nations, its health-care system is inadequate. In the same way, are few related studies done on psychosocial challenges amongst first-year students in universities in Kenya and may not represent the current situation. In Kenya, 14–30% of adolescent students joining University are assumed to have psychosocial health problems which affect their academic performance (Gurung, 2015). Additionally, exposure to military disputes may constitute a significant hazard to a children's proper development, affecting school adaptability as these challenges pose a considerable threat to academic performance.

First-year university students might face numerous psychosocial challenges, for instance,

academic demands, high expectations, the pressure to do well, homesickness, peer pressure, increased freedom among other challenges. This may lead to risky behaviors that are likely to affect their academic performance (Kadison & Digeronimo, 2014). Research shows that the majority of first-year students seem not ready for the social and emotional demands of the university (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2016). It is crucial to highlight that the social factors that may interrupt or enrich the quality and efficiency of learning impact the psychological environment of learners (Ferre, 2019). The challenge is how to handle and study in an emotional atmosphere that is neither safe nor secure to enable academic achievement. Motivation, social control, and auto-regulation are essential factors in the learning of the classroom (Zins et al., 2014). Students must thus be encouraged, directed, and learn how to control their feelings.

Many students may find it very hard to form relationships due to a lack of social interaction before college life. It is very important to get along well with other students and to live in harmony. Due to the differences in attitude, personality, culture, and ethnicity, it is likely for them to have various challenges. They may feel confused, nervous, pressed, lonely and unsafe, or even have various crises (Lakey & Cohen, 2015).

Most of the first-year students who were outstanding in their high school might suddenly start to perform poorly during their first year of study. Some may drop out of school while others may change courses for example from sciences to art-based. On the other hand, Government-sponsored students, who form the majority in public universities, are not given a chance to pursue a specialty based on their interest and find themselves taking courses that are far from their dreams and deviate too much from their future completion.

For this category of students, there may be loss of interest and motivation in their specialties (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2016).

University students go through many challenges and academic demands, for example, being away from family may contribute to loneliness, depression, and stress. They are also plagued with developmental challenges, increased freedom, inability to make decisions, defying family views, experimenting with dangerous activities, and feeling under pressure to succeed (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2014).

University students have interpersonal relationships, including the teacher-student connection, student-student relationships, roommate relationships, and love relationships. Other students with diverse lifestyles, attitudes, financial situations, hobbies, and traits surround themselves in the first year. Solitude and sadness can happen among students if they have poor interpersonal communication skills or a communication barrier (Gurung, 2015). Forming friendships with others can be difficult since external stress factors harm them (Rob & Callahan, 2011). Low academic performance is a key contributor to the student stress level and leads to the fear of failure and expulsion. Depression can cause absenteeism and desperate sentiments, which interfere with healthy study habits, and subsequently further decrease academic performance (Lakey & Cohen, 2015).

Most of the university's high school pupils may lose dominance over the various university competitors. This contest might lead to a sense of defeat, severe psychological problems, inadequacy, and deception in research (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2016).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

First-year students comprise a large proportion of students who struggle because of specific psychological problems to cope with their academic burden. Most students are underprepared for university life and do not know how to cope with it (Jellinek et al., 2015). The students become disturbed psychologically and socially, leading to poor performance. Some of the psychosocial challenges that affect students are emotional and relational factors. In this field, a few research were carried out. These are studies by Kyalo (2011) on select factors influencing social and emotional adjustment of university graduate students of the University of Egerton, and by Wangeri (2013) on transitional challenges facing university students in the first year. However, these studies do not seem to bring out the issue of the influence of psychosocial challenges on academic performance, and specifically, they do not touch on emotional and relational factors. Therefore, few related studies have been done in this area in Kenya. Hence, this study intended to investigate the influence of emotional stability and relational factors on academic performance of Kenyatta University students in Nairobi County, and also come up with interventions that may help students to overcome the psychosocial challenges they face.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To examine the influence of relational factors on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County.
- ii. To determine the influence of emotional stability on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County.
- iii. To identify strategies that can be used to help first-year students to overcome psychosocial challenges affecting their academic performance in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to test the following questions:

- i. What is the influence of relational factors on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County?
- ii. How does emotional stability influence the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County?
- iii. What strategies can be used to help first-year students overcome psychosocial challenges affecting their academic performance in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Remaining in university, psychological well-being, and good academic performance have

constituted a successful transition to university. It is highly adapted graduates who, in contrast with their poorly adjusted peers, are supposed to promote a robust, internationally competitive economy. Admission to a university requires greater responsibility and may call into question certain students' capacity to succeed at the college level which might decrease their academic achievement and increase their stress level. Factors impacting the adjustment of university students in the first year are nonetheless complicated, thus the study attempted to identify and remedy the observed gaps.

1.7 Significance of the Study

In recognition of the importance of understanding the relationship between psychosocial challenges and academic performance, it is hoped that the study will help the management of the universities and university counselors in the assessment of the specific barriers of learning among first-year students. This will in turn help to remove barriers that influence many first-year students from achieving their full potential.

Policy makers such as the Ministry of Education and the student counselors in the universities may use these findings and recommendations to implement appropriate interventions aimed at improving the academic performance of first-year students in the universities.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study took cognizance of the fact that students in varied years in both public and private universities may be influenced by psychosocial factors. The study was only limited to first-year students at Kenyatta University in Nairobi County. Due to this

limited scope of the study, the results of the study were not generalized to other public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the study was conducted bearing in mind that there was inadequate local research and literature in this area of study.

Availability of such literature would have offered more support and insight into the study. The study only covered relational factors and emotional stability and there might be other important factors that affect academic performance such as financial constraints.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited in terms of scope and would only cover Kenyatta University first-year students in Nairobi County.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

- i. First-year students at Kenyatta University face certain psychosocial challenges that affect their academic performance.
- ii. The respondents would be willing to answer all the questions willingly and truthfully.
- iii. The relevant concerned authorities would fully cooperate to give the information required.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic performance: The degree to which a student has accomplished their short or long-term education objectives.

Emotional stability: Being firmly established or fixed, not like to move or change, not easily upset or disturbed, well-balanced, and capable to remain in

the same status.

- Peer-group:** A little group of old friends who share the same pastimes. Cliques or peer groups have between 2 and 12 members with an average of 5 to 6 members.
- Psychosocial Challenges:** The psychosocial situations and factors (emotional stability and relational factors) that are faced by first-year students in a university.
- Relational factors:** This is how two or more first-year students relate to each other and their relations with new people when they join university.
- Transition:** The student's transition experience included a university membership. Transitions can take place on a variety of levels, including intellectual, personal, economical, and social. Learners who are successful in one area may suffer in the other.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter entails a detailed review of various empirical findings on the effects of psychosocial challenges on academic performance. Two theories were used concerning the study. Literature was reviewed against the independent variables that include: relational factors, emotional stability, and how to empower first-year students. Finally, a conceptual framework was drawn.

2.2 Relational Factors and Academic Performance

Trust, devotion, partnership, and authority are relational attributes (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2016). Peer relationships are one of the most significant social elements influencing the behavior of students in their first year, from how they wear, hairdo, music, and amusement to much more important decisions about short & long educational goals. Peer group are much more likely than families, lecturers, or counsellors to affect decision throughout the critical teenage years, and these peer-related teenaged choices may have a lifetime impact (Campbell & Li, 2018).

Multiple chances for students to exchange ideas in small groups are provided through high university student contacts. It facilitates a whole-class conversation that promotes deep thinking. A student to student interaction is also a predictor of the amount with which the group of students is devoted to undergraduates conversing to each other and all they have managed to learn. Classroom contact has long been seen to be important in

creating a learning climate that allows students to achieve their educational goals (Garger et al., 2010).

According to Garger et al. (2010), a research done at the California State Department of Education by Kirk in 1972 found that individuals with emotional difficulties performed below normal in educational performance when compared those without emotional difficulties. Sobbing, symptoms of withdrawal, examination fear, hysteria, and other emotional features were detected by teachers. Such characteristics have a significant impact on students' academic achievement, both indirect and direct.

According to Park and Robinson's research (2021), there is a statistically significant gap between highly and poor emotionally mature groups. Interpersonal, flexibility, managing stress, and overall feeling in relation to their academic achievement were the focus of the research. According to the findings, top performers have a diverse set of emotional and social abilities for dealing with academic obstacles, but poor performers lacked adequate ability to cope with the demanding and competitive educational environment. The previous study concentrated on the learners' social / psychological components, but the present study examines the impact of student-student interactions on the achievement of learners with deafness.

De la Iglesia et al. (2014) examined the capacity to predict academic progress in Argentinian university students based on their perceptions of parental and social support. The participants comprised of 355 Argentinian students of the university (n=354) studying in a variety of areas at the University of Buenos Aires, with the bulk of them studying in Psychology (59.5 percent). The majority of the participants (83.4 percent)

were girls from a middle socioeconomic background (78.2 percent). The respondents' ages varied from 20 to 36 years old ($M=23.50$, $SD=2.62$). Both the yield and its components Perceived Parenting Approaches and Parental Inconstancy Scale and the 16-item Student Peer Support Score were provided to the respondents. The attentiveness and perceived parental of the parents were used to construct observed parenting. Demandingness was defined as parental techniques used to restrict the offspring's actions by imposing restrictions, outright bans, spoken or and physical force or violence, and other forms of restraint. Response time was defined as the proportion of espoused comfort, adoration, and time devoted to conversation, whereas demandingness was defined as parental methods used to constrain the offspring's actions by imposing restrictions, outright bans, conversational and physiological coercion, and other forms of restraint. Parents, instructors, classmates, and closest friend/significant other were all used to assess felt social support.

Multivariate regression logistic regression models were used to decide which factors can be incorporated in the models to estimate academic attainment. The findings revealed that only teachers ' perceived involvement was significant statistically ($\beta=.393$, $p=.01$). According to the results of a Path analysis, both a mother's and father's response had a significant positive influence on the perception of support networks and accomplishment ($p=.01$). As it came to demandingness, the Path analysis revealed that the mother had a distinct influence when contrasted to the father. Demandingness had an adverse and indirectly influence on the feeling of support networks in the dad model ($p=.05$), but a good real impact on success in the mom model ($p=.03$). Educators were the sole source of

help that substantially predicted success among Argentinian university students, according to the Path analysis for psychosocial factors. Effective teaching, for instance, was higher in the dad's model ($p=.02$) than in the mom's model ($p=0.01$).

Another recent study using Path analysis on support networks, stress, illness, and academic achievement with Ghanaian teenagers was undertaken by Glozah and Pevalin (2011). The research's main purpose was to look at the interconnections between the above mentioned components. A total of 771 two- and three students ($n=770$) from 4 High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana were included in the study. The bulk of the participants were boys (64 percent), and their ages varied from 14 to 21 years old ($M=16.87$, $SD=1.02$). Learners' academic progress was determined by their most recent terminal examination grades in mathematics, English, social studies and Integrated Science. Six major discoveries emerged from the Structural model:

(1) There was a substantial negative relationship between social support and stress ($= -.29, .05$). (2) Peer interaction had a statistically significant favorable impact on the health ($= .51, .04$). (3). Academic achievement was unaffected by social assistance ($= -.14, >.05$). (4). Stress has a detrimental impact on health as well ($= -.47, p.05$). (5). Academic achievement was not affected by stress ($= -.04, >.05$). (6). Academic achievement was positively influenced by health ($= .22, .04$). The results on support networks and academic achievement in this study, according to the authors, were similar with previous findings by Kirby and DiPaola (2011), which revealed that support network had a favorable influence on academic achievement.

Hoy (2012) investigated the link between cooperative learning, social support perceived, and academic accomplishment. Participants (n=135) enrolled in ten sessions of a beginning English course at a Public University In malaysia in Lebanon that reflects the American educational paradigm were studied. Males made up the bulk of the respondents (54.2%), who came to class five times a week for three hours each time. A customized version of the Class Life Measure (CLM) was administered to respondents to measure the relationship between collaborative learning and students' views of class support networks, emotions of estrangement from schools, and academic progress. The customized version included 38 of the CLM's initial 91 questions, and the modified version's 38 questions were particularly relevant to the factors being investigated in this study. It's also worth noting that academic accomplishment was determined by the good grades of tests completed during the semester in question. There were two types of method in this study. "Is peer tutoring connected with learners' views of social support, estrangement from school, and educational success?" was the first questionnaire method (RQ1).

"What role does collaborative learning, supportive social perceived, and school alienation play in student achievement?" was the third questionnaire method (RQ2). RQ1's data analysis comprised of Simplified Pearson correlations, while RQ2's analysis of the data comprised of stepwise multiple regression analysis. According to the results, collaborative learning and the level of academic assistance offered by instructors are favorably connected with accomplishment ($r=.44$, $p.01$), but learners' emotions of estrangement from school are inversely correlated with success ($r=-.28$, $p>.001$). The study also discovered that collaborative learning is moderately favorably connected

($r=.29$, $p.01$) with perceived academic levels and support and help from instructors and classmates, while being moderately negatively correlated ($r=-.32$, $p.01$) with emotions of separation from school.

Setiawan et al. (2020) discovered that the amount to which students become socially active with classmates and teachers during first six to seven weeks of a semester was strongly associated to their chance of remaining at their accredited university ($\beta = 0.23$; p -value 0.08, respectively). That is, more the learners engaged with one another, the more likely they were to continue and complete an academic program. Other research have discovered that levels of social family support, peers, instructors, and important others had a beneficial influence on Mathematics grades. (Azmitia et al., 2009) as well as reading assessments (Park & Bonner, 2008). These results show that persons who have difficulty communicating with others may also have difficulty obtaining higher academic goals.

Peer groups give a sense of comfort and enable students in their first year to create an identity. Peer pressure has the ability to modify one's conduct to suit others' perceived expectations (Darling-Hammond & Burns, 2012). Peer acceptance in many aspects of childhood, including academics, causes pro-social comportment. This in turn influences the child's self-esteem, which has various social repercussions (Quillian & Campbell, 2013).

Irrespective of socio-economic position, parents want to ensure that their children have the finest social networks available, particularly at a young age when their kids become more independent from their parents. During these formative years, educational

objectives take shape and young people choose decisions that define their paths in school, even as their networks of friendship impact these decisions (Hamm et al., 2015).

While the publication of the renowned Coleman Report gives the literature about peer-effect in education from the 60s on, the significance of peer-group effects is still controversial. Although certain assertions were made concerning the potential of peers in the development of children, several types of research have produced inconsistent findings ranging from strong, to poor, and non-existent results in some cases (Harris & Hargreaves, 2013). This reflects the difficulties in determining the peer group, distinguishing causal effects from other factors, lack of enough data, and diverse study techniques.

Students with improved social skills and greater participation in extra-curricular activities might obtain higher academic accomplishments and pay more in their selected areas (Blumenfeld et al., 2018 & Fredrickson, 2015). Classes are more probable for students who have close ties with professors and classmates (Allensworth et al., 2017). Frequency and type of the interpersonal experience of students with their peers can impact psychosocial issues such as the development of identity, self-evaluation and independence, relationships with one person, leadership abilities, and general personal development.

Perceived social support is the impression that other people such as family and friends can provide help or aid. Social support can take the shape of direction and reaction, non-directive support for trust, good social encounters, and material support (Halamandaris & Power, 2011). The previous study showed that social support for first-year university

students was connected to academic, psychological, emotional, and social adjustment (PriscillaLui, 2020). First-year students with greater levels of reported parental and peer social assistance have shown better adaptation than students with less perceived parental support, such as increased well-being, happiness and reduced sadness (Holahan et al., 1994). In the first-year students, social support from parents and friends has been found to predict college adjustment and social aid will interact with stress to predict college adaptability.

Failure to build excellent social ties might impact the academic success of students. Peer groups support each other in group conversations, leading to improved academic work understanding. Social determinants affecting the academic achievements of students include the mothers' education level, the disagreement between their families, and their relations. According to Brown (2015), the increased pressure to achieve is one more element that supports an already more stimular home environment for children with better-educated parents than students with lower educational levels.

In social groups higher numbers of students with average grades were studied, and found that students with the highest and lowest marks were less sociable in academic work. Research also showed that academic performance is affected by university happiness, financial conditions, career guidance, and assistance. The most often approved reason for students to leave university was the unhappiness with the course of study (Lowe & Cook, 2014).

Malefo (2015) have discovered that there are other prevalent reasons for university departure, such as financial issues. Those with a clear career direction were more

effective and less likely to leave the university than students without clear career orientation, confirming that academic achievement is also influenced by social support. In contrast, Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (2014) identified a person with strong family or husband support as key indicators of student retention and academic performance. Their presence is important.

Leading learning environments are necessary to challenge and encourage students to become active and self-directed pupils (Brown et al., 2013). In genuine challenging task scenarios students learn new information and abilities. Students must guide their own paths to guarantee success in their learning environments.

The inability to develop good social interactions appears to be a key element in the academic success of students. A group of peers support each other in group conversations and leads to a greater comprehension of the job. According to the study carried out by Bojuwoye (2012), he focused on developments, identity and closeness, and the need to change socially and to learn new social skills. He stressed the development of friends and new values, especially friends of the opposite sex, as well as the preparation for adult positions, as a worker, citizen, or family member are some of the social interactions that have a strong impact on academic performance. Students who do not have excellent social interactions lack the potential to experience and learn well in a postsecondary institution. He also noted that some elements that are psychological in origin result in academic difficulties.

Bandura's social cognition theory is founded on the assumption that social elements impact thought. Other researchers who have supported Bojuwoye's (2012) hypothesis

that the inability to form good social relations is an obstacle to the academic achievement of students, However, advising pupils that they had no prospect of academic achievement, for any reason, would be unethical. Students in their first year may have excessive expectations about non-academic variables that might affect their chances of success and they may have even greater feelings of loneliness, isolation, and alienation (Bojuwoye, 2012). Research shows that family strife has a detrimental influence on university academic success. People from such family backgrounds may have problems connecting with others and having success as the university atmosphere may be a source of stress for them. Depending on their institutional affiliations, sex, and age, the stress-related features of the university can be experienced by various groups of students.

The start of university education marks for most young people the first entry into adulthood and also a long suspending period concerning societal obligations and certain choices. It includes social support, coping methods, and locus of control. Malefo (2015) noted the effect on academic performance by 'faceted' stress theories, coping, and adaptability in the analysis of variables that included a student's past, an examination of different kinds and stress sources, and an analysis of diverse elements that serve to forecast functional and stressful aspects.

2.3 Emotional Stability and Academic Performance

Emotional stability is a feature that can either positively or negatively affect the behavioral dimension of the individual. This special characteristic can impact kids' academic activity and eventually their academic success. The fact that first-year students have moved away from home for the first time at that era and are cut off from family and

friends who have given important social support in their lives might lead to stress in an alternative climate (Pancer et al., 2010). The study by Altmaier (2013) demonstrated that the most stressful phase for first-year students is the first weeks and months of the classes during their college transfer. If stress is not adequately addressed, uneasiness and loneliness, as well as sleeplessness and excessive concern can lead to poor academic performance.

He discovered that students in the first year had less knowledge of the social environment that might contribute to their exit from university. Pike and Kuh (2015) have also shown that first-year students are less likely to be socially and intellectually involved than in later years. Greenfield et al. (2013) reports that effective academic and social adaptation can encourage learning, development, and conservation for first-year students. Kuh (2013) showed that university environments including students improve achievement both academically and socially. Academic and social adaptation cannot thus be overestimated in student persistence.

Research conducted by Nasir and Masrur (2010) on emotional intelligence and academic performance showed that successful students learned when they understood how to learn, and this requires emotional abilities such as trust, control, and the ability to interact and work with others. The paper found that emotional intelligence has predicted considerably academic performance among 132 students from various departments of the Islamic International University, Islamabad, and Pakistan. In a previous study, a substantial relationship was between the kids' emotional intelligence and academic achievement in several institutions and departments in the United States of America. This study aimed to

determine the influence of emotional stability on academic success for students from the Kenyatta University of Kenya.

Delbari et al. (2021) looked at how well several profession and personality evaluation surveys may predicted first-year college success and perseverance. The sample comprised of 677 college freshmen (n=677) who were enrolled in a career orientations program at a big southeastern institution. The bulk of the participants were female (n=356), European (87%), and 18.15 years old on average. The average GPA for the students in their first year was 2.48, with a spread of 0.00 to 4.00, according to the survey. According to the MBTI sub - scales, a large number of the subjects scored highly on the assertiveness, emotion, and perceptive inclinations scales. The Study Habit score on the SSI was well below 51, indicating that this group favored a more practical rather than academic educational environment, as per the researchers. The SII subscales indicated that this bunch of learners had standard levels of social skills for university undergraduates. Generally, the sub - scales that indicated first-year Grade average all examined some facet of social ties, according to the authors. This conclusion is in line with Hoy's (2012) academic model developed, which suggests that individuals who actively assimilate into the university community are more committed to the university and more inclined to succeed.

Berenson et al. (2008) looked at the internal components of emotional intellect (EI) and character and see how much they can influence GPA, and how EI and personality might predict web - based learning performance. The survey's sample comprised of 83 community undergraduate students enrolled in online classes. The bulk of the learners (82

percent) were female, and the both men and woman ($M=29.8$) were between the ages of 19 and 58.

A research by Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2003) examined at how temperament affects academic success. This research used two samples of university students from the Imperial College London who were english Speakers. Group 1 included 70 undergrads (22 men and 48 women), whereas Group 2 included 75 undergrads (22 males and 55 females). Group 1 had an average age of 19.9 ($SD=1.05$) while Group 2 had an average age of 20.9 ($SD=3.65$). For the first group, the researchers used the 60-item NEO Five-Factor Inventory to measure personality. Openness to experience, emotional stability, social competence, emotionality, and extraversion were all assessed with this tool. The authors used the Behavior Rating Survey tool for the next group, which included 106 questions and evaluated psychoticism, openness to experience, and psychoticism.

Academic success was measured by overall test scores (5) and the last year project results. The survey's ultimate purpose was to figure out which character factors influence academic success. For group 1, the results suggested that neuroticism may hinder academic success whereas agreeableness may contribute to greater academic accomplishment. This conclusion is comparable to Conard's (2006) research, which found that agreeableness influenced scores on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) in an incremental manner. Anxiety and psychopathy were found to be barriers to academic progress in group 2. The EPQ-R outperformed the NEO-FFI in terms of predicting academic success, accounting for roughly 17% vs 10% of the unique variance in total exam scores.

Nguyen et al. (2005) investigated which personality qualities predict academic success and if genders takes part in this. A total of 361 bachelor's degree students (n=360) took a business course at a Southern institution. The bulk of the pupils (51.4 percent) were girls who categorized as White (73 percent). Goldberg's 51-item Big five personality scale was used to assess temperament. Last course scores in a bachelor business course and cumulative grade average were used to assess academic success (GPA).

The results of the data analysis revealed that agreeableness, above and outside the other character qualities of cooperativeness, assertiveness, emotion regulation, and intelligence, predicted total GPA favorably and considerably, accounting for unique variation in final program grades and GPA. The data also revealed that for males, emotional maturity and intelligence positively and strongly influenced academic achievement, but not for females. This study backs up Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham's (2003) findings that agreeableness is a key element in improving overall academic performance among college students. This supports the notion that temperament inventories must be evaluated for college admissions and job decisions.

Farooq (2013) found that high-powerful pupils exhibited superior academic achievement than low emotional intelligence students in another study of 246 Pakistani young persons. Similar findings were found among Nigerian university students by Adeyemo (2017), whereas Sünbül and Arslan (2018) report a similar relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among 312 students in Konya, Turkey. The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement was similar.

There is growing recognition, especially for minority, First-Generation, and other college

students, that transitions from school to college and profession are tough and stressful and that emotional intelligence impacts student success and retention throughout a transition time. For example, in the first year of college in Texas Universities and Colleges, Nelson and Low (2003) observed a similar link amongst high school graduates. Other studies in Texas, USA, have established a substantial connection for secondary and college students in the transition to South Texas between academic success and intelligence (Stottlemyer, 2012). This study was of interest in understanding how emotional intelligence might be a predictor of first-year students at Kenyatta University.

A multitude of research that links good emotions and achievement demonstrate that pleasure, optimism, and pride are favorably related to the academic self-efficiency, academic interest, and overall success of our kids (Pekrun et al., 2014). Positive emotions are thought to support approach activities, which can lead to academic advantages, particularly when the student progresses towards the desired objective (Davidson et al; 2003). Fredrickson (2015) claimed that happy emotions improve academic competency, encouraging the exploration, integration of various resources, and expansion of possible approaches of problem resolution. If stress is not adequately addressed, uneasiness and loneliness, as well as sleeplessness and excessive concern can lead to poor academic performance.

2.4 Strategies of Empowering First-Year Students to Overcome Challenges of Adjustment

There is growing concern worldwide regarding students' exposure to psychological problems during their first year at the university, and as a result universities have

attempted to come up with prevention and intervention strategies to make life easier for the students (Campbell & Li, 2018). Universities, for example, have created transitional university programs to smooth the shift from informative orientation in the first few days of the university to organized, clinical treatments for at-risk students (Barefoot et al., 2015). There was great attention to first-year experiences, including faculty and staff consulting, first-year learning opportunities, and even first-year seminars (Barefoot et al. 2015). These initiatives offer students opportunities to connect more informally with teachers and obtain much-needed social assistance, elements which can increase their first-year student success (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2015). Although these faculty or staff-led programs are promising, they do not thoroughly analyze the vital importance of the transfer of students to university in their first year. Research has previously shown that peer interactions boost academic achievement in the first year and increase leadership capabilities (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2015).

The study of social aid programs run in the 1990s and 2000s Ho et al.(2004) showed the reduction of loneliness of students with social support programs in their initial weeks of joining the university. The research showed that to modify freshmen through crisis intervention, high-level students functioning as peer consultants aid with drug addiction and alcohol abuse, which leads to lesser utilization of professional advice. Theoretical perspectives for these scientists include that the move to university disturbs social networking and difficult living situations (Bebbington et al., 2017). Specialized groups enable kids to build new social relationships with similar students confronting the same changing society, increasing academic expectations, separation, parent independence, and

mechanisms for secondary education assistance.

In general, academic performance and accomplishment are the main objectives of all first-year students. From the foregoing talks, however, it is obvious that students in the first year confront enormous adaptation problems in a new setting. It may thus be anticipated that students face certain obstacles in academia too for the first year. Academic stress is the most essential of all the factors that cause stress to first-year students. In exploring adaptation efforts, Church (2018), specifically in academic matters, found that students had an inadequate language proficiency, lack of understanding of different standards and processes in connection with the new system of academia, and lack of information and guidance on a different form of the educational system. The following were important challenges.

According to Church (2018), the absence of linguistic abilities might result in difficulty in reading and writing, and spoken communication for studying. Consequently, it may lead to an inability to grasp the many standards and procedures in a new academic system involving features such as a credit-based study system, protocols for classrooms, and informality between teachers and students. Similarly, poor prior preparation, inadequate academic assistance, and counsel suggest a lack of information and direction. In summary, the language, standards, and procedures of a new academic system and information make the first-year students feel stressed. The research of Andrade (2016) confirmed the importance of these three obstacles and added to this list several other challenges affecting the academic adaptation of students in the first year.

While the question of linguistic competence was raised further by Mehdizadeh and Scott

(2015) to call our attention to the question of comprehending diverse emphases, the study by Andrade (2016) focused on academic contexts and issues related to speech and writing. Campbell and Li (2018) highlighted the variables that have influenced first-year students' learning progress, such as insufficient support for learning, unknown ideas of group discussions and work, difficulties building friendship amongst them, and incorporating cultural values into educational practices. Similar to problems with language skills, pupils might also have a serious influence on academic achievements in academic cultures between their home countries and other first-year nations.

Ho et al. (2004) literature analysis reveals that various cultures are motivated by distinct traits and goals, which have consequences for the connections between learning, education, and classrooms. Novera (2014) further argues that the cultural differences of academia have a bigger influence on the learning process of first-year students. In the ways of their learning, class interactions, and student-teacher relationships, the consequences of these variations are evident. Holmes (2015) research of the communication skills of Chinese students at the university in New Zealand indicated that the problems they face because of their country of origin and their host country varied from one culture to another.

Furthermore, Holmes (2015) points to a foreign notion for many Asian pupils as investigational learning (which implies interaction in question form, expresses thoughts and opinions). The distinctions originate from the fact that instructors are seen as moral authorities, a source of information, and therefore challenging a teacher in the Asian cultures is strongly discouraged. Unfortunately, these familiar perspectives of students in

the first year hamper their attendance and connection with the professors in the new host nation. In addition, current research also shows that students in the first-year experience problems with a few of the host nation academic customs. Campbell and Li (2018), for example, have discovered a lack of knowledge and an awareness of key academic norms such as independent training, writing, group discussion, and group assignment, even if students have finished their bachelor's degrees in their native country.

Students, in their first year struggles with autonomous education, take personal responsibility, in a non-monitored environment in particular, for doing and organizing their research and study. The study by Eaves (2019) confirmed that participants perceive a significant amount of variations in the learning process, autonomous learning, and evaluation methods to be stressful in England. Yoko and Susan (2018) has studied the critical thinking method in Western academic culture as another academic norm. With its focus on 30 postgraduate students from East Asia, Durkin (2018) found that the research participants struggled with the notion of critical thinking, which is a major aspect of Western academic standards.

The study showed that in the Western academic setting, the memory process with which pupils initially knew in their national school systems, was difficult. Based on the study, Durkin (2018) said that a new host country's academic customs might provide major obstacles for first-year students impacting their academic adjustment and accomplishments. Studies on Indian first-year students in Australia and the USA showed that the main gap facing participants was adaptation to a foreign academic system in the host country, adding to the list of academic cultural variations (Nayak & Venkatraman,

2010).

Particularly since they favored annual exams to research-organized tasks, many reported problems in composing assignments, given that the stress of first-year encounters with students in new host nations might be immense, particularly because of the contrasts in the academic culture. Although Leavitt et al. (2017) study in New Zealand in the mid-1990s highlighted this issue, sadly even some recent studies have shown a similar lack of knowledge on academic standards and customs preventing academic adjustment of students in a host nation (Andrade, 2016). To illustrate this, Campbell and Li (2018) have shown that their study participants have not been able to utilize learning help and/or access their learning materials through the website because of a lack of knowledge. Consequently, despite the scientific problems they faced, this lack of information caused them to under-use the institutional help provided.

This study will contribute to knowledge on emotional stability and academic accomplishment, and will urge parents, teachers, politicians, and everyone involved to ensure that each student is a good asset to society.

2.5 Theoretical Review

The current study was informed by two theories; social learning theory and Eysenck's Personality Theory. The theories are discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.5.1 Social Learning Theory

Bandura (1977) developed the theory of social learning, which is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context . The psychologist argued that people learn behavior cycles

from observation followed by imitation before they finally adopt the new ways in a process referred to as observational learning. The behavior of human beings is a consequence of sustained interactions taking place in the cognitive, social, and physical environment. Change of social behaviors is first processed in the mind when an individual observes the behavioral patterns of others. In the observation, the individual also takes mental notes on the consequences of the said actions before deciding to imitate them. They may then develop a model of applying them in the process which may lead to being assimilated into new social behaviors.

In the campus setting, most first-year students may not have social stands and can easily copy the various behavior patterns of other students in other years. They then try to fit into the new system by directly imitating what the seniors are doing. They may frequent the social places that were previously unknown to them. Use of new language patterns especially the adoption of slang, fashion change follows. The first year may not be easily distinguished from the rest. The danger comes when these new lifestyles which have just been fixed in their lives affect their studies. They might also experience challenges in trying to normalize it and this can lead to distraction from their academic work. The theory was relevant to the current study as it described how students Through observation and imitation, both good and bad actions may be learned. Learners' intellect, surroundings, and conduct all contribute to the development of their mind and how they engage in school-related activities thus determining their academic performance in the long run.

2.5.2 Cognitive Behavioral Theory

Cognitive Behavioral Theory covers the integration of cognitive and emotional states to ultimately influence behavior. An individual's thoughts have an impact on what they feel and how they behave. Thus, a mindset that creates negative thoughts, in the end, has negative feelings with an equal effect on the behavior. The concept was developed by Ellis (1960) who indicated that CBT is a type of cognitive therapy that may be utilized to help people with a variety of psychological issues. University students have an above average cognitive ability, which implies that they can manage to control their own thought processes. Normally, the end behavior patterns can be traced to the mental perceptions absorbed within their minds. A first-year student who perceives alcohol drinking as a good behavioral idea may end up trying to emulate the patterns from friends. The student may become used to taking alcohol, hence in the process taking this up as a trait. Another student may form a cognitive perception of a bad living habit which they avoid thus adopting a lifestyle from his/her peers.

The process, therefore, breaks down to how they first form the thoughts, the influence of such on their behavior and finally the impact on their academic performance. Ellis (1960) developed a sub-field of cognitive behavior theory named Rational Emotive Concept. In this, he argued that every individual had their own set of assumptions that guided their own perception on given behavioral traits. Ellis (1960) recognized that most people bear irrational thoughts that may lead them into adopting behavior that is maladaptive. This may describe the life of a first-year university student, whereby he/she joins university knowing well the difference between good and bad behavior. If they perceive certain

inappropriate behaviours as acceptable, it may end up interfering with their academic work and contribute to poor performance.

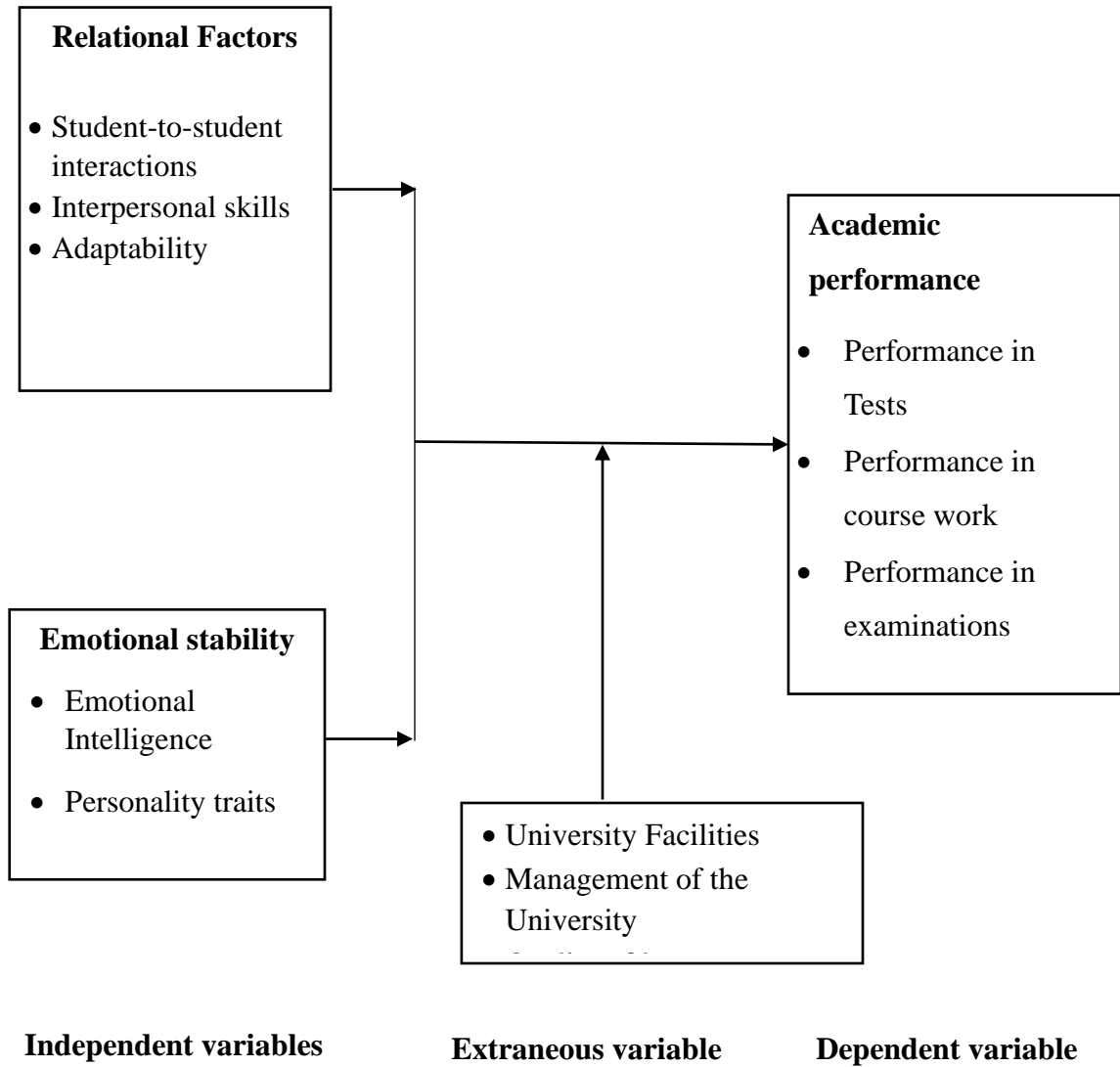
2.6 Summary

The notion of social learning stresses the significance of watching and copying other people's behaviors, attitudes, and emotions. This idea says that the majority of human behavior is learned through modeling observationally. In terms of the ongoing interplay of cognitive-behavioral and environmental factors, the theory of social learning explains human behavior. Collectively, the two theories (social learning theory and Cognitive Behavioral Theory) provide important information that helps to explain different outcomes concerning adaptation to the university of first-year students faced with psycho-social challenges.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2. 1

Conceptual Framework



The figure 2.1 indicates that relational factors and emotional stability, which are the independent variables, influence academic performance which is the dependent variable. The extraneous variables included university facilities, the management of the university, and the quality of lecturers.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter describes both the research design, the field of investigation, the target population, sampling techniques and sample size, data collecting methods, data collection tools, and, in conclusion, the data analysis.

3.2 Study Design

A descriptive research design was used in this research. The descriptive study, as according Kothari (2014), allows a study to characterize the record, evaluate it, and report on any circumstances that present or have occurred. Descriptive survey is to gather information about a phenomena and develop a valid conclusion based on the facts presented. The descriptive study is used to define or characterize a theme by putting up a profile of a set of issues, persons, or occurrences. variables or their interaction as indicated. Orodho (2015) states that descriptive design is used when collecting information about people, attitudes, opinions, habits, education, and social issues. Specifically, a descriptive design was used in this study to explain the influence of relational factors and emotional stability on the academic performance of first-year students with special reference to Kenyatta University.

3.3 Study Area

The study took place at Kenyatta University main campus. The University's main

campus in Nairobi now has approximately 30,001 enrollments in a variety of degree courses.

3.4 Target Population

The target population, as per Creswell (2005), relates to all individuals of a theoretical or actual sample of subjects, items, or humans to which an investigator want to extrapolate the research outcome. The study population was made up of 9,994 first-year students at Kenyatta University. This figure, nevertheless, does not include students on school vacation, teaching practice (TP), or other outdoor assignments. As a result, the real proportion of students on campus was substantially lower than 9,994. It was impossible to determine the precise number away because to the methods as shown in Table 3.1. The study also targeted the school counselors.

Table 3. 1

Target Population

School	Male	Female	Total
Education	2,173	2,138	4,311
Business	715	403	1,118
Pure & Applied Sciences	369	180	549
Humanities & Social Sciences	312	416	728
Engineering & Technology	651	174	825
Applied Human	393	284	677
Environmental Studies	483	352	835
Health Sciences	152	160	312
Economics	110	89	199
Law	120	152	272
Visual & Performing	92	36	128
Agriculture &Enterprise	26	14	40
Total	5,596	4,398	9,994

Source: KU - Students Admission Office (2020)

NOTE: The total (24,484) excludes students from the School of Hospitality and Tourism.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The number of first-year students at Kenyatta University was 9,994. To obtain the required sample size from these target populations, the study adopted the formula by Nassiuma (2000).

$$n = \frac{Nc^2}{c^2 + (N - 1)e^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N = population size, e = error margin (= 4%), and c = coefficient of variation (= 50%) by substituting the formulae, therefore, we obtain;

$$N = [9994 * 0.5 * 0.5] / 0.5 * 0.5 + (9994 - 1) 0.04 * 0.04$$

$$N = 153$$

The sample size was 153 first-year students

3.5.1 Sampling Technique

Since the university has 12 different schools, this study used simple random sampling to select 153 students from the 12 schools. The features of simple random sampling provided each respondent with an equal chance of inclusion while on the same note, keeping the manageable size. Simple random sampling was also used to enhance the generalization of data obtained in the study (Helfrich et al., 2020). The sample size was then proportionally allocated according to the targeted population in respective schools as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2
Sample Size

School	Number of students	Ratio	Sample size
Education	4,311	0.015309	66
Business	1,118	0.015309	17
Pure & Applied Sciences	549	0.015309	8
Humanities & Social Sciences	728	0.015309	11
Engineering & Technology	825	0.015309	13
Applied Human	677	0.015309	10
Environmental Studies	835	0.015309	13
Health Sciences	312	0.015309	5
Economics	199	0.015309	3
Law	272	0.015309	4
Visual & Performing	128	0.015309	2
Agriculture & Enterprise	40	0.015309	1
Total	9,994	0.015309	153

3.6 Research Instruments

A questionnaire and an interview guide were utilized as data collection instruments in this research.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

To respond to the study questions, a questionnaire was utilized to collect information from respondents. Questionnaires refer to printed lists of questions that are used in

gathering people's thoughts or feelings about an issue, product, or service. Questionnaires can be interviewer-administered or answered by the respondents themselves (self-administered). According to Kombo and Tromp (2016), a questionnaire is regarded as a highly convenient way of collecting information within a shorter period from a large number of people.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

An interview guide was used to generate in depth data among the Deans of schools. The Deans responded to a face to face structured interview with the researcher. This helped in triangulation of data from the questionnaires.

3.7 Pilot Test

Before the actual data collection, pre-testing of the questionnaire and interview guide was conducted at Kenyatta University City campus (Nairobi), with 20 student respondents. The pre-testing enables the researcher to assess the clarity and ease of use of a questionnaire and interview guide. The researcher also identified the sensitive, confusing or biased items and modified accordingly

3.7.1 Validity

Validity is defined as the accuracy with which an instrument measures what it claims to measure. To achieve content validity, procedures recommended by Cooper and Schindler (2013) were used. Precisely, identification of the existing scales from the literature, and developing data collection instruments in consultation with experts in the subject matter. The study ensured content validity by exhaustively covering the research objectives in the

tools for data collection. The content validity of the instruments was further enhanced through discussions with the researcher's supervisor.

3.7.2 Reliability

A reliable questionnaire would give the same results if used repeatedly with the same group (Mohamad et al., 2015). According to Zikmund et al. (2012), reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and in this case, provide consistent results.

The goal of the research was to determine the internal consistency of the study's primary variables. This was accomplished by performing a reliability test on the three essential variables, as indicated in Table 3.3. Cronbach alpha values greater than 0.7 were found in a scale test of the variables, indicating that they were quite dependable in producing consistent findings over time. The accompanying rule of thumb was proposed by George and Mallery (2003): A number of larger than 0.9 is considered excellent, more than 0.8 is considered good, higher than 0.7 is considered acceptable, higher than 0.6 is considered suspect, higher than 0.5 is considered bad, and much less than 0.5 is considered unsatisfactory. The better the internal reliability of the scale's components, the closer Cronbach's alpha value is to 1.0.

Table 3.3***Reliability Analysis***

	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Item removed	Verdict
Relational Factors	0.899	7	None	Accepted
Emotional stability	0.927	8	None	Accepted
Academic performance	0.941	5	None	Accepted

Table 3.3 indicates the results of reliability if a particular item is removed, in which relational factors had a coefficient value of 0.899, emotional stability had a coefficient value of 0.927, and the academic performance had a coefficient value of 0.943.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection was carried out at Kenyatta University on the first-year students. This was done through questionnaires for students and interview schedule for the Deans of schools, which were issued by the researcher. The assistant was trained by the researcher before the data collection time. Written consent was obtained from the participants and only those students who consented to the study participated. The researcher also sought approvals from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) to conduct the study.

The researcher introduced herself to the authority at the university and was permitted to collect data from the students and the university counselors. The researcher established a rapport with the students and the university counselors and explained the study objectives

detailing the purpose of the study. They were asked if they had any questions before the commencement of the data collection. To increase participation, the questionnaires were delivered by the researcher, using the research assistants, throughout the day of school and in the classroom. The researcher described the methods and attended to the respondents' concerns regarding evaluation measures. To complete the surveys, students were allotted 30-40 minutes. The researcher also conducted face-to-face interviews. The questionnaires and interview responses were gathered and safely stored.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

The analytical procedure included editing, coding, and entering data. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and the results were presented using Pie-charts and bar charts. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically and the results were presented in verbatim.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

During the course of this investigation, ethical standards were followed to guarantee participants' rights were always safeguarded. Before data collection, consent to conduct the study was sought from Kenya Methodist University. A research permit was obtained from NACOSTI and other relevant authorizations to carry out the study were obtained from Kenyatta University and the Ministry of Education respectively.

The researcher also got written notified consent of the subjects before the gathering of data. Participants were informed that the information they gave out was confidential and

that it was solely utilized for academic purposes only. In addition, to ensure the anonymity of the respondents, the questionnaire was coded.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The study examined the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County, and also came up with interventions that may help first-year students overcome the psychosocial challenges faced. The findings were presented under the study objectives which were:

- (i) to examine the influence of relational factors.
- (ii) to determine the influence of emotional stability on academic performance.
- (iii) to identify strategies that can be used to help first-years to overcome the psychosocial challenges in Kenyatta University.

A total of 153 questionnaires were administered and only 126 respondents completed and returned. This provided a response rate of 82.35%. For the analysis and generalization of the results by the target population, this was judged to be adequate. This is in agreement with Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) who reported that more than 50 percent response rate is sufficient for this sort of study.

4.2 Demographic Findings

The demographic variables included in the study were gender and age.

4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study attempted to determine the gender of the participants. The results were as

shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4. 1

Respondents Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	81	64.3
Female	45	35.7
Total	126	100.0

The findings show that 81 (64.3%) of the respondents were males while 45 (35.7%) were female. This indicated that the majority of first-year students who participated in the study were male.

4.2.2 Respondents Age

The findings on the age of the respondents were as in Table 4.2:

Table 4. 2

Respondents Age

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent %
Less than 18 years	14	11
18 to 25 years	71	56
26 to 35 years	38	30
above 35 years	4	3
Total	126	100

As indicated in Table 4.2, 56% of the respondents were between 18 - 25 years; 30% were between 26-35 years; 11% were less than 18 years and 3% were 35 years and above. The majority of the respondents were between 18 - 25 years which tallies with the age group for first-year students who join the university in Kenya.

In terms of age the findings concurred with Billari and Pellizzari (2008) who found that the younger when contrasted to their older peers, kids in a group acquire crucial personality traits and social abilities, including such personality and authority, to a smaller extent or at a slower rate. This effect is called psychological effect of relative age. According to Michele (2014), The impact manifests itself at university, and it is unimportant at lower ages since it is only in university that one gains complete control over one's period. The deleterious age repercussions in students' achievement are due to two processes: a characteristics of intellectual growth that may begin to decline all around age of twenty and mental general age impacts that cause the youngest in a group to grow interpersonal skills (consciousness, leadership) at a slightly slower pace. Students [younger] have less social activities and dedicate more time to their studies. (Billari & Pellizzari 2008).

4.3 Academic Performance

This section describes Academic achievement is the output variable. Academic achievement was defined as grades earned on exams, class assignments, and exams. The outcome variable was covered with five items in Section E of the survey, as illustrated in Appendix III. The questions employed a Likert scale spanning from one to three, with one representing poor academic performance and three representing excellent

performance. The findings on academic performance were presented in mean and standard deviation as tabulated below:

Table 4.3

Level of Academic Performance as Perceived by the Students

		Mean	Std. Deviation
AP1	Academic performance in Mid-term tests	2.41	0.568
AP2	Academic performance in Take-home course works	2.36	0.574
AP3	Academic performance in your previous semesters Examinations	2.31	0.674
AP4	Academic performance in core/compulsory courses	2.27	0.548
AP5	Academic performance in optional courses	2.20	0.531

Table 4.3 illustrates that students performance was highest in mid term tests and lowest in optional courses. The means ranged from 2.20 to 2.41 indicating that majority of the respondents performed below average in various tests, which is an indicator of poor academic performance.

4.4 Influence of Relational Factors on the Academic Performance

The first study objective sought to establish the influence of relational factors on the academic performance of first-year students at the university, Nairobi County. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with several statements concerning the influence of relational factors on their academic performance.

The results were as illustrated below.

Table 4.4***The Extent to which Relational Factors Affect Academic Performance***

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My friends give me a sense of belonging and this makes me feel loved, hence improves my academic performance	3.224	1.242
Belonging to a group builds my sense of identity which in turn improves my confidence to excel in academics	3.620	0.630
Peer groups influence my short and long-term education plans	3.650	0.714
The influence of my peers on my decision making affects my academic work	3.728	0.954
The security I get from relation groups in the University contributes to the improvement of my academic performance	3.735	0.653
Difficulty accepting support from teachers and others affect my academic work	3.749	0.514
Uncontrolled freedom affects my time management skills and this affects my studies.	3.812	0.678

As per the findings, the mean values for the responses varied from 3.2 to 3.8, which showed that the respondents to a great extent, agreed with the statements on the extent to which relational factors influence the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County. For example, uncontrolled freedom affects their time management skills and this affects their studies, had the highest mean of 3.812 and a standard deviation of 0.678. This was followed by difficulty accepting support from

teachers and others affect their academic work, which had a mean of 3.749 and a standard deviation of 0.514. The security they get from relation groups in the University contributes to the improvement of their academic performance had a mean of 3.735 and a standard deviation of 0.653. The influence of their peers on their decision-making affects their academic work had a mean of 3.728 and a standard deviation of 0.954. Peer groups' influences on their short and long-term education plans had a mean of 3.650 and a standard deviation of 0.714. Belonging to a group builds my sense of identity which in turn improves my confidence to excel in academics had a mean of 3.620 and a standard deviation of 0.630. Their friends give them a sense of belonging and this makes them feel loved, hence improves their academic performance had a mean of 3.224 and a standard deviation of 1.242. The findings imply that the academic performance of first-year students was significantly affected by relational factors.

The study also found out from the key informants that first-year students experienced various relational challenges. To start with, the social environment at university may be nerve-wracking at times, particularly for first-year students. Although some students are inherently extroverted, the majority of them must work hard to form social bonds. For fear of being ridiculed, getting criticized, or being rejected, some individuals may withdraw themselves or withdraw from activities. In their research, Oseguera and Rhee (2019) and Ramsay et al. (2017) underline the relevance of student interactions on their chance of completing college. They discovered that students require assistance during moments of transition throughout their early months of university. To lessen the stress involved with transferring into a demanding setting, college students must be able to

recognize that their campus environment provides them with assistance. Some respondents described themselves as timid and did not believe they were capable of social interaction.

One student said; "I always feel shy to mingle with old students and I prefer staying in my hostel room all weekend than going to clubs."

New students may experience culture shock as a result of leaving their comfortable culture and adjusting to a new setting. Furthermore, whereas new students might be good at making friends, they might struggle to join social circles in university because they are newbies with modest achievements. Failure to fit into a society, for instance, can lead to social marginalization, stress, despair, and a lack of enthusiasm in learning and talking with peers. Some individuals would rather remain in their dormitories or go to the libraries than approach other learners and introduce themselves. Because of a lack of relationship and peer interaction, a student might feel overburdened, alone, and lonesome. Depression occurs at different rates in different cultures, with industrialized countries having greater prevalence than developing nations (Kessler & Bromet, 2013).

Peer pressure is a challenge faced by these students whereby they are pressured into indulging in activities that may negatively affect their academic performance in the long run. For instance, uncontrolled partying. Partying isn't an issue in and of itself. The purpose of parties is for students to have a nice time. Some gatherings, on the other hand, can be problematic. Drinking too much alcohol can lead to intoxication and potentially fatal scenarios. It is possible to transfer illness by having intercourse without taking the proper measures. Students starting university have been identified as a motivating force

for the affirmation of sexuality because they are introduced to different personal experience, of that kind as the usages of drugs and alcohol, and they are subjected to peer pressure, as well as being accessible to heretofore forbidden or impeded circumstances. (Borges et al., 2015).

Peer pressure may also affect students' academic performance because they more often tend to pull away from class and engage in leisure activities in order to fit in. This finding is supported by Frank et al. (2015) who found that peer approval leads to pro-social behavior. For instance, it may result in a student mucking around with friends in town and not doing an assignment and private study. Priority is therefore given to having fun instead of concentrating on one's academic work, and that reasoning and point of view often are viewed as the cognitive domain of compassion that is related to the development of pro-social conduct.

Relationship issues are also challenges faced by first-year students. Partnerships are wonderful, but they can also be exhausting. Every couple will have disagreements or issues at some point in their relationships. Couples' arguments might divert students' attention away from their studies and contribute to their occupational stress. Breakups might push some individuals into deeper melancholy. These results were in line with Nasir and Masrur (2010), who said that university students experience a slew of issues, including separation from family, transitioning to a new environment, and adjusting to education systems, all of which contribute to a high incidence of depression.

One of the respondents stated; 'I had suicidal thoughts, not once, when I realized my then third-year boyfriend had broken up with me'

The findings also concur with those by various scholars, such as, Allensworth et al. (2017) who observed that Students who have positive interactions with their professors and peers are more likely to show up to class. Peer approbation, according to Quillian and Campbell (2013), contributes to pro-social conduct in many aspects of a child's life, including academics. This, in return, has an effect on the individual's self, which has societal ramifications. 1st learners reported understanding less for the social context, which might lead to exit from university. According to Pike and Kuh (2015), first-year undergraduates are less likely to be socially and intellectually motivated than learners in previous years. According to Greenfield et al. (2016), good academically and socially adaptation in the first years can increase learning, growth, and retention. University settings that engage learners socially and academically boost achievement, (Kuh, 2013).

4.5 Influence of Emotional Stability on the Academic Performance

The second objective examined the effect of emotional stability on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County. Again, several statements on emotional stability and academic performance were identified and the respondents were required to rate the extent to which they applied to them using 1 was strongly disagree and 5 was strongly agree.

Table 4.5***The Extent to which Emotional Stability affects Respondents Academic Performance***

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Meeting new people affects my ability to concentrate in class	3.371	0.751
Anticipating exams frustrates and makes me feel depressed	3.579	0.751
Feeling overwhelmed or helpless interferes with my academic work	3.579	0.707
My academic performance is affected by frustration brought about by my fear of some lecturers.	3.613	0.671
Feeling lonely or isolated makes me lose focus on my school work	3.655	0.687
Worries of being in a new environment affect my academic performance	3.711	0.769
Trimester exams make me anxious and this affects my schoolwork	3.826	0.653
Being denied a chance to choose a course of my choice frustrates me and this affects my grades	3.904	0.705

As indicated in Table 4.5, the mean values for the responses varied from 3.37 to 3.90, which showed that the respondents agreed to a great extent with the statements on the extent to which emotional stability influences their academic performance.

Specifically, the respondents agreed that being denied a chance to choose a course of their choice frustrates them and this affects their grades had a mean of 3.904 and a standard deviation of 0.705. Trimester exams make them anxious and this affects their school work had a mean of 3.826 and a standard deviation of 0.653. Worries of being in a

new environment affect their academic performance had a mean of 3.711 and a standard deviation of 0.769. Feeling lonely or isolated makes them lose focus on their schoolwork had a mean of 3.655 and a standard deviation of 0.687. Their academic performance is affected by frustration brought about by their fear of some lecturers had a mean of 3.613 and a standard deviation of 0.671. Feeling overwhelmed or helpless interferes with their academic work had a mean of 3.579 and a standard deviation of 0.707. Anticipating exams frustrates and makes them feel depressed had a mean of 3.579 and a standard deviation of 0.751. Meeting new people affects their ability to concentrate in the class had a mean of 3.371 and a standard deviation of 0.751.

The results portray that emotional factors that affect the academic performance of the year one students are a result of the lack of freedom to choose their course of interest, exams as well as fears emanating from various factors such as new environment, lecturers, loneliness, and feelings of helplessness.

The Dean of students said, "Students in their first year face various challenges that include homesickness as a common struggle for many students. When a graduate is lonesome, it's not so much that she or he is away from family as that is she or he has not yet established the University a second home. Returning home frequently (or concentrating on wishing to come back home) might help a homesick learner avoid becoming used to his or her surroundings." This is frequently the case, according to the Dean of Students questioned.

Another emotional challenge students face is academic workload. The majority of the respondents (76%) indicated that students were not prepared for the academic workload at college and they do not keep up with all assignments and homework. They have to read and write a lot and are expected to have a deep understanding of the course materials. Students are no longer treated as irresponsible children; they are treated as adults with responsibilities. In addition, the academic challenge requires being self-reliant in time management.

There is a growing anxiety of not meeting expectations, resulting in uncertainty regarding career prospects. Distress and/or anxiety are the most common symptoms, and these responses can be serious and/or lengthy, necessitating active therapy. Depression and anxiety can affect interpersonal relations as well as social and academic integration (Alawia, 2012). Whilst taking tests, some learners may suffer significant anxiousness. They may well be frightened and experience sweating, hyperventilation, and difficulties focusing. Test anxiousness, on the other hand, is a taught reaction that can be easily undone. It is feasible to view tests as stressful by their qualities or activities without needing to relate to reported anxiety and alertness, as per Dave (2018), distress is a much broader approach than worry.

Other prevalent experiences include emotion disengaged, having difficulties to develop behaviour patterns including such managing time, priority setting, and maintaining good health, adjusting to academic achievement that might very well be more complicated than it sounds, trying to manage a threshold of diversity that could be distinct from the societies with and that they are greatest acquainted, trying to compare one's own to others

have become disheartened, and experiencing difficulties trying to manage relationships at both school and home.

The emotional challenges negatively affect students' academic performance in the majority of the cases. This is because the students try to find coping mechanisms that pull them further away from concentrating on their academic work. For instance, the students develop dependency disorders by trying alcohol and/or drugs for the first-time, Some individuals choose to engage with excessive drinking as a leisure activity. Excessive usage might result in personality changes, poor focus (academic decline), and interpersonal interaction issues. Furthermore, in order to avoid getting detected, some learners may resort to cheating (copying coursework from internet resources). The ramifications of such a decision are poor academic performance due to quality issues or punishment for being caught considering the side effects of punishment and its harmful consequences on students' behaviors and future life (Alawia, 2012). These findings are similar to what According to Pike and Kuh (2015), students in their first years are less inclined to be socially and intellectually engaged than individuals in previous years.

4.6 Strategies to Overcome Psychosocial Challenges affecting Academic Performance

This section sought to investigate the strategies that can be put in place to overcome psychosocial challenges determining the academic performance of the first-year student at Kenyatta University. The respondents were asked to explain the skills that were critical for a learner to have a positive learning experience. One key informant said that:

“Various for a learner to have a good academic experience, they must have

certain abilities. including, time management since students getting to college may not be accustomed to taking responsibility for their schedule. In addition, students in the first year must establish adequate schedules and provide enough time to study. Confidence and communication are other essential abilities. Students in the first year should not be afraid to talk to others, be introduced, and work on a variety of campus community projects”.

This means that pupils in the first year should be visible to others. About academic work, confidence and communication help in students seeking clarification whereby they should seek assistance and clarity from lecturers and tutors. According to the majority of the student respondents (76%), several college teachers are approachable and eager to assist students. (Barefoot et al., 2015).

In addition to trust in one's understanding, critical thinking is a crucial skill for first-year students. The critical thinking characteristics described by Warren (2015) include examining factual claims, assumptions remarks, comparisons, and contrast works, finding clarification or challenges, as well as keeping the claims open, sensitive, determined, and open-minded. Warren characterizes critical thinking as an element of reflection, with the three parts critical and creative thought and understanding of information. The knowledge is more deeply integrated into cognitive awareness and encourages a good decision by assessing and evaluating friendships, relationships, and social activities.

The Key Informants (Dean of Schools) further revealed that the University has :

implemented some programs to help students cope with the challenges they face in their first year. They said that programs include: Psychological assessment and evaluations, time limitation treatments, emotional support, personal development groups or referrals to external psychological services which typically include student counseling services that are given. It is of

utmost significance that any information provided by the student is secret and ethical. It is important to share the information with trusted third parties only in exceptional instances (i.e. if there is a serious threat of a student damaging himself or others). This is explained at the initial counseling session to the student. Counselling offers a chance to look at broad developments such as job choices, study behaviors, routine changes, connections, identity, and self-conception.

In addition, social interaction is usually suggested to assist solitude and relationship issues. This means that students are encouraged to engage in intellectual, cultural, and sports activities. Extracurricular activities are available to supplement the academic program and increase the educational experience of the student. Additional academic engagement can improve training, that is, coping, problem-solving, and time management abilities. University peer networks also have a major impact on personal growth, whereas students, who are solely concerned with home buddies, tend to experience greater issues with adjustment (Barefoot et al., 2015). The findings are comparable to those of Barefoot et al. (2015), where institutions have established transition programs ranging from information guidance sessions during the initial university days to organized, clinical treatments of at-risk students to ease transfer to the university.

Barefoot et al. (2015) supported the findings, arguing that there was a lot of attention given to first-year experiential programs: teaching and staff consultations, first-year student training opportunities, and even first-year professorial courses. These programs, shown to improve student performance in their first year, allow students to engage in an informal style and provide much-needed social support. While promising, they stress

strongly the role that First and High-Class peers may play in aiding the transfer of pupils to university, while not analyzing carefully the faculties or staff-led programs. Research has previously shown that peer contacts increase the university performance of the students in the first year and develop their leadership qualities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County, and also come up with interventions that may help first-year students overcome the psychosocial challenges faced. The facts, findings, and suggestions are highlighted in this chapter given after considering the study results.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Influence of Relational Factors on the Academic Performance

The study found out that the academic performance of first-year students is significantly affected by the relational factors of identity, peer influence, uncontrolled freedom, and relationships with their lecturers as well as fitting in with their peers.

5.2.2 Influence of Emotional Stability on the Academic Performance

The study established that emotional factors that affect the academic performance of first-year students are a result of the lack of a sense of peace, acceptability, sense of security, freedom to choose their course of interest, level of anxiety which may be caused by exams, as well as fears emanating from various factors such as new environment, lecturers, loneliness and feelings of helplessness.

5.2.3. Strategies to Overcome Psychosocial Challenges affecting Academic Performance

Regarding the strategies put in place to cope with the psychosocial challenges that determined the academic performance of students at the university, the study established that the university implemented programs for first-year students aimed at helping students cope with the first-year-related challenges. Some of the strategies included the introduction of student counseling services that involved the provision of Psychological evaluations and examinations, moment counseling, emotional support, personal improvement groups, or, in certain situations, recommendations to outside psychiatric therapies are all options.

5.2.4 Academic Performance

The research established that the majority of the first-year students under investigation rated their performance fairly in terms of their performance in midterms assessments, take-home class work, prior year assessments, cornerstone courses, and elective courses.

5.3 Conclusions

The study managed to fill the existing knowledge gap in the counseling psychology field by examining the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County. The study concludes that relational factors measured in terms of student-to-student interactions, interpersonal skills, and adaptability significantly influence the academic performance of first-year students at Kenyatta University. The majority of the first-year students

indicated that their friends gave them a sense of belonging and that made them feel loved, thus leading to improved academic performance, belonging to a group built their sense of identity which in turn helped improve their confidence to excel in academics, peer groups influenced their short and long-term education plans, and their decision making which in turn affected their academic work. The students also indicated that the security they got from relation groups in the University contributed to the improvement of their academic performance. Further, the majority of the students expressed their difficulties in accepting support from lecturers which affected their academic work. Lastly, uncontrolled freedom affected their time management skills and this affected their studies and academic performance.

Further, the study concludes that emotional stability influenced the academic performance of the first-year students at Kenyatta University. Emotional stability was measured in terms of emotional intelligence and personality traits. Most of the first-year students at Kenyatta University reported that they experienced challenges in concentrating in a class with students they were not familiar with, anticipating exams felt frustrating for most of the students causing depression and a feeling of helplessness and this consequently interfered with their academic life. Some of the first-year students cited they feared some lecturers. Some students also reported feeling lonely or isolated and lost focus regarding their school work. Lastly, most of the students felt frustrated for not being allowed to pursue the course they desired and this affected their academic performance negatively.

Lastly, the study sought to establish the strategies that Kenyatta University had put in

place to overcome psychosocial challenges among first-year students, this study concludes that some of the strategies that were implemented include the introduction of student counseling services that involved the provision of psychological assessments and evaluation, emotional support for the affected students, organization of personal development groups where students can share their experiences and suggest possible solutions to overcome challenges. The University had also put in place procedures to be followed in a case where referrals to external psychological services are needed.

5.4 Recommendations

The accompanying recommendations were provided premised on the survey's findings:

- i. There is need to stress the importance of student-to-student interactions at the University to help cope with psychosocial challenges among first-year students. Such interaction provides students with a sense of belonging, makes them feel loved, and builds their sense of identity which in turn positively affects their psychological wellbeing and their academic performance.
- ii. The study confirmed that emotional stability influenced the academic performance of the first-year students at Kenyatta University. It is recommended that the University should find improved ways to encourage first-year students to let their voices be heard concerning matters that are affecting their psychological well-being.
- iii. Matters relating to course selection should be addressed to reduce frustrations among students who feel a lack of passion pursuing wrong career choices.

- iv. There is need for student-lecturer relationship improvements as most of the first-year students cited they feared engaging some of the lecturers at the university. This would help reduce the levels of anxieties caused by examinations anticipation among the students. Furthermore, a good relationship between lecturers and the students can help build a sense of peace, acceptability, and adaptability among the first-year students.

5.5 Recommendation for Further Research

While the study successfully examined the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County, the study also presents gaps that other studies should fill.

1. The study focused on Kenyatta University, and there is need to focus on other universities both locally and abroad and see whether the results will be replicated.
2. This study focused on the influence of relational factors and emotional stability on the academic performance of first-year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County, and there is a need for a study focusing on other factors not captured in the current study.
3. This study only focused on Kenyatta University, a public university. A comparative study on public universities and private universities can be conducted to investigate how relational factors and emotional stability influence academic performance among first-years.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction letter

Julia Gakii Muthuuri

Kenya Methodist University,

Department of Theology, Religious studies, and Counseling

P.O Box 45240,

Nairobi.

7th May 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

I study for a Masters in Theology, Religious Studies, and Counseling at the Methodist University of Kenya. In partial compliance with the need to receive a master's degree in psychological advice. I am pleased to notify you that you have been chosen to be a study member. I thus need you to help complete the accompanying questionnaire and interview guide, which provides an important contribution to the study process. The data is carefully utilized exclusively for educational reasons and rigorous trust in the identity is observed.

You will work together to make this study a success.

For your time and attention, I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Gakii Muthuuri

Appendix II: Informed Consent

The purpose of the Study

I am Julia Gakii, a master's student at the Methodist University of Kenya in the Department of Theology, Religious Studies, and Counseling. The primary goal of this study is to evaluate how the psychological problems of first-year students in Kenyatta University, County Nairobi affect the academic performance of the individual. I hope you can provide your opinion on the same subject.

Procedures

The collection of data in this study will entail giving the self-administered questionnaires to the students and giving them five days to fill in the questionnaires. You may decline to answer any questions and at any moment without penalties. You can stop participating.

Discomforts and risks

This study involves minimal risk to the participants. Some inquiries may nonetheless be sensitive and uncomfortable. If this occurs, if you so desire, you may not reply. At any moment you can also cease taking part in the study.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefits or compensation to the students as individuals but the information generated in this study will be used by the management of the University and other stakeholders to come up with strategies concerning the influence of selected psychosocial challenges on the academic performance of first-year students.

Voluntary participation and withdrawal

Your participation is optional and you can opt-out at any moment if you change your mind in connection with participating in the study. Without penalty, you can save questions or quit participation.

Confidentiality

The researcher will not identify the participants with any information that will make it possible for anyone to identify the participants in this study. Moreover, the information supplied is utilized exclusively for academic reasons and is not supported for any other use in any organization or individual.

Contact information

Any questions about this study can be sent to me,

Julia Gakii Muthuuri

Cell Phone: 0727557316

Email: fridahmuthuuri@yahoo.com

Thank you.

You may consent to participate in the study if you have been educated about the study and read the above to understand all the implications of this investigation.

Participant _____ signature.....

Date.....

Appendix III: Questionnaire for first-year students

Please answer as accurately and truthfully as possible the following questions. Any submitted information is kept strictly secret and anonymous. Moreover, only for scholarly purposes will your replies be utilized. Check the slots provided for your replies to each question.

Section A: General Information

1. Gender

Male Female

2. What is your Age bracket?

Less than 18 years 18 to 25 years

26 to 35 years above 35 years

Section B: Relational Factors (RF)

3. Kindly indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements, guided by the following scale: (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderate 4=agree⁷ and 5=strongly agree)

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
RF1	Peer groups influence my short and long-term education plans					
RF2	The influence of my peers on my decision making affects my academic work					
RF3	My friends give me a sense of belonging and this makes me feel loved, hence improves my academic performance					
RF4	The security I get from relation groups in the University					

	contributes to the improvement of my academic performance					
RF5	Belonging to a group builds my sense of identity which in turn improves my confidence to excel in academics					
RF6	Difficulty accepting support from teachers and others affect my academic work					
RF7	Uncontrolled freedom affects my time management skills and this affects my studies.					

Section C: Emotional Stability (ES)

4. Guided by the scale provided, respond to the following questions by indicating how joining the university has affected your emotional stability (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree)

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
ES1	Meeting new people affects my ability to concentrate in class					
ES2	Feeling overwhelmed or helpless interferes with my academic work					
ES3	Worries of being in a new environment affect my academic performance					
ES4	Feeling lonely or isolated makes me lose focus on my school work					
ES5	Trimester exams make me anxious and this affects my schoolwork					
ES6	My academic performance is affected by frustration brought about by my fear of some lecturers.					
ES7	Being denied a chance to choose a course of my choice frustrates me and this affects my grades					
ES8	Anticipating Exams frustrates and makes me feel depressed					

SECTION D: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (AP)

5. Regarding the variables mentioned in the table below, how would you rate your academic performance at Kenyatta University? (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree l)

		1	2	3	4	5
AP1	In Mid-term tests					
AP2	In Take-home course works					
AP3	In your previous semester's examinations					
AP4	In core/compulsory courses					
AP5	In optional courses					

Appendix IV: Interview Schedule for the Dean of Schools (Key informants)

1. (a) Explain the emotional challenges that students in their first year of University face
.....
(b) How do these emotional challenges affect your academic performance?
.....
2. (a) Elaborate on the kind of relationship difficulties that students in their first year of University face
.....
(b) Explain how these emotional difficulties affect students academic work
.....
3. Explain the skills that are important for a student to have a successful educational experience?
.....
.....
4. (a) How do University students try to cope with academic challenges brought about by emotional instability?
.....
(b) What programs has the University put in place to help students
.....
5. (a) How effective have the programs put in place been?
.....
(b) To what extend have these programs been effective
.....

Appendix V: Ethical Clearance of a Masters Research Thesis



KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 267 MERU - 60200, KENYA
TEL: 254-064-30301/31229/30367/31171

FAX: 254-64-30162
EMAIL: info@kemu.ac.ke

5TH MARCH 2019

KEMU/SERC/MCO/15/2019

Julia Gakii Muthuri
MCO-3-2260-2/2016

Dear Julia,

RE: ETHICAL CLEARANCE OF A MASTERS' RESEARCH THESIS

Your request for ethical clearance for your Masters' Research Thesis titled "**Influence of selected psychosocial challenges on academic performance of first year students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi county.**" has been provisionally granted to you in accordance with the content of your project proposal subject to tabling it in the full Board of Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (SERC) for ratification.

As Principal Investigator, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the project.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the SERC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. The Proposal number assigned to the project should be cited in any correspondence.
3. Adverse events should be reported to the SERC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for SERC review. The SERC and outside agencies must review the information to determine if the protocol should be modified, discontinued, or continued as originally approved.

4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The SERC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. SERC regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. **Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the SERC in order to continue the study beyond the approved period.** Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion will result in termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.

Please note that any substantial changes on the scope of your research will require an approval.

Yours sincerely



DR. WAMACHI
Chair, SERC

cc: Director, RI & PGS



KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

P. O. Box 267 Meru - 60200, Kenya
Tel: 254-064-30301/31229/30367/31171

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Our ref: NAC/MAS/1/2019/16

18th March 2019

Commission Secretary,
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations,
P.O. Box 30623-00100,
NAIROBI.

Dear sir/ Madam,

RE: JULIA GAKII MUTHUURI (MCO-3-2260-2/2016)

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student of Kenya Methodist University, Department of Theology , Religious Studies and Counselling, undertaking a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. She is conducting a research on, "**Influence of Selected Psychosocial Challenges on Academic Performance among First Year Students in Kenyatta University, Nairobi County.**"

We confirm that her thesis proposal has been defended and approved by the university.

In this regard, we are requesting your office to issue a permit to enable her collect data for her research.

Any assistance accorded to her will be appreciated.

Thank you.

DR. JOHN MUCHIRI PhD.
DIRECTOR, POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Encl.

Appendix VI: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MISS. JULIA GAKII MUTHUURI
of KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY,
43844-100 NAIROBI, has been permitted
to conduct research in Nairobi County

on the topic: INFLUENCE OF SELECTED
PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES ON
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG FIRST
YEAR STUDENTS IN KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY, NAIROBI COUNTY

for the period ending:
12th April, 2020

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/19/68950/29601
Date Of Issue : 12th April, 2019
Fee Received :Ksh 1000




Applicant's
Signature


Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

**THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION ACT, 2013**

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science,
Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
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REPUBLIC OF KENYA



National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation

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CONDITIONS: see back page

