UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EFFECTS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL EDUCATION ON STUDENTS'

ADJUSTMENT TO THE KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI.

BY

JOSEPH ASAMOAH-GYAWU

Thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Educational Foundations of the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Guidance and Counselling

JULY, 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature……………………   Date……………………

Name: …………………………………………………………………

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down in the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature…………..……………… Date……….…………

Name: ………………………………………………………………….

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology to investigate the effects of psychosocial education on the adjustment of students to the university environment. The study was guided by four research questions and one hypothesis. The cross-section survey design was used for the study. A total of 257 respondents were selected for the study using a stratified sampling method. A self-developed questionnaire was used as the research instrument and data were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The hypothesis was tested by using the independent samples t-test. Using students' involvement and attachment theories as the theoretical lens of the discussion, the finding of the study revealed attending study skills seminar and applying the suggestions made by professional counsellors help students to adjust positively to the university environment. Also, it became evident that the knowledge of students about campus security is greatly enhanced after receiving psychosocial education. It therefore positively affects their adjustment to the university environment. Moreover, it was established that psychosocial education helps students manage stress in a healthy way which in turn enhances their adjustment to the university environment. It was recommended that students should continue to avail themselves of study skills seminars organized in their schools by the Counselling Centre to learn more about study skills and that they should put into practice the suggestions and recommendations they receive from professional counsellors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my father, Edward Gyawu Barnie and late mother Juliana Adwoa Achiaa.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Students face a daunting task of adjusting to the university environment as they contend with challenging situations in their quest for knowledge and academic skills (Robino & Foster, 2018). These tasks include the pressure from demanding academic work, social issues and demands from family and friends. Kumaraswamy cited in Robino and Foster (2018) noted that students' academic responsibilities often contribute to this stress. The expectation to produce satisfactory academic performance throughout the period of study maximises the already existing burden on students to an extent that some might find it worrying to cope. Other factors such as family instability, conflict, abuse, financial problems, managing emotional and relationship issues could also affect students. These situations might also add up to the seemingly unending fleet of trials that they may face.

Moreover, students' adjustment to school life on campus itself increases the weight of load that they need to carry. These psychosocial matters could affect students approach to life in general and how they achieve their desired goals while in school. Empirical studies (Hudd, Dumlao, Erdmann-Sager, Murray, Phan, & Soukas, 2000; Robino & Foster, 2018) have well established that psychosocial issues not limited to those mentioned above negatively interfere with student's ability to adjust to college/ university environment. Robino and Foster (2018) further argued that among the

numerous difficult situations which students have to deal with are, "typical life changes occurring during college such as the transition from high school, which often results in homesickness, isolation and loneliness" tower over the rest. As a result of the shift in power, students must adjust to the responsibilities of independent living and begin to take ownership of balancing their time between school, work and recreation (Robino & Foster, 2018, p. 4). Students have to adapt in a short period of time cognitive and psychosocial skills for not only living with their peers but also for the cooperation with the lecturers (Frese, Wolff, Saure, Staehle, & Shulte, 2018). Students who formally had assistance from parents or guidance to care for some of their needs may have to shoulder the load all alone. Some might have to take full control of providing for both their physical and emotional needs. This could lead to adjustment difficulties, unhappiness and emotional disorders.

Additionally, Hudd, Dumlao, Erdmann-Sager, Murray, Phan and Soukas (2000) as cited in Robino and Foster (2018) stated that these responsibilities and life adjustments cause half of college students to report experiencing high levels of stress which is regularly associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression. Some might want to quit school while others could resort to unhealthy ways such as abusing drugs, developing avoidance techniques (defence mechanisms) to control the situation. This challenges universities and colleges to device ways to resolve the emotional and psychosocial imbalances and retain students till graduation. Concerning this institutional responsibility, Krumrei-Mancuso, Newton, Kim and Wilcox (2013) argue to emphasize the point that if students discontinue their

education it may reflect a failure on the part of the institution to support students' progress or respond to students' needs.

Knitzer and Lefkwitz (2006) argued that schools are supposed to be a source of positive socialization for students but when students face many situations in the school environment, it can result in psychosocial and health problems. A study conducted by Famakinwa, Olagunju and Akinnawonu (2016) in Ondo state Nigeria opined that greater number of students experiences of psychosocial challenges within the school hours among their colleagues, which range from thought of committing suicide, bully, and substance abuse to sexual harassment in school.

Krumrei-Mancuso et al. (2013) further noted that colleges and universities invest a great amount of money in retention services (e.g., preparation courses, orientation, advising interventions, tutorial programmes, and counselling) in the hopes of retaining students through graduation enterprise. Hence, the institutions will be at great loss if they are unable to help students find their balance in the school. Unfortunately, students who drop out of university or college due to unresolved psychosocial issues may find it even more difficult to handle any future obstacle that they are certain to face.

However, when optimal institutional outcomes occur and the needs of students are satisfied, there is good academic environment that students adjust to. Understanding the importance of creating and maintaining conducive academic environment that supports and promotes emotional and psychosocial needs of students is crucial to the success of both the institution and students.

As already noted, the disparities in various forms among students present a psychosocial challenge that students need to deal with. A study into psychosocial problems faced by distance education student in a university in Ghana reveals that "teaching modules, ineffective tutorials, academic, administrative and socio-economic problems" are at the heart of students' psychosocial challenges (Atindanbila & Azasu, 2011). The findings further indicated that 27.9% of the respondents reported severe levels of psychosocial problems as students, with a surprise revelation that "level 400 university students reported the highest level of psychosocial problems" (Atindanbila & Azasu, 2011). Level 100 students took the third position to report psychosocial problems with level 200 students reporting the least.

According to Robino and Foster (2018) increase in academic demands and other responsibilities burden students to easily bow to psychosocial problems. A qualitative study conducted in Catholic University in Ghana with a sample size of 26 foreign students indicated that 14 of them perceived campus life as unpleasant (Ackah & Kuranchie, 2015). All these evidence suggest that psychosocial problems can readily be encountered by students and affect their adjustment to the university environment. Helping students to anticipate the changes and decisions they face will help them think carefully about what is important to them. That is what the research sought to find out and it is against this backdrop that an empirical study has been conducted to investigate how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment to the university environment.

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Statement of the Problem

Most studies conducted in Ghana mostly focus on identifying psychosocial problems that confront students. Atindanbila and Azasu (2011) conducted a study on distance education students of University of Ghana and their findings revealed that students at all levels of study show signs of psychosocial difficulties. They further revealed that level 400 university students reported the highest level of psychosocial problems in relation to the rest of the remaining levels.

Adasti (2013) conducted a study on Senior High School student's biopsychosocial problems and their academic performance in Tema metropolis, the findings brought to light that school related problems significantly predict poor academic performance and female students have more problems as compared to males. Also, Quist, Nyarko-Sampson, and Essuman (2006), reported that there is no significant difference in the study habit of form one and form three students when they carried out a study on 500 Senior High School students from the central region of Ghana. They further recommended that there is need to teach study skills to Senior High School students so that they can all cultivate good and effective study habits. Form the aforementioned studies; it is likely that these students will carry their unresolved psychosocial problems from senior high schools to universities in Ghana. Hence there is the need for psychosocial education for these students.

Again, Awabil (2013) conducted a research on effects of study and self-reward skills counselling on study behaviour of students in University of Education, Winneba (UEW) and University of Cape Coast (UCC), using a sample a sample size of 60 for an experimental research, he asserted that study

skills counselling is more effective at improving all the five dimensions of study behaviour which are time management, concentration, consultation, note taking and reading and library use. In his study he focused on study skills counselling but this current study focused on study skills, suicide ideation, stress management and students security.

A study carried out on foreign students' adjustment in early days of their university education at Catholic University College, Ghana, revealed that international students in the University College experience some social, academic and economic challenges in their early days on campus but authorities in the university have not put adequate measures in place to enhance international students' adjustment on campus (Ackah & Kuranchie, 2015).

Another study by Hudd, Dumlao, Erdmann-Sager, Murray, Phan and Soukas (2000) cited in Robino and Foster, (2018) showed that the new responsibilities and life adjustments cause half of college students to report experiencing high levels of stress which is regularly associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression. Clearly, psychosocial problems disturb students and their adjustment to the university environment. In the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the researcher being a counsellor in the university has observed that most students complain of several issues that affect their adjustment within the university environment. This study was therefore considered necessary in investigating the impact of psychosocial education on the adjustment of students in the university environment.

Purpose of the Study

The intended purpose of this study was to examine how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment to the university environment. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate how study skills seminar relates to students' adjustment to the university environment;

2. Examine whether suicidal ideation management affects students' adjustment to the university environment;

3. Investigate how stress management helps students adjust to the university environment; and

4. Determine how students' security issues affect their adjustment to the university environment.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. How does study skills seminar relate to students' adjustment to the university environment?

2. How does suicidal ideation management affect students' adjustment to the university environment?

3. In what way does stress management affect students' adjustment to the university environment?

4. How does psychosocial education on students' security issues affect their adjustment to the university environment?

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Research Hypothesis

1. H_0:   There is no significant gender difference in the perception of campus security.

   H_1:   There is significant gender difference in the perception of campus security

Significance of the Study

The results of the study would be of significance to stakeholders such as university management, university counsellors, students and other researchers.

Firstly, the results of the study may highlight the impact of psychosocial education on the adjustment of students in the university. Student will understand that attending seminars and applying suggestions from these seminars will help them to overcome some of the challenges they encounter on campus.

Secondly, the findings of the study may enlighten university counsellors on how university students perceive the psychosocial education offered by counsellors to them. This can assist professional counsellors to make informed decisions concerning the guidance programmes organised by the University Counselling Centre so as to make the lives of students easier in the university. For instance counsellors will become aware of certain guidance programmes they need to intensify on campus.

Thirdly, management would be enlightened on the security concerns of students and how to strengthen campus security. Fourthly, if the study is published, the results from this study would serve as an addition to the

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literature on the impact of psychosocial education on the adjustment of university students in Ghana

Delimitations of the Study

The study was done in the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study area was chosen for proximity. Though there are many variables in the phenomena which could be included in the study, the researcher focused his attention on four key variables namely; study skill seminar, suicidal ideation, stress management and students' security. This was done for effective discussion and analyses.

Limitations of the Study

Methodologically, the study utilized the close-ended questionnaire for data collection. The instrument seemed to have restricted research respondents in a way that did not allow them to express how they felt or perceived the phenomena. That could have affected the results obtained. Also, research respondents were initially afraid and reluctant to take part in the study because of a violent clash between the student body and the university authority that had taken place. The students wrongly concluded that the study was a trap to catch those who were involved in the riot.

Lastly, the study could have some limitations if used as a basis for generalization beyond the confines of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology since its focus was on under graduate students of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

Definition of Terms

Some of the key terms in the study are defined as they are used in the context of the study.

Psychosocial education: Student-centred-seminars provided by the university to equip students with the necessary skills needed to handle potential challenges. It aims at identifying the causes of stressors within and without students that have the potential to throw them off balance. The programme also suggests practical help for students to successfully ameliorate the negative effects of future obstacles that they may encounter.

Psychosocial problems: These are both internal and external factors that create anxieties for students and negatively affect their adjustment to the university environment.

Suicidal ideation: It is the suicidal ideas or thoughts that emerge in the minds of students who are battling with psychosocial problems.

Organisation of the Study

The study has been organised into five chapters. The first chapter contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, research hypothesis, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, definition of terms and organisation of the study. The literature review which looked at the relevant theories and concepts in which the study has been grounded are found in the chapter two.

Chapter three entails research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, sample size, sampling methods, instrument, ethical considerations, analyses, and summary of chapter. The fourth chapter mainly comprises the presentation of result and discussion. The fifth chapter contains summary,

conclusions, recommendations and guidance and counselling implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study investigated the effects of psychosocial education on students' adjustment to the university environment. The current chapter presents relevant existing materials that have a bearing on the study. Doing so helped to show the extent to which works have been done on this subject. The literature review also guided the direction of the study, in that the researcher was made aware of the current and on-going debate in the field and sought to build on what has been laid down. Applicable theories, concepts and perspectives that form the pillars and columns around which the study was constructed are captured in this chapter.

The Concept of Psychosocial Education

According to Jutai and Day (2002, p. 2), "psychosocial refers to both factors within the person and factors attributable to the environment that affect the psychological adjustment of individuals who have disabilities". The researchers further argued that it is concerned with the challenges faced by these individuals in relation to the social environment. This is the external dimensions of an individual whereas the internal factors are the core dimensions of psychological well-being, which include independence, personal control (locus of control) and self-efficacy.

From the definition, it could be noted that psychosocial issues emanate from a combination of both internal and external attributes of a person. The external factors emanate from the social environment whereas the internal

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factors are purely within the person. By extrapolation, a psychosocially 'unhealthy' student might be having difficulties in handling issues related to the university environment or might be battling with pressures from within. Such a struggling student could be helped by troubleshooting the problem from the university environment in which the student lives or his/her past experiences.

If a first year university student or any other student finds it difficult in adjusting to the university environment, those who have the professional mandate need to be holistic in their assessment before any recommendation is made. After all, the definition makes it clear that, psychosocial problems can be attributed to internal and external factors. It might be beneficial to the study to challenge this definition of the concept. It could be safe to suggest that the definition of the concept is somehow limited in scope, in that, it seems to convey the idea that, it is only individuals with 'disabilities' who have psychosocial issues.

However, a rendering of the concept by Woodward (2015) adds a functional aspect to the definition in order to elucidate the scope of understanding much better. The researcher states that "psychosocial approach looks at individuals in the context of the combined influence that psychological factors and the surrounding social environment have on their physical and mental wellness and their ability to function". It might be argued that this version of the definition encompasses the very essence of the concept. However, it must be clearly established that, this is the observation of the researcher as the literature is carefully reviewed. They do not change the

structure or direction of other definitions. New knowledge might add up to the concept through further studies.

Yet, it could be noted in the definition that, the researcher does not dwell on individuals with disabilities, a condition which could be pathological in nature. Rather, the focus is on the 'physical and mental wellness and their ability to function' (Woodward, 2015). This suggests that the focal point of helping students who are having a hard time to adjust to the university environment is on their 'physical and mental wellness and their ability to function' (Woodward, 2015). If the student does not have a stable mental state or in good physical condition and not necessarily any pathological 'disability', it could affect how he/she adjusts to the university environment.

That missing link in the definition of the concept might have informed Robino and Foster (2018) to argue that, counsellors and those helping students deal with psychosocial issues must lean toward the 'wellness' paradigm. The researchers are of the view that wellness "offers a strengths-based and holistic perspective of counselling that promotes balance, self-responsibility and a positive view of humanity. Counsellors utilizing a wellness approach encourage their students to pursue a healthy lifestyle based on their strengths from these wellness dimensions and encourage them to be accountable for their choices and actions.

This might suggest that, psychosocial education will best be effective when counsellors focus on the strength of students who have psychosocial issues, and offer help to rediscover their locus of control and be responsible for the consequences of their actions. Students need to be 'balanced, self-responsible, positive' and well-grounded in their academic pursuits (Robino &

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Foster, 2018). That serves to be the task of this study. That is, to understand how psychosocial education comes in to help students find their balance in the university environment. Psychosocial education as used in this study would mean the thoughtful instructions and practical suggestions that the university provides to help students deal with adjustment difficulties.

Concept of Study Skills

Kerka (2007) defined study skills as learning strategies that help students organise, process, and use information effectively.

Gettinger and Seibert (as cited in Awabil, 2013) identified four broad clusters of study skills that students need to acquire in order to facilitate their academic success. The categories of study skills are:

(a)   repetition or rehearsal-based study strategies;

(b)   procedural or organisational-based study strategies;

(c)   cognitive-based study skills/ strategies, and

(d)   meta-cognitive-based study skills/ strategies.

Repetition or Rehearsal-based Study Strategies

The most basic study strategies involve repetition, re-reading or rehearsal of information. Rehearsal strategies are most useful when storing small bits of information for the short-term or when the content being studied is used frequently. Rehearsal strategies are easy to learn and use and, therefore, are among the first study skills taught to young children. In early grades, teachers may rely on repetition strategies for helping children acquire basic reading and mathematics skills. For instance, flashcard sets are frequently used to help children learn spelling, vocabulary, sight words and mathematics facts (Decker et al as cited in Gettinger & Siebert, 2002).

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Procedural or Organisational-based study Strategies

Procedural study skills encompass the behaviours that allow students to maximise the benefits of their study time. Several competencies underlie the development of procedural study skills, including time management, material organisation and development of schedules for consistent study routines (Gettinger & Nicaise as cited in Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). Organisational routines and schedules for studying are most effective when they are personalised by having students construct their own plans for monthly, weekly and daily study, Archambeault (as cited in Gettinger & Seibert, 2002).

Cognitive-Based Study Skills

The goal of cognitive-based study strategies is to guide students to engage in appropriate thinking about information they are required to learn. According to the information processing theory, the greater knowledge students have about content the more likely they are to think about, understand, and remember it (Schunk as cited in Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). Studying is enhanced when new material is meaningful to learners, and integrated with their existing knowledge. Besides, information that is stored as a network of connected facts and concepts, called schemata, is more easily learned and retained. Other evidence based cognitive study strategies that assist students in activating and making connections with prior knowledge are question generation and summarising.

Meta-cognitive-based Study Skills

The extent to which students apply study skills when the need arises depends largely on their meta-cognitive capacities (i.e. the ability to assess the need for studying and to plan, implement, and monitor and evaluate their study

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approaches). Whereas cognitive-based study strategies relate to how learners process information, meta-cognitive strategies relate to how students select, monitor, and use strategies in their repertoire. Being meta-cognitive is essential for effective studying. Mega-cognitive ability enables learners to adjust their studying according to varying task demands. Students with well-developed meta-cognitive skills know how to study effectively; they understand which strategies to deploy, monitor their studying, and allocate time wisely. They are familiar with the cognitive strategies that help them study and regulate their use of such strategies (Winne & Hadwon as cited in Gettinger & Seibert, 2002).

The strategies that can help navigate the academic struggles of university life are sometimes known as study skills. Study skills comprise several dimensions. Some of these dimensions are.

Time Management

According to Hassanbeigi, Askari, Nakhjavanic, Shirkhodad, Barzegar, Mozayyan and Fallahzadehg (2011) time management has been referred to as a set of techniques for managing, planning and appropriate using of time. Proper investment of time in students' life is much important. The actual amount of study time required by an individual depends on his speed and efficiency in the work and his preparation and adaptability for each type of work in which he/she is engaged. For proper time management, there is the need for organizing and planning to avoid distraction from regular studies.

Test taking

Understanding students' emotional experiences during the testing process, in particular test anxiety, has long been a major concern for

researchers, educators and counsellors as test anxiety may have a deleterious impact on test performance, academic success and overall well-being (Bonaccio & Reeve, 2010). Students need to be provided with study skills training on test taking so as to reduce the extent to which students experience test anxiety.

Concentration

One major obstacle to academic achievement is the challenge of unwanted distractions since students face distractions regarding paying attention in class, completing assignments, and studying (Parks-Stamm, Gollwitzer & Oettingen, 2010). In structured settings, the ability to sustain attention is necessary for learning to occur. Irregular sleep, exercise, and eating patterns can be the unsuspected cause of concentration difficulties. In spite of this, students may not realize the strong connection between physical health and intellectual functioning.

Note Taking

The pervasive nature of note taking and note reviewing and the assumption that such activities are a necessary part of university learning experience have encouraged researchers to investigate how students go about taking and reviewing notes and how these activities might be improved (Grabe, 2005). According to Van Meter, Yokoi, and Pressley (1994) college students believe that the act of taking notes facilitates attending to the lecture, comprehension of the material to be learned, and the subsequent recall. In the study of Haghverdi, Biria and Karimi (2010), it was revealed that note-taking strategy instruction had significant effects on the students' achievement. These

studies support the view that in academic performance, the process effect of note-taking is of great importance.

Reading

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive ability requiring the capacity to integrate text information with the knowledge of the listener/reader and resulting in the elaboration of a mental representation (Meneghetti, Carretti & De Beni, 2006). It is believed that early successful reading may set a positive life-course trajectory, leading to good academic and psychosocial outcomes, whereas hampered reading skills may lead to less desirable outcomes (Kern & Friedman, 2009). University students can perform an effective reading process by using reading comprehension strategies. Reading comprehension strategies can help readers remember the key points, distinguish the necessary and unnecessary information, think about the main idea and comment on the subject matter (Cogmen & Saracaloglu, 2009).

Concept of Suicidal Ideation

The term suicide was coined by Sir Thomas Browne in 1642 in his "Religio Medici. The term was derived from two words; "SUI" which means of one's self and "CAEDES" which means murder (Whyte, 2005). Suicide is defined as the act of voluntarily taking one's own life or the act of killing one's self.Suicidal ideation is also known as suicidal thought refers to thinking about, considering or planning suicide (Klonsky, May, Saffer, 2016)

Concept of Stress

Stress may be defined as a condition that results person-environment interaction leads to someone to perceive a painful discrepancy (either real or imaginary) between the demands of a situation and their social, biological or

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psychological resources (Girdano, Dusek & Everly, 2013). Individuals mostly react to stressful situations differently and this is partly due to the way they perceive the situation. According to Has Selye (1976) if a person views a situation negatively, he/she is likely to feel distressed thus, overwhelmed, oppressed, or out of control. Distress is the more familiar form of stress. The other form, eustress, results from a positive view of an event or situation, which is why it is also called "good stress."

Managing Stress

The initial step in managing stress is to understand oneself. One has to understand what causes the stress and how he/she reacts to stress. Ayala, (2000) outlined the following steps for managing stress.

Set priorities: Make a "To-Do list." Decide what is really important to get done today and what can wait. This helps a person to know that he/she is working on most immediate priorities.

Practice facing stressful moments: Think about the event or situation you expect to face and rehearse your reactions. Find ways to practice dealing with the challenge. If you know that speaking in front of a group frightens you, practice doing it, perhaps with a trusted friend or fellow student.

Examine your expectations: Try to set realistic goals. It's good to push yourself to achieve, but make sure your expectations are realistic. Be satisfied with doing the best you can.

Live a healthy lifestyle. Get plenty of exercise. Eat healthy foods. Allow time for rest and relaxation. Find a relaxation technique that works for you. These may include; prayer, yoga, meditation, or breathing exercises. Look for the humor in life, and enjoy yourself.

Learn to accept change as a part of life. Nothing stays the same. Develop a support system of friends and relatives you can talk to when needed. Believe in yourself and your potential

Concept of Student Security

A safe university environment is the most cherished treasure of students, administrators, faculty members, visitors and the university community as a whole. For this reason universities have devoted huge resources to campus security personnel and safety measures.

Rund (2002) asserted that an environment is considered to be safe if it provides students with the opportunity to pursue their academic potential when there is no discrimination, intimidation and threat to physical and emotional well-being. From the point of view of Beard (2010), identifying and mitigating risks is crucial to building a safety culture in which members of the university perceptions are positive

The issue of security on campus has become a concern of many people as there is a rise in insecurity on campus. On 11th of December, 2017, a student (Osei Sampson) was butchered on Kumasi campus of University of Education, Winneba when he was returning to Autonomy hall after studies (Domfeh, 2017). After this incident, executives of University Students Association of Ghana issues a press statement is they are much concerned because of Development Studies (UDS) has also recorded cases of armed robbery and rape case on the Wa campus (Domfeh, 2017). The executives further stated that there have been several unpleasant security incidents on the campuses of University of Ghana, Kwame Nkruma University of Science and Technology University and other Universities.

Another incidence of campus security can be cited on the campus of University of Ghana, where a level 100 student's laptop was snatched from her and another student when she refused to hand over her laptop and other valuables was beaten mercilessly by an unknown individuals. These occurrences compelled some students from the Common Wealth Hall to petition the Vice Chancellor of the university indicating in the petition that "campus is no safe." (Owusu, Akoto & Abnory, 2016)

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework upon which the study is based is presented in Figure 1.
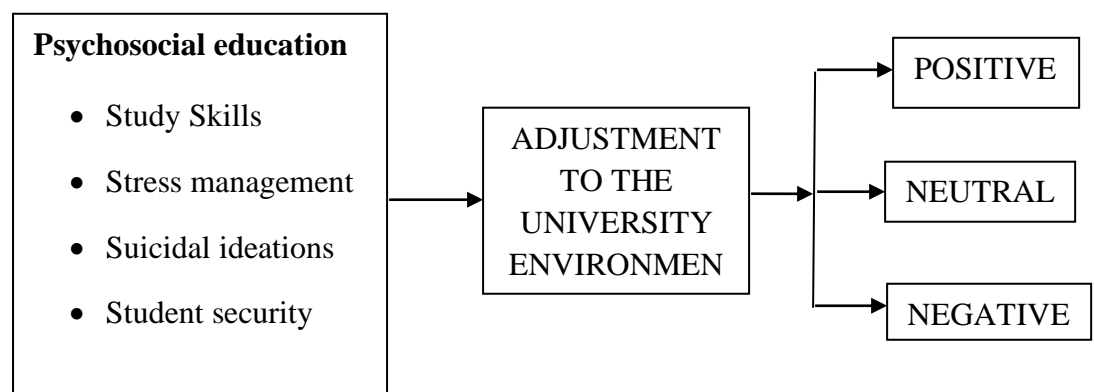
Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: Researcher's own work derived from careful studies of the literature.

Figure 1 is a conceptual framework of the study. When psychosocial education in the form of seminars on study skills, stress management, suicidal ideations and students' security are provided to students it is expected that it will enable the students to adjust to the university environment. The effect of the psychosocial education could be positive, neutral or negative. Positive effect occurs when students who attend psychosocial education seminars and apply the suggestion and recommendations given in the course of the seminar.

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Neutral and negative effect occurs when students either fails to attend psychosocial education seminars or they attend psychosocial education seminar but fails to apply the suggestions and recommendation made by psychosocial educators.

Theoretical Review

Student's Involvement Theory

An important theoretical framework that the study heavily relies on is the student's involvement theory. It must be appreciated that other relevant theories applicable to the study is also employed. Propounded by Alexander Astin in the early 1980s in the field of higher education, the theory has a multi-dimensional application. It is inclusive, holistic and eclectic in nature, in that, it sees students to be at the centre of the academic enterprise. It also encourages students to be part of the academic environment. Jansen (2009) is of the view that universities consist of knowledge and traditions often captured in curriculum and other practices.

The theory defines student involvement as the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience (Astin, 1984, p. 518).

Both the internal and external make-up of the student is engaged in the education process. Not just taking in academic knowledge, rather, emphasis is on the significant alteration in behaviour of the student, which results in his adjustment to the university environment. The rough edges of students need to be filed off by the academic experience. "Thus, a highly involved student is one who, for example, devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in students' organizations, and interacts

frequently with faculty members and other students. Conversely, a typical uninvolved student neglects studies, spends little time on campus, abstains from extracurricular activities, and has infrequent contact with faculty members or other students" (Astin, 1984, p. 518).

The theory, thus suggests that, a student who is involved has locus of control, understands and appreciates stress and time management, involvement with college activities, and emotional satisfaction with academics (Krumrei-Mancuso, Newton, Kim & Wilcox, 2013). Such a student has an intrinsic motivation to go through the academic process; a well seated inner reasons for studies. Academic learning does not become burdensome or a dutiful endeavour - an extrinsic value for studies. This might suggest that a student who is facing psychosocial imbalances may withdraw from or lack the motivation to participate in various activities on campus. Cameron and Kirknan (2010) suggested that universities ought to provide support and guidance for students to enable them acquire the necessary academic, social and cultural competence to come to terms with the challenges.

The theory further establishes that, traditionally, theories were propounded to focus primarily on the outcomes (the what of student development and adjustment), but the theory of students' involvement is more concerned with the "behavioural mechanisms and processes that facilitate student development" (the how of student development and adjustment to the university environment) (Astin, 1984, p. 522). It is therefore, arguable that learning and adjustment reach its peak when learning (university) environment is structured to encourage active student participation (Rosenshine, 1983). This might also imply that, there could be structures, policies, practices and

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laws in the university environment that might limit or promote students' ability to adjust.

It will be of interest to identify some of these limitations to students' adjustment to the university environment during the analyses and discussions of the empirical data from the fieldwork. When the university tends to focus heavily on developing course content at the expense of students' motivation to enjoy studies, learning becomes burdensome and students lose interest in the learning process. This in effect, affects students' adjustment to the university environment. The structure of the university environment thus, can have negative implication on students' adjustment. The theory therefore, holds that, when students actively engage in campus activities and see themselves as not just recipient of information; a product in the making but rather a central part of the university, they will be able to adjust to the university environment.

Administrators and faculty members can help students especially freshmen who may be contemplating how life would be like, and the possible challenges that they are likely to face on campus by actively involving them in university activities and also being approachable. From the perspective of Ackah and Kuranchie (2015) orientation, which most of the time lasts a number of days (week) is given to students to make them familiar with the academic and social demands of university education. Astin (1984) further argues in connection with the idea that "administrators and faculty members must recognize that virtually every institutional policy and practice (e.g., class schedules; regulations on class attendance, academic probation, and participation in honours courses; policies on office hours for faculty, student

orientation, and advising) can affect the way students spend their time and the amount of effort they devote to academic pursuits".

The theory situates students in the limelight and become the focus of analyses. Emphasis is placed on how the student can succeed in the university environment and achieve his desired goals. It is in this direction that the study looks at: To seek to understand the 'how'-the behavioural mechanisms and processes that facilitates students' adjustment to the university environment, so that if anyone encounters psychosocial worries, the right assistance could be offered. According to the theory, the greater the student's involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development. The principal advantage of the student involvement theory over traditional pedagogical approaches is that, it directs attention away from subject matter and technique and toward the motivation and behaviour of the student (Astin, 1984, p. 528). Students facing psychosocial problems thus, can be helped when the right motivation is identified and recommended to them. To get adjusted to the university environment "is not so much what the individual thinks and feels, but what the individual does, how he/she behaves, that defines and identifies involvement" (Astin, 1984).

A consideration of some tenets of the student involvement theory will be helpful. The theory of student involvement has five tenets. The study has briefly reviewed the first three tenets which because they are of interest to the research. Firstly, involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a chemistry examination). Secondly, regardless of its object, involvement occurs

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along a continuum; that is, different students manifest various degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degree of involvement in different objects at different times. Thirdly, involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and daydreams) (Astin, 1984, p. 519).

A student's adjustment to the university environment is not just an attribution status but also having the locus of control. It encompasses many facets and different dimensions in the life of students. The entire personhood must be taken into consideration when studying students' adjustment. Since their involvement in both academic and non-academic pursuits varies, a one-size fit all approach to investigating their adjustment could be insufficient. Student involvement theory can thus be applied to serve as the theoretical lens for the data analyses.

Attachment Theory

Another theory relevant to the study is the attachment theory. Jointly developed by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (1991), the theory provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding how relationships function to facilitate or hinder developmental progress, such as progress in career development. When students enter the university, they develop a relationship with the institution. This relationship could promote or limit student's adjustment to the school environment and negatively or positively affect their academic outcome.

A central tenet of this theory concerns the central role of attachments as enduring emotional bonds of substantial intensity that influence healthy development and participation in satisfying relationships (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Vincent and Idahosa (2014) argue that emotional connections to higher educational institutions may depend on family knowledge of higher education and support needed. Thus, students who are from families with adequate knowledge of higher education and provide the students with the needed support to stay on campus enable the students to develop a strong attachment to the institution.

Though a theory of human development, the theory of attachment can be applied to understand how psychosocial education can help students better adjust to the university environment. The theory holds that when caregivers (in this case the university) provide regular interactions with children (students), there is a sense of security on the part of students. However, when a gap, which the theorists called 'separation', occurs between the caregiver (institution) and the child (the student), there are adjustment difficulties to the university environment (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991).

As a student progresses through the education process, cognitive representations (schemas) - or internal working models of attachment relationships to the university environment develops and becomes essential to the experience of security throughout the study period on campus and are predictive of a number of adaptive outcomes (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). For example, when students realize that the university takes serious matters about their security, they are secured and freely move about on campus.

However, when the opposite happens, fear, anxiety and uncertainty grip students.

These models become activated and essential during times of stress or psychosocial problems. Continued participation in mutually satisfying relationships plays a significant role in healthy student adjustment throughout his or her stay on campus. Students at any level during their course of studies are better adjusted to the university environment when they have confidence in the accessibility and responsiveness of a trusted other- in this instance, the university (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991).

According to Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991), anxiety created by new situations, such as those encountered when engaging in academic works, can be alleviated through the experience of attachment to a significant person in one's life who can provide emotional security. This bond, referred to as the secure base, can provide some of the necessary elements for successful adjustment to a wide range of new contexts including the university environment (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). The transition to a new and higher level of academic environment, which is undoubtedly even more complex for young people leaving high school, represents the sort of challenge for which the experience of a secure base would be particularly important. When the university environment is structured such that student's emotional needs are taken care of, they are likely to fearlessly face the future with the hope that there is someone significant behind them on whom they can lean. However, if the opposite occurs, students become confused, disoriented and less able to adjust to the university environment.

Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another (in this instance the student to the university environment) across time and space. It might take time for students to get attached or adjust to the university environment. Counsellors having this knowledge and understanding of students who may be showing signs of anxiety disorder can be strategic in offering help. Attachment therefore, has consistently been found to be positively related to effective and healthy transitions. This theory has been shown to be relevant and applicable to the study.

The Dramaturgical Perspective

The dramaturgical perspective about the human self holds that the elements of human interactions are contingent upon time, place, and audience (Goffman, 1974). The self is a sense of who one is, a dramatic effect emerging from the immediate scene being presented (Ritzer, 2007). Goffman (1974) creates a theatrical metaphor in defining the method in which one human being presents itself to another based on cultural values, norms, and beliefs. Performances can have disruptions of which actors are aware of such. However, most are successful. The reason for this presentation of self is to be accepted by the audience through carefully conducted performance. If the actor succeeds, the audience will view the actor as he or she wants to be viewed (Ritzer, 2007).

Ritzer, (2007) further stated that everyone wants to be accepted and see the smile of approval. We try to put up our best behaviour in every situation. Such unconscious act or performance is influenced by those around us- our audience. The stage on which we act varies depending on the situation we find ourselves in. The reaction of the audience to our behaviour tells us whether a

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performance is acceptable or unacceptable. This perspective takes a microanalysis of how humans behave and why they undertake certain endeavours. There is therefore, an unseen social force that compels everyone to submit in a way, to the dictates of the audience. This social action is designed to be seen by others and to improve one's public self-image.

The university environment may be compared to a stage on which students perform. Imaginary or real, students in institutions of higher learning have expectations of themselves and what others expect of them. Parents, guardians, siblings, friends, colleagues, lecturers and the society in general have different expectations for the student. Would he/she measure up to the expectations from the audience? This, coupled with the burden of academic work could create psychosocial imbalance in the student. This anxiety; fear of the unknown, could lay its cold hands on the student and present a mountain of psychosocial problems which might require professional help to climb. The perspective therefore, could be used to augment other theories and perspectives in the analysis of the empirical data. As a pattern, it could be used to assess how students especially freshmen understand the extent of the expectations from their audience and how they are able to handle such demands when they receive psychosocial education.

Empirical Review

Study Skills and Adjustment of Students

According to Cazan and Stan (2015), academic adjustment represents one of the permanent challenges of university pedagogy. Academic adjustment is an integrating construct and as such is fairly difficult to define (Clinciu & Cazan, 2014). The construct academic adjustment implies successfully

understanding what lecturers and tutors expect academically from students, the development of effective study skills, adjusting to the academic demands of the school and not feeling intimidated by lecturers. Thus, adjustment is seen as a dynamic and interactive process that takes place between the person and the environment and is directed towards an achievement of a fit between the two (Anderson, 1994; Ramsay, Barker, & Jones, 1999).

Students in universities face various sources of academic stress, including demonstration of an ability to engage in challenging materials under time limitation. This could compound the realization that they may not have acquired optimal learning and thinking strategies (Alexander & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Students are found to be victims of time management when they procrastinate.

According to Steel (2007), procrastination consists of the intentional delay of an intended course of action, in spite of an awareness of negative outcomes, and according to Ferrari, O'Callaghan and Newbegin, (2005) it often results in unsatisfactory performance. Academic procrastination involves leaving academic tasks, such as preparing for exams and doing homework to the last minute and to feel discomfort out of this (Çapan, 2010). Anecdotally, it has been suggested that approximately 95% of all college students procrastinate (Ellis & Knaus, 1977). Furthermore, several studies have found a moderate to strong negative correlation between academic procrastination and academic performance (Van Eerde, 2003). For college students particularly, academic procrastination has been associated with guilt, stress, neuroticism, low self-esteem and low grades (Fritzsche, Young & Hickson, 2003). To be properly adjusted in the university, students need study skills training in terms

of time management so they can use their time properly to ensure that their academic work is not affected negatively.

There are several empirical studies on how study skills training affect students' adjustment in the university environment. Awabil (2013) investigated the effects of study and self-reward skills counselling on study behaviour of students in Ghanaian public universities. Using a sample size of 60 in a quasi-experiment and he reported that research participants who received study skills counselling showed an improvement in their study behaviour. A similar study conducted by Ohanaka and Ofuani (2010) revealed that both male and female participant in the experimental group experienced higher improvement in study behaviour than their counterparts in the control group.

The findings of Quist, Nyarko-Sampson and Essuman, (2006) indicated that no significant differences exist between the study habits of males and females. Also, no significant differences existed between the study habits of SSS forms 1 and 3 students and they recommended that the need to teach study skills to senior secondary school students so that they can all cultivate good and effective study habits

Hassanbeigi et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between various study skills and academic performance of university students. A total of 179 male and female junior and senior medical and dental students participated in the study. The instrument was "Study Skills Assessment Questionnaire" taken from counselling services of Houston University. The content validity of this questionnaire was approved by ten psychologist and faculty members of Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences. The data were collected and

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analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test. The results showed that the study skills scores of university students with a grade point average (GPA) of 15 or more (out of 20), were statistically higher than that of those students with a GPA of less than 15 in all of the 7 skills of time management and procrastination (P<.01), concentration and memory (P<.01), study aids and note taking (P<.02), test strategies and test anxiety (P<.01), organizing and processing information (P<.01), motivation and attitude (P<.04), and reading and selecting the main idea (P<.0001). The researchers concluded that teaching of study skills to university students can play an important role in the improvement of students' academic performance.

Cazan and Stan (2015) analysed the relationships between academic adjustment, self-directed learning and learning engagement. The researchers used the following scales: the Academic Adjustment Questionnaire, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and the Self-Rating Scale of Self-Directed Learning. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the dimensions included in the study were significant. The results indicated that self-directed learning and learning engagement could efficiently predict academic adjustment at the university level. The ability of a student to become a self-directed learner implies the development of their metacognitive skills, the ability to monitor and evaluate their own learning strategies, the ability to manage their interpersonal relationship, a self-directed learner being a successful student.

Van Rooij, Jansen and van de Grift (2018) investigated how intrinsic motivation, academic self-efficacy, self-regulated study behaviour and satisfaction with the chosen degree programme influenced academic

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adjustment in university and how these variables and adjustment affected three important indicators of student success: grade point average (GPA), attained number of credits (ECTS) and intention to persist. The sample consisted of 243 first-year university students in the Netherlands. Structural equation modelling showed that academic adjustment was influenced by intrinsic motivation, self-regulated study behaviour and degree programme satisfaction, which together explained 72% of the variance in adjustment. Motivational and behavioural variables did not influence GPA and credits directly but through academic adjustment. Furthermore, only satisfaction with the degree programme predicted intention to persist. These results point to the importance of academic adjustment in predicting university GPA and credits and the pivotal role of satisfaction with the degree programme in predicting intention to persist. Universities could integrate the development of self-regulated study skills—the biggest contributor to academic adjustment—in the first-year programme. Moreover, looking at the importance of students' satisfaction with the programme, communication and collaboration between secondary schools and universities should be enhanced in order to help students to choose a university degree programme that matches their abilities, interests and values.

Study skills training is a major factor in improving the adjustment of students in university. As part of the focus of the current study, it remains to be seen whether the findings of the current study will reflect the importance of study skills training to students' adjustment in universities.

Suicidal Ideation and Adjustment of Students

According to the World Health Organisation (2016) globally, the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15-29 years is suicide. In 2012, suicide was the cause of 804,000 deaths worldwide, and since it bears a stigma in most countries, it is very likely that cases are under-reported (WHO, 2016). Suicidal behavior has different stages, such as suicidal ideation, suicide planning, and attempting suicide (Baggio, Palazzo, & Aerts, 2009). Wishes, ideas, and the tendency towards committing suicide are defined as suicidal ideation (Ahmad, Cheong, Ibrahim, &Rosman, 2014). Many factors can lead an adolescent to suicidal behavior, and these can be divided into two categories: psychological problems like loneliness, worry, hopelessness (Galaif, Sussman, Newcomb, & Locke, 2007; Page & West, 2011) and social-environmental factors such as low, or lack of, parental or peer support, harmful alcohol and drug use, smoking (Makhija & Sher, 2007) and being bullied or sexually abused (Montoro, Thombs, & Igartua, 2015). University and college students are among groups affected more than the general population since suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students (Schwartz, 2006). This may be due to the broad range of challenges faced by university students, such as academic and social pressures (Sreeramareddy, Shankar, Binu, Mukhopadhyay, Ray, & Menezes, 2007), adaptation to a new social environment (Clinciu, 2013), and financial burdens (Dachew, Azale-Bisetegn, Berhe-Gebremariam, 2015; Goodman, Huang, Wade, & Kahn, 2003).

Suicidal ideation carries clinical and public health significance as an antecedent of suicide and suicidal behavior (Beck, Brown, & Steer, 1997).

There are well-known risk factors for suicidal thoughts such as depression, hopelessness, and sub-threshold psychosis (Heisel, Flett, & Hewitt, 2003) although it is unknown whether they provide independent predictive information regarding suicidal ideation over time when modeled together.

Brennan and McGilloway (2012) conducted an exploratory study to investigate the extent of suicide ideation, psychological maladjustment and views of mental health service support in a sample of secondary school pupils in Ireland. A cross-sectional survey was conducted on a purposive sample of respondents (n=93) recruited from a secondary school located in the south east of Ireland. Respondents completed a Background Information Questionnaire (BIQ); the Suicide Ideation Questionnaire (SIQ); and the Reynolds Adolescence Adjustment Screening Inventory (RAASI). The study found that approximately ten percent of respondents displayed high levels of suicide ideation whilst one third reported having previously had suicidal thoughts; one quarter reported psychological adjustment difficulties, although these varied by age and sex. Respondents' drug use and their levels of parental closeness were both individual factors that significantly predicted both suicide ideation and psychological adjustment. Females reported higher levels of parental closeness than males. Forty percent of respondents rated mental health support services as insufficient to meet their needs. The researchers concluded that there are serious concerns about the extent of suicidal thoughts amongst young people in Ireland and how important parents are in this regard.

Ziaei et al. (2017) conducted a study to determine the prevalence and correlates of suicidal ideation among 15–17-year-old high school students in Iran. Self-administered, Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS)

questionnaires were distributed to a representative sample (N =1517) of high-school students aged 15–17 in the city of Tabriz. Multivariate logistic regression was used to assess the association between relevant independent variables (e.g. gender) and the dependent outcome variable (suicidal ideation in the past 12 months). The study found that overall, 62 of 1,517 students had thoughts of suicide. Three hundred and thirteen students reported being bullied in the previous 30 days. In addition, 134 students reported having been sexually abused. Being worried that they could not eat or did not feel hungry; current cigarette smoking; thinking about using alcohol or other drugs; and being sexually abused were all factors positively associated with suicidal ideation. The researchers concluded that the prevalence of suicidal ideation was lower among the students than in earlier studies. Interventions that address the issue of current cigarette smoking, worries, thinking about using alcohol or other drugs and sexual abuse should be given more priority by the public health authorities. Thus, providing some training on how to overcome suicidal ideation can help students adjust in the university environment.

Dachew, Bifftu, Tiruneh, Anlay and Wassie (2018) carried out a study aimed to determine the prevalence of suicidal ideation and to identify factors associated with suicidal ideation among university students in Ethiopia. A random selection of 836 students was surveyed. Binary and multivariable logistic regression models were fitted, adjusting for potential confounders. Associations were measured using odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (95% CI). Analyses were carried out using the SPSS version 20 software. The prevalence of suicidal ideation was 19.9%. The odds of suicidal ideation were higher among students who had mental distress, a family history

of mental illness and for those who had low social support. Financial distress, Khat chewing, and alcohol use were also significantly associated with suicidal ideation. The researchers however found no evidence of associations between suicidal ideation and gender, age, relationship status, or year of study. Based on their results, the researchers concluded that one in five students reported suicidal ideation and that there were strong associations between suicidal ideation and mental distress, family history of mental illness, low social support, financial distress, and substance use. It is, therefore, important to develop suicide prevention strategies targeting these risk factors for university students in Ethiopia. This study also places emphasis and importance on psychosocial education for suicidal ideation.

Nam, Hilimire, Jahn, Lehmann, and DeVylder (2017) conducted a prospective cohort study to investigate longitudinal predictors of suicidal ideation among college students in United States of America. A non-clinical cohort of college students ($N = 171$) completed baseline and 3-month follow-up surveys. Depressive symptoms, worst-point suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt history significantly predicted follow-up suicidal ideation severity after adjusting covariates. Similarly, depressive symptoms and worst-point suicidal ideation (but not attempt history) were significant predictors of follow-up suicidal ideation intensity in an adjusted model. The results suggested that current depressive symptoms and lifetime worst-point suicidal ideation were independently valuable constructs that may provide relatively short-term predictive information when screening for suicidal ideation among college students. The studies reviewed have shown that suicidal ideation exists

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among university students and as such organising some form of education to help the students in universities is ideal.

Stress Management and Adjustment of Students

A report by the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2003) observed that a student faces important challenges due to increased independence and responsibilities. For students leaving home for the first time life is difficult. It involves separation from family and friends, adjusting to new environment, need to face new responsibilities and an unknown future. Similar reports have been made by other researchers too. According to D'Zurilla and Sheedy (1991), college students, especially freshmen, are prone to more stress due to their transition from home to college life. Ross, Niebling and Heckert (1999) argued that most of the students are stressed because of some compulsory adjustments such as being away from home for the first time, maintaining high academic achievement, and adjusting to a new social environment. Besides these, a student also encounters a pressure to earn good grades (Bunn, Bifulco, Lorenc & Robinson, 2007).

In addition, excessive and unclear assignments, uncomfortable classrooms (Frazer & Kohn, 1986), assessment deadlines (Misra & Mckean, 2000), relations with faculty members, time pressures (Sgan-Cohen & Lowental, 1988), financial pressures, relationship with peers, opposite sex, family and friends, new eating and sleeping habits, loneliness and bleak future career prospects are other stressors identified by researchers. An issue associated with study load related stress is the fear of failure. Gender differences surface quite naturally in the area of stress.

Conley, Travers and Bryant (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of a psychosocial wellness seminar for first-year college students, from 2009 to 2011, using an 8-month prospective quasi-experimental design. Compared with controls (n=22) involved in an alternative seminar, intervention respondents (n=29) showed no differences at baseline, but reported significantly greater perceived improvements over the course of the intervention, in psychosocial adjustment and stress management. Furthermore, specific aspects of intervention engagement (attendance and student-rated skills practice, but not didactic mastery or facilitator-rated skills practice) differentially predicted beneficial outcomes: (1) psychosocial adjustment (increases in psychosocial well-being, decreases in psychological distress), after adjusting for baseline levels of these outcomes; (2) college-related stress management (lower college-related stress, greater adaptation to college) and (3) perceived improvements in psychosocial adjustment and stress management. In concluding, the researchers argued that there are promising avenues for programmatic efforts to promote psychosocial adjustment and stress management in college students.

Safety and Security and Adjustment of Students

There are strong relationships between addressing social and emotional learning and academic achievement (National Center for Technology Innovation and Center for Implementing Technology in Education, 2008). A study by Lacoe (2012) found there is a direct correlation between students feeling unsafe in the classroom and their academic achievement. Cornell and Mayer (2010) reported that levels of school safety and school order are the

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basis for achievement gap, teacher retention, and student engagement and learning.

Amoatemaa, Kyeremeh and Arthur (2017) reported in their study on students' perception of campus safety which was carried out at Kumasi campus of University of education, Winneba that 192 out of 224 students affirmed that they are very much concerned about campus security. The finding of Amoatemaa et al. differ from that of Nimako and Bondinuba (2013) which revealed that students ranked security in their various hostels as fourth most important thing to them. Similarly, Nduka (2013) pointed out in his study that students are not much concern about their own safety and security issues on campus.

Chekwa, Thomas and Jones (2013) researched on what are college students' perceptions about campus safety. With a sample size if 20 first year students, 70% of respondents said that campus safety was very important in their selection of college. Furthermore, 45% feels that security is inadequate and they are of the view that they need firearm to protect themselves.

Also, Owusu, Akoto,and Abnory (2016) reported that 416 (89.1%) out of 467 students indicated that the campus of university of Cape Coast is safe for them during day time whilst 413 students said that campus is not safe during night time. The researchers further found that 448 (95.9) of the respondents were not satisfied with the lighting situation on campus this is as a result of breakdown in the lighting infrastructure on campus.

Again, a survey carried out in University of Alberta with 468 student sample of 468 highlighted 80.3% of students responded "no" whilst 19.6% responded, that as "yes" to the item "Have you ever felt unsafe on campus?"

School safety has become an important topic in today's world due to increased publicity of bullying, disrespect, shootings, kidnapping, arson, robbery, sexual assault, and weapon abuse. School safety has an impact on students' physical and emotional health and affects students in every nation (Angnich & Miyazaki, 2013; Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen, & Poillitt, 2013). Research has indicated that unsafe schools, including environments where bullying and harassment occur from students or teachers, are associated with disengagement from school, increased absences, and the perception of being intimidated or not achieving academically (Vooren, 2010). The learning environment, school climate, and school culture affect a student's perception of school safety. Without a positive influence in these areas, learning and development do not take place (State of New Jersey Department of Education, 2011).

The idea of being safe in school is not a new idea. Abraham Maslow created his theory of hierarchy of needs and hypothesized students would not be interested in learning until they felt like they belonged or were esteemed by others, thus experiencing a safe learning environment (Williams, 2003). Arum (2003), in his article on judging school discipline, argued that without discipline, schools will become chaotic places where student learning will fall by the wayside, as feelings of safety become a predominant factor that relates not only to behavioral issues, but to student success and academic outcomes. Students who do not believe they are safe are unlikely to take the intellectual risks involved in the learning process (Brophy, 2013).

Student safety has a huge impact on the ability to learn. Research found that the impact of violence on students increases the need for

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disciplinary action and the lowers achievement (Neeley, 2003). Bosworth, Ford, and Hernandaz (2011) stated that violence in schools is a unique public health problem because it primarily affects students, and the negative consequences undermine the primary purposes of education.

Grover (2015) used a mixed-method approach to examine the relationship between students' perception of safety in their schools and how it affects their academic success. Student data, including discipline records, attendance, demographics, and grade point averages, were analyzed. The quantitative data were examined and compared to see if there were significant differences between students with discipline problems and academic success, and if demographics play a role in the feelings of being unsafe. Analysis of data from previous research has shown that students who feel safe at school do better academically. Students who feel unsafe at school have lower grades, no grade improvement, or an increase in disciplinary action.

Gender difference in campus security

Currie (1994) found that men and women use safety precautions differently. Men are much more likely to carry a weapon than women, while women are much more likely to use avoidance strategies.

Similarly, an online survey conducted in university of Alberta, 80 females students (25.7%) said they felt unsafe on campus, while only 6 representing 4.2% of male students indicated that they felt unsafe on campus. Research has shown that more female students report feeling less safe than male students (Jordan, 2014).

Amoatemaa et al. (2013) conducted a study on students' perception of campus safety which was carried out at Kumasi campus of University of

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education, Winneba, the finding showed that there were no significant differences in levels of concern between gender, age or mode of study. This is because 192 representing 85.7% indicated that they are very concerned about their security on campus. In a study conducted by Pryor and Hughes (2013) on the female's fear of rape on college campuses, it is found that women fear rape more than any other crime, and not only in the United States – globally young women have a significant fear of being raped regardless of race, social class, geography, sexual orientation, time of day,

Chapter Summary

The chapter two has carefully provided the theoretical basis for and application to the study. Relevant theories, perspectives and concepts useful for the study have been microscopically revisited to show the scientific linkages to the study. Other important works by researchers and scholars in the field have been scrutinized to give proper direction to the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

As noted in the preceding chapters, the study sought to investigate the effects of psychosocial education on students' adjustment to the university environment. This chapter is devoted to explaining the research design for the study, study area, population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection procedure, data analysis.

Research Design

A research design refers to the conceptual structure, framework or the blueprint within which a scientific enquiry is conducted (Yin, 1984). The design encompasses what the researcher has planned to do from stating the hypotheses or assumptions through to the analyses of the empirical data. With regard to this study, the researcher employed the cross-sectional survey design for the investigation. A cross-sectional research design is a type of research design where either the entire population or a subset is selected and from these individuals data are collected to help answer research question. It is called cross-sectional because the information about the variable(s) of study that is gathered represent what is going on only at one point in time (Olsen & Goerge 2004). Yin (1984) noted that the cross-sectional research design is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context.

Firstly, the selection of this research design was based on the assertion of Lavrakas (2008) that a cross-sectional survey collects data to make

inferences about a population of interest (universe) at one point in time. Cross-sectional surveys have been described as snapshots of the populations about which they gather data. Secondly, the cross sectional survey design was selected because it is relatively cheaper to use in terms of cost. This is because as compared to other design like experimental method, there is no need for follow-up after data is collected from the sample. Once the information is collected from the entire study group, it can be analyzed because only that single time reference is being considered (Brandon, 2018).

Thirdly, cross sectional survey design provides quick way to collect data from respondents. When cross sectional survey is compared to longitudinal studies it can be seen that data can be collected in a relatively short time (Sincero, 2012).

Study Area

The study was conducted in the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi. It is one of the major public universities in Ghana. It is located at Ayigya on the Kumasi-Accra Highway. The university has a student population of 62,346 comprising undergraduate and post-graduate (KNUST Quality Assurance unit, 2019). The school is composed of male and female students from Ghana and other countries. The university was chosen as an ideal site for the study for three-fold reasons. The first reason has to do with the proximity of the researcher to the study area. The researcher lives in the same city where the university is located and therefore, the cost of travelling was reduced for choosing this study area. The second reason is that the researcher works in the same institution and understands the challenges that students face in adjusting to the university

environment. The third reason why Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology was chosen is that psychosocial education is organized for students in this university and therefore, became a suitable natural setting in which the study was conducted.

Population

The population for the study included all students at the public university where the research was conducted. The accessible population for the study comprise all under graduate students from six colleges totalling 44,548 (KNUST Quality Assurance Unit, 2019). The students are made up of both males and females from Ghana and other countries.

Table 1-*Distribution of Population by Colleges and Gender*

College	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Humanities and Social Sciences	6,098	5,112	11,210
Health Sciences	3,213	4,287	7,500
Science	5,262	2,800	8,062
Agriculture and Natural Resources	3,177	1,370	4,547
Arts and Built environment	4,386	2,211	6,597
Engineering	5,546	1,086	6,632
Total	27,682	16,866	44,548

Source: KNUST Quality Assurance Unit, 2019

Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed the stratified sampling technique to select 380 sample size for this study. A sample size of 380 is appropriate for a study with a population of 44,584 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique where the entire population is divided into

different subgroups or starta, then randomly selects the final subjects of respondents from the different starta (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Since the university under study had colleges and schools (six in all), a stratified sampling method was first used. The six colleges and schools were grouped as strata. Then under each college, sub-strata (faculties) were identified.

Babbie's formular was used to calculate appropriate sample from each college. Thus, appropriate number of respondents from each college was calculated by dividing the total number of students in each college by the total number of students in all the six colleges, multiplied by sample size of three hundred and eighty (380). In order to get the right sample for the study, the researcher utilized some basic probability sampling techniques in the selection process of the sample. Following the fundamental principle of probability sampling referred to as 'Equal Probability of Selection Method' (EPSEM), the researcher had to ensure that, the sample selection was free of any biases (Healey, 1999). The author further stated that a sample is representative if it reproduces the important characteristics of the population. Otherwise, generalization to the population becomes, at best, extremely hazardous (Healey, 1999). Healey (1999) noted that the stratified sampling technique is very desirable because it guarantees that the sample will be representative of the population. The simple random method was used to select one faculty from each college. Afterwards the researcher used illustration of lottery method (cut papers and wrote "Yes" and "No" on each paper, mixed the papers thoroughly and put them in a container). The researcher then asked each student willing to participate in the study to draw out one of the papers in the container. Students who picked "Yes" were included in the study. Students

who were willing to participate in the study but picked a "No" paper were thanked for their willingness to support the work.

Table 2- *Distribution of sample by colleges*

College	Sample
Humanities and Social Sciences	96
Health sciences	64
Sciences	69
Agriculture and natural resources	39
Arts and built environment	56
Engineering	56
Total	380

Instrument

The data was collected by the use of a self-questionnaire after careful review of literature on the four areas of the study. Literature by these researchers guided the construction of the instrument for this study; study skills by Awabil (2013), suicide ideation by Brennan and McGilloway (2012), stress management by Conley, Travers and Bryant (2013) and campus security by Owusu, Akoto, and Abnory (2016). The questionnaire was designed based on the main objectives of the study. There were four sub-scales which sought information about students' security on campus, how students handle suicidal ideation, study skills and stress management. Apart from demographic items, the instrument is made up of 16 items in all. Item 5-8 solicited information on study skills, item 9-11 solicited information on suicidal ideation, item 12-16 solicited information on stress management and item 17-20 solicited information on students' security.

Validity and Reliability

The validity of the questionnaire was ascertained by my supervisor. According to Bhattacherjee (2012), validity refers to the extent to which an instrument adequately represents the underlying construct or content that it is supposed to measure. My supervisor assessed the content validity of the data collection instrument because expert advice is usually the best way to ascertain the content validity of an instrument. Content validity refers to the extent to which the content of an instrument measures what it intends to measure (Li, 2016). Content validity was used because it helped ensure that the questionnaire measures every objective of the study.

Further, the reliability of the instrument was also ascertained. Jackson (2011) defined reliability as the consistency or stability of a data collection instrument in measuring what it is supposed to measure. The internal consistency method of reliability was used. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained after the pre-testing of the instrument. The reliability was obtained by calculating Cronbach Co-efficient Alpha. The pre-testing of the instrument was done on 50 students of Cape Coast Technical University. Cape Coast Technical University was chosen as the pre-testing area for these reasons. First, some programmes such as degree in Building Technology and Bachelor of Science in statistics cut across these two institutions. Secondly, psychosocial education is offered by qualified professionals in these two educational institutions (CCTU Public Relation Unit, 2019). Regarding the importance of pre-testing research instruments for data collection, Beazley, Bessell, Ennew, & Waterson, (2009) are of the view that research tools must be tested before being used to collect data, so that any mistakes can be

corrected and data can be collected effectively. The reliability co-efficient obtained for the questionnaire was 0.769. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) indicated that a reliability co-efficient greater than 0.7 implies that the instrument is reliable enough for research. Therefore, the reliability co-efficient was deemed appropriate for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected within a period of 3 weeks. The researcher recruited five research assistants and took them through two hours training to help with the data collection. These five data collection assistants were national service persons at the counselling centre of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. They were given copies of the instrument for them to read in order to be conversant with the items on the questionnaire. The researcher explained all items on the questionnaire to the data collection assistants to enable them give appropriate answer in case any student ask question concerning the instrument. Also, the researcher educated the data collection assistants on the importance of confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. The researcher educated the data collection assistants on the need for them to establish rapport with the respondents and explain the aim of the research to the respondents before they give out the questionnaires to the respondents. Each data collection assistant was given 43 questionnaires to be administered. The data was collected in three batches because six faculties were selected from the six colleges. The first phase started on the 4th of February 2019 and ended on the 11th of the same month. The second batch started on the 12th of February 2019 and ended on 19th of

the same month. The last phase began on 20th February to 27th of the same month.

Ethical Consideration

First of all, the researcher obtained an approval letter from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of University of Cape Coast. This letter gave the researcher the ethical clearance to carry out this research work. Also, the researcher met with and sought the consent of gatekeepers (those who had relative authority over the research respondents such as heads of departments and lecturers) to discuss the aim of the study with them and to allow their students to take part in the study. Since part of their lecture period was going to be used, their consent was necessary. Aside these important persons, research respondents were also consulted and made to understand the purpose of the study and the extent to which they might be willing to respond to the questionnaire. They were also made to understand that they had absolute right to withdraw from the research process whenever they deemed it necessary to do so without any consequences.

Consent forms were given to research respondents to sign. The consent form also had sections that dealt with confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality relates to the agreements with respondents about what may be done with the data that arise from their participation. Mostly, it implies that private data with the potential to identify respondents will not be disclosed (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). Respondents were assured that any piece of information given during the study was going to be treated with high sense of security and will be used for the intended purpose.

With regard to anonymity, respondents were asked not to provide any sensitive information such as their names, places of residence and addresses that could be used to easily identify them with their responses. Since student uprising had recently hit the University, research respondents were assured that the study had nothing to do with that past event.

Data Processing and Analysis

Out of the 380 questionnaires which were administered, 272 were returned which indicate a good return rate of 71.6%. According to Draugalis, Coons and Plaza (2008), an acceptable return rate is within the rage of 30-70%. The researcher sorted out and counted the total number of completed questionnaires which numbered to 257 and these questionnaires were analysed for the study. Numerical figures which served as code were assigned to the responses. Information from these questionnaires was then entered into a Statistical Programme for Social Science research (SPSS) to generate the analysable version of the data. Research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 were all analysed using frequencies and percentages. Research Hypothesis one was tested using independent samples t-test. The use of independent samples t-test was deem appropriate because there were two independent variables ie male and female whiles the dependent variable (campus security) is measured on an interval scale. Descriptive tools (figures and tables) were mainly used to present the results of the empirical data for the analyses and discussions.

Chapter Summary

The chapter has detailed the various processes, techniques and methods that the researcher employed, adapted, adopted and devised to reach, interact and collect the empirical data necessary for the analyses and discussion of the

research questions. Moreover, the chapter has also outlined how the rights of research respondents were upheld and the ways crippling challenges were resolved during data collection and analyses of the empirical data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The intended purpose of this study was to investigate how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment to the university environment. This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study. The results are presented first before the discussions.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the bio information of the research respondents who volunteered to participate in the study. Frequencies and their corresponding percentages are displayed in the tables below:

Table 3- *Gender of respondents*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Male	105	40.9
Female	152	59.1
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 3 shows the number of research respondents who took part in the study. Female respondents were 152 representing 59.1 percent of the total sample size. Their male counterparts were 105 accounting for 40.9 percent of the total sample size. The sample was a conglomerate of students at all levels of study and from all the colleges and school in the university.

Table 4- *Age group of respondents*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
18 years and below	29	11.3
19-24 years	197	76.7
25-29 years	29	11.3
30-34 years	2	0.8
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

In table 4, the age group distribution shows that majority (197) of the respondents were between the ages of 19-24 constituting 76.7 percent of the total sample size. Only 2 respondents were within the age group of 30-34 years representing 0.8 percent of the total sample size. Respondents who were 18 years and below and those between the age group of 25-29 had the same frequency of 29 accounting for 11.3 percent of the total sample size for each group. This implies that the opinions of respondents within that the age range of 19-24 will dominate the findings of the study.

Table 5- *Year or level of respondents*

Level	Frequency	Percent
100	66	25.7
200	87	33.9
300	66	25.7
400	38	14.7
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

With respect to the level or year of study of respondents in the university, 87 respondents indicated that they were in the second year. That figure represents 33.9 percent of the total sample size. Levels 100 and 300 categories had 66 respondents each, which represents 25.7 percent of the total sample size for each category. Level 400 students who participated in the study were 38 in number accounting for 14.7 percent of the total sample size as shown in Table 5.

Research Question 1: How does study skills seminar relate to students' adjustment to the university environment?

One of the research objectives was to explore how study seminar organized by the counselling centre of the university helps students get adjusted to the university environment. To answer this research question, four sub-questions were formulated to answer research question one. The results are presented in tables 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Table 6- *Respondents' knowledge about study skill seminar*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	216	84.1
Not sure	20	7.8
No	21	8.1
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

In Table 6, research respondents were asked about their knowledge of study skills seminar organised by the counselling unit. Majority of the respondents (216) representing 84.1 percent of the total sample size indicated that they were aware of that event. Only a handful of the respondents (20) said

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that they were not sure whether counselling centre organize study skills seminar on campus or not. Respondents who indicated that the counselling centre does not organize study skills seminar on campus for students were 21 representing 8.1 percent.

Table 7- *Students attend study skill seminar*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	160	62.2
Never	97	29.2
Sometimes	20	8.6
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

From Table 7, the respondents were also asked to indicate whether they attend study skills seminars or not. One hundred and sixty (160) respondents said that they always attend study skills seminars organise by the counselling centre. Only 8.6 percent of the respondents indicated that they sometimes attend study skills seminars. Respondents who have never attended study skills seminar on campus were 97 which represent 29.2 percent

Table 8- *Application of suggestions from study skills seminar*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	158	61.5
No	99	38.5
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

It is clear from Table 8 that majority of the study respondents apply suggestions made by psychosocial educators during study skills seminar. However, respondents who do not apply the suggestions were 99 which reflect 38.5 percent.

Table 9-*Whether suggestions from study skills seminar help students enjoy life on campus*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	48	18.7
Agree	120	46.7
Never	44	17.1
Disagree	22	8.6
Strongly Disagree	23	8.9
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 9 showcases the outcome of the question inquiring whether suggestions received from the study skill seminar helps respondents to appreciate learning and in turn, enjoy life on campus. One hundred and twenty (120) research respondents representing 46.7 agreed that they got tremendous boost from the application of the suggestions they receive from the study skill seminar. Furthermore, 48 respondents also showed that they strongly agreed to enjoy life on campus as a result of the application of the suggestions from the study skill seminar. Nevertheless, a total of 89 research respondents strongly disagreed, disagreed or never saw how the suggestions from the study skill seminar contributed to their joy on campus. The figure accounted for 34.6 percent of the total sample size.

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Research Question 2: How does suicidal ideation management affect students' adjustment to the university environment?

This research question was to find out whether psychosocial education on suicidal ideation management affects students' adjustment to the university environment. The results are presented in Tables 10, 11 and 12.

Table 10- *Help for students dealing with depression*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	84	32.7
Agree	142	55.3
Never	13	5.1
Disagree	12	4.7
Strongly Disagree	6	2.3
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

The researcher probed into the psychosocial education provided by the university which enhances students' ability to handle issues of depression. Out of the 257 research respondents, 226 indicated that there is help for students dealing with depression. That number shows that more than half (88%) of the total sample size have knowledge of the help available for students in depressed situation. However, 31 respondents representing 12.1% indicated that there is no help for students who are dealing with depression on campus. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the university provided timely intervention for students. The result is presented in Table 11.

Table 11-*Timely intervention by the university*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	61	23.7
Agree	149	58.0
Never	23	8.9
Disagree	15	5.8
Strongly Disagree	9	3.5
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

From Table 11, 149 respondents showed that the university provides timely intervention for depressed students and those who are in need of other assistance. Additionally, 61 respondents strongly agreed that they were aware of the timely intervention that the university offers to students in need of help. Thus, 210 respondents accounting for 81.7 percent of the total sample size positively indicated that an intervention is available for students having difficulties on campus.

Table 12-*Causes and management of suicidal ideation seminar*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	57	22.2
Agree	149	58.0
Never	27	10.5
Disagree	18	7.0
Strongly Disagree	6	2.3
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 12 shows the views of the respondents concerning whether seminars are organised on the causes and management of suicidal ideation or not. It can be seen that 206 respondents representing 80.2 percent agree that seminar is organized to educate students on the causes and management of suicidal ideation. However, a combination of those who strongly disagree and disagree constituted 19.8 percent of the respondents showed that there is no seminar on causes and management of suicidal ideation

Research Question 3: In what way is stress management integral to students' adjustment to the university environment?

This research question was aimed at finding out whether stress management is integral to the adjustment of students in the university environment. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 13, 14 and 15.

Table 13- *Education on stress management*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	183	71.2
No	74	28.8
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 13 show the responses from the research respondents. One hundred and eighty-three (183) respondents accounting for 71.2 percent of the total sample size indicated that they receive timely education on stress management. On the other hand, 74 respondents representing 28.8 percent confirmed that they do not receive such education.

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Table 14- *Students have fixed plan for studies*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	58	22.6
Agree	167	65.0
Never	17	6.6
Disagree	8	3.1
Strongly Disagree	7	2.7
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Looking at whether psychosocial education makes students meticulous in terms of academic studies, 87.6 percent of the total sample size affirmed that they have fixed plans for studies because of the guide they receive from the study skill seminar whilst 12.4 percent said they do not have a fixed plan for studies. Table 15 presents the result of the researcher's enquiry into whether respondents apply the suggestions they get on stress management.

Table 15- *Application of suggestions on stress management*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	186	72.4
No	71	27.6
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

The outcome shows that majority of respondents (72.4%) confirmed that they apply the suggestions they receive on stress management whilst 71 respondents representing 27.6 % indicated that they do not apply suggestions on stress management.

Table 16-*Stress management on campus life*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	69	26.8
Agree	156	60.7
Never	22	8.6
Disagree	6	2.3
Strongly Disagree	4	1.6
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 16 presents the results on whether they were managing stress appropriately on campus. It can be seen in Table 16 that 60.7 percent of the respondents agreed that properly managing stress positively affects their campus life. Additional 26.8 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that their campus life is greatly enhanced when they pay good attention to stress management. Yet, some 12.5 percent of the respondents thought otherwise. They showed by their responses that proper stress management has nothing to do with how they enjoy campus life.

Research Question 4: How does psychosocial education on students' security issues affect their adjustment to the university environment?

This research question aimed at finding out whether psychosocial education on campus security issues affects the adjustment of students in the university environment. The results are presented in Tables 17 and figure 2.

Table 17- *Students have knowledge of campus security*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	231	89.9
No	26	10.1
Total	257	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Concerning security and safety on campus, majority (89.9%) of the respondents showed by their responses that they have adequate knowledge of campus security whilst a small number of respondents (10.1%) said that they do not have adequate knowledge on security issues on campus.

Finally, respondents expressed their concerns with regard to the presence of security personnel on campus and how it affects their safety (Figure 2).
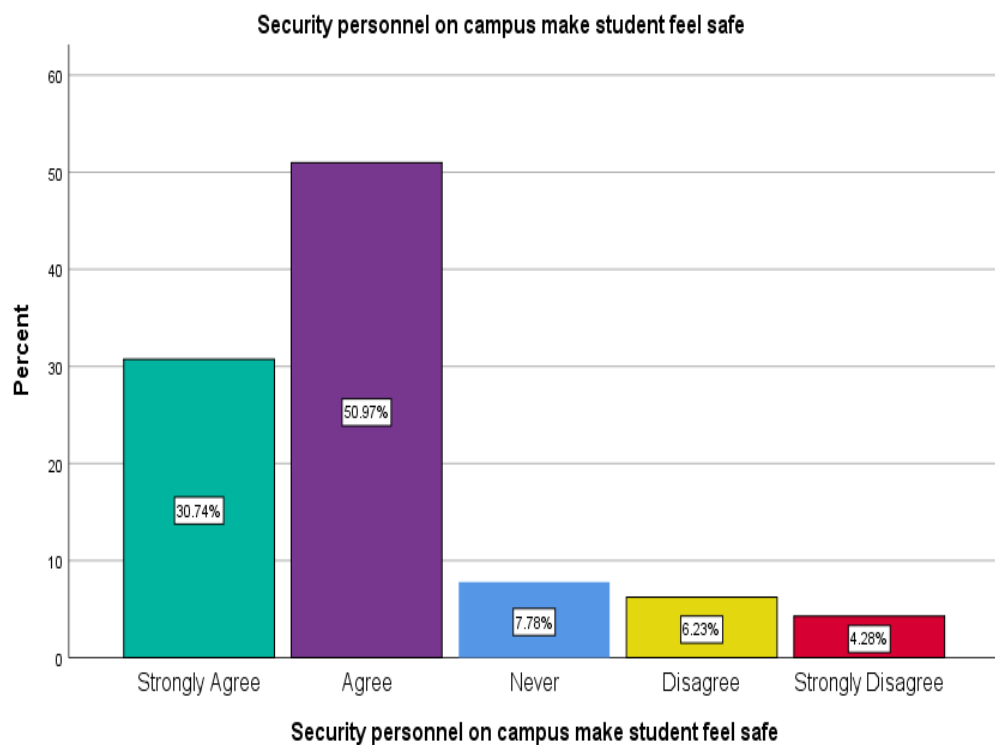

Figure 2: How security personnel on campus make students feel safe

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

It is shown in Figure 2 that a little above half (50.9 %) of the respondents showed that they feel safe on campus with the presence of security personnel. Furthermore, 30.7 per cent also indicated that they strongly agreed to feeling secure with the presence of security personnel on campus. Nevertheless, other respondents had different view of the matter. Respondent who indicated that the presence of security personnel on campus never has any effect on their safety were 7.8%. Another 6.2 percent disagreed and answered that security personnel on campus does not affect their safety. The statistics further show that a section of the respondents accounting for 4.3 percent of the total sample size strongly disagree that their safety has anything to do with the presence of security personnel on campus.

Research Hypothesis One

There is no significant gender difference in the perception of campus security. This hypothesis sought to find out if there is a significant in the perception of campus security between male and female. The hypothesis was tested at an alpha level of 0.05.

Table 18-*Independent samples t-test on gender difference in campus security*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.(2 tailed)
Male	105	9.32	2.37			
				.066	255	.948
Female	152	9.30	2.65			

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare how male and female perceive the security of campus. There was no significant difference in the scores of campus security of male (M=9.32, SD=2.37) and

female (M=9.30, SD=2.65; t (255) =0.066, p=0.948. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant gender difference in the perception of campus security was not rejected. This implies that how male and female perceive campus security is the same.

Discussions

The main aim of this current study was to investigate how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment to the university environment of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. The discussions were done in line with the research questions and research hypothesis of the study.

Study skills Seminar and Students' Adjustment

Findings from the survey revealed that majority of the respondents were aware of the study skill seminar available for students. This certainly might suggest that, the publicity of the provision made to help students get the best out of their study is high. Probably, the various means of reaching student with information such as notice boards, flyers, text messages or through class representatives are used. It would be of interest to know how the university advertises this seminar to reach the student body.

However, it is one thing to know about the seminar and a different thing altogether to utilize the provision. To probe further, the researcher inquired from the respondents whether they attend study skills seminar. The study revealed that majority of the respondents attends study skills seminar organised for them.

The study also found out that majority of the research respondents apply the suggestions they receive from psychosocial educators during study

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skills seminar. The finding supports the study conducted by Atindanbila and Azasu (2011). In their finding, it was stated that, students reported severe levels of psychosocial problems as a result of ineffective tutorials and other academic related issues. Since majority of the students attend and make use of the suggestions they receive from the study skill seminar, it is assumed that, the psycho-education in the university is appreciated. That could lead to a reduction in academic stress and might probably explain why majority of the students attend the seminar. The finding could also provide a clue into their responses about enjoying studies and campus life. When a student finds it hard to comprehend the meaning of what is being taught, studies might seem burdensome, less interesting and a nightmare.

However, when one understands the meaning of what is being taught and can relate to the information, studies could become an enjoyable endeavour. That explains the reason for which majority of the respondents affirmed that, they feel well adjusted to and enjoy life on campus as students. That is, they get tremendous boost from the application of the suggestions they receive from the study skill seminar, which in turn, helps them to fully involve themselves in fruitful activities on campus. This finding is in line with the findings of Awabil (2013) that students who are exposed to study skills counselling exhibit great improvement in their study habit. Similarly, the findings agrees with that of Cazan and Stan (2015) that self-directed learning and learning engagement could efficiently predict academic adjustment at the university level.

However, this finding contradicts the findings of Ackah and Kuranchie (2013) which indicated that majority of the respondent did not have smooth

adjustment in their early days on campus. The respondents explain this maladjustment that the Catholic University College does not provide special orientation for the foreign students.

The finding from the current study also reflects the spirit which inspires the student involvement theory (Astin, 1984). As already noted in chapter two, the theory explains how students get involved in campus activities. It posits that, a highly involved student is one who, for example, devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in students' organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students. As the finding suggests, 65.4 percent of the respondents view psychosocial education to be helpful in aiding them to have as full share as possible in student's activities. Perhaps, the psychosocial education opens up many benefits that students can derive from actively involving themselves in both academic and social activities on campus. The programme might also suggest practical steps for students in finding the balance between academic and social responsibilities thereby easing the stress of imbalance. This finding supports the study that was conducted by Robino and Foster (2018). They established in their findings that, students adjust to the responsibilities of independent living and begin to take ownership of balancing their time between school, work and recreation when they receive the right motivation and encouragement (Robino & Foster, 2018). The finding of this research has shown that, psychosocial education provides the motivation and encouragement that students need in order not be thrown off balance by the pressures of adjusting to new environment and eventually "throw in the towel", a sign of failure.

Despite the positive outcome about psychosocial education, a section of the respondents (35.5%) claimed that they could not relate to the programme. Their ability to adjust to life on campus is claimed to be unrelated to the psychosocial education that is provided. Are these students simply oblivious to the shocks that result from adjusting to a new environment? It might be reasonable to suggest that, these students have an unknown source(s) that helps them survive the turbulence that emanates from adjusting to university life. Yet, it seems advantageous to question the data for a healthy discussion. These questions also lay the foundation for further studies into the phenomena. In any case, the researcher can only question, interpret and discuss what the data seem to offer and cannot go beyond that.

It could be safe to establish that the first objective of the study which sought to find out whether study skill seminar organised as part of the psychosocial education for students is answered. It could be seen from the on-going discussion that majority of the students appreciate the study skill seminar that is being organised for them. They claim through their responses that, it helps them to get well adjusted to the university environment. But how does it help? The respondents suggested that, they are introduced to new and effective ways of learning and getting the most out of their studies. Furthermore, the seminar suggests practical help for those struggling with their academic work, and that in turn, increases their desire to learn and pursue their academic career to the end. It retains them on campus and what is more, they find the university environment not to be a scary theatrical arena but a welcoming community where their dreams are certain to come true.

Suicidal Ideation Management and Students' Adjustment

Woodward (2015) argued that, the physical and mental wellness of students help them in their ability to function. For this reason, it might be safe to suggest that, the ability of a student to successfully manage stressful circumstances in life could positively affect his adjustment to the university environment. It is against this backdrop that, the researcher probed to understand how psychosocial education helps students to manage suicidal ideation. That is the second objective of the study. Students who do not see a way out/around a difficult situation could entertain the thought of giving up on life by quitting or ending it all.

A study by Woodward (2015) established that, students may not function to their full limit if they have burdens weighing on their minds. How does psychosocial education help students facing such challenges? The study inquired to find out whether there is help for students dealing with depression. From the responses, 88 percent of the respondents answered in the affirmative to indicate that, students are aware that there is help available for those dealing with depression. They claimed that, the awareness is created through the psychosocial education they receive. Besides the awareness, 81.7 percent of the respondents also confirmed that, the university has timely intervention to assist students.

It might be argued that, since some of the students do not realise the existence of such help, they may not even bother to learn more about it. As already noted, these students may have external help in dealing with stressful situations. If that is true, then they may not consider knowing more about psychosocial education. Furthermore, 82.2 percent of the respondents

indicated that, through the psychosocial education, they learn the possible causes of suicidal ideations or thoughts and the best to manage them when they surface. For this reason they affirmed that it helps to properly situate them within the academic environment. As previously stated, helping students anticipate the possible challenges that they are likely to encounter while in school, and partnering them to identify possible solutions reduces their anxiety. This in turn, could lead to high involvement in school activities and positively affect their adjustment to the university environment (Astin, 1984).

Stress Management Seminar and Students' Adjustment

The findings of the study brought to bear that respondents are educated on stress management through psychosocial education. This education could certainly draw students' attention to the possible causes of stress and what they could do to ameliorate the negative effects. There is no doubt that such education has positive effects on students' adjustment (Robino & Foster, 2018).

To determine whether students put into practice what they learn on stress management, the study, further, asked respondents about having a fixed study plan. Overwhelming 87.6 percent of the research respondents positively claimed that, they have a fix plan for studies. The researcher assumes is a positive indication that, the psychosocial education that the university offers to students is having good impact. For students to be meticulous and meet deadlines for assignments, the need for proper schedule might not be an option. Things must be done in an orderly manner and well-arranged fashion. This in turn, reduces the possible stress that could result from a disorganised and unplanned lifestyle as the response shows.

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It comes as no surprise to notice that, majority (72.4%) of the respondents showed that, they indeed apply the suggestions on stress management which they receive during psychosocial education. These may realise that, handling stress well relate to their adjustment. Stress is a residue of the external factors within the environment. If wrongly managed, it could throw one off balance and negatively affect an individual's orientation. The finding also confirms what Jutai and Day (2002) established in their work. The researchers argued that, excessive stress can destroy the internal factors of an individual which are the core dimensions of psychological well-being, which include independence, personal control and self-efficacy. However, it is argued that, psychosocial education can aid in stabilising the affected individual and contribute to their overall well-being (Jutai & Day, 2002). Clearly, psychosocial education helps students handle stress in a healthy way, which in turn, enhances their adjustment to the university environment.

Safety and Security and Students' Adjustment

Last but not least among the research objectives was to establish how students fare when they receive psychosocial education about their safety and security on campus. Students in particular, may feel anxious and uncertain when their safety cannot be guaranteed on campus. What exactly do students want to see on campus or hear from authorities about their safety that will make them feel less tensed, comfortable and free to carry out their academic and social responsibilities?

From the data presentation, an overwhelming 89.9 percent of the respondents indicated that, being aware or having knowledge of security issues on campus contributes to their safety. To have sound mind and focus

their attention on their core business, students need to know that they have maximum protection. For a fact, to know that, a concern friend is constantly keeping watch over you could reduce anxiety. How students are made aware of security on campus? The university through psychosocial education provides practical information to all the students. They are made aware of potential thieves and the tactics they often employ to rob students of their valuables. Students are also made conscious of always keeping their rooms under lock. Further on their security, psychosocial education is used to empower students to be bold and report strangers who look suspicious and frequent their surroundings. The practical information is given to students so that they could take responsibility of safety.

Besides all these, students also expressed that, they feel safe and secure when they notice the visible presence of security personnel on campus. With that, 81.6 percent of the respondents revealed that, when they see university security personnel on campus, they experience a degree of security and less anxious. They also claimed that, when campus security personnel are placed at vantage points in the university to check the motive of individuals before granting them entry to the school, their confidence in the security system on campus is increased. Furthermore, to enhance the safety of students, the university in collaboration with Ghana Police Service has set up new Police stations on the university campus. These works are part of the university's aim of ensuring that students go about their academic and social activities in peace, and be rest assured that, their security is paramount. These calm students down and increase their adjustment to the university environment.

However, a section of the respondents reported that, the presence of security personnel on campus does not affect their adjustment to the university environment. They could not relate their safety on campus with the presence of university security. Such students might reason that, bad people still find their way into campus to terrorise students even though there are security personnel on campus. They might have little or no confidence in the university security system. These students may not have realised how their safety on campus connects with their intricate psychosocial web. It might be sound to suggest that, the psychosocial education must feature prominently in every aspect of the lives of students so that they would realise the importance of it.

Gender difference in the perception of campus security

The findings from this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the perception of campus security between male and female. This finding is in agreement with the work of Amoatemaa et al. (2013) who reported there were no significant differences in levels of concern between gender, age or mode of study. A possible explanation to this finding is that both male and female fall victims to attackers on campus. These robbers attack students for valuables such as money, mobile phones, laptops and jewelleries. This finding is in sharp contrast with the findings of the online survey conducted in university of Alberta, 80 females students (25.7%) said they felt unsafe on campus, while only 6 representing 4.2% of male students indicated that they felt unsafe on campus. Culture could account for this difference between the two findings. For instance it is hardly for a Ghanaian student to own a gun for person protection whilst is this easy to see Canadian university students with weapons for personal protection. Again, the current study

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finding was not in agreement with that of Jordan (2014) that more female students report feeling less safe than male students. A factor that could account for why more male feeling safe on campus is that men are more likely to carry weapons such as knives, gun and scissors to protect themselves (Currie, 1994).

In a study conducted by Pryor and Hughes (2013) on the female's fear of rape on college campuses, it was found that women fear rape more than any other crime, and not only in the United States – globally young women have a significant fear of being raped regardless of race, social class, geography, sexual orientation, time of day. It is uncommon to hear cases of male being rape on campus as Condon (2014) opined that rape of male is still a taboo and it gives negative connotation to individuals.

Chapter Summary

The discussions have been a process of moving back and forth, making sound speculations and asking analytical questions about the data. It has been established through the discussions that, the four main research objectives at the onset of the study have been met by critically and analytically discussing the data. It could be argued from the discussions that, study skill seminar which is part of the psychosocial education organized for students affects their adjustment to the university environment in a positive way. Respondents revealed that it helps them to learn smarter not harder and get the most out of their studies. That in turn, increases their desire to stay on campus and happily pursue their programme.

Moreover, it has been established from the findings that, psychosocial education helps students to manage suicidal ideation. Students who may be

dealing with suicidal thoughts are helped through counselling and other appropriate ways. They are reassured and given practical help to combat the debilitating effects that could result from unchecked psychosocial problems. Furthermore, psychosocial education on stress management affect students' adjustment, in that, students are coached on how to identify and best handle stress which is inevitable. The psychosocial education programme focuses on the factors that could produce undue stress in the lives of students and recommend helpful ways for students to keep them in check.

Lastly, it has been noticed from the discussions that, students feel safe and unafraid if security personnel are present on campus. They are free to go about their daily activities without watch over their shoulders to see who is approaching from behind. Clearly, psychosocial education helps students to better adjust to the university environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the final chapter of the study. It houses the conclusions drawn from the discussions of the data as well as reasonable recommendations for policy implementation and implication for guidance and counselling.

Overview of Study

The study sought to investigate the effects of psychosocial education on students' adjustment to the university environment. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A sample of 257 students was selected from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. Questionnaire was used in the data collection. An adapted questionnaire was used as the study instrument. The study sought to answer four research questions:

1. How does study skills seminar relate to students' adjustment to the university environment?

2. How does suicidal ideation management affect students' adjustment to the university environment?

3. In what way is stress management integral to students' adjustment to the university environment?

4. How does psychosocial education on students' security issues affect their adjustment to the university environment?

Research Hypothesis

1. H_0: There is no significant gender difference in the perception of campus security.

Relevant theories, perspectives and concepts useful for the study were reviewed to show the scientific linkages to the study. These became the theoretical lenses through which the empirical data were discussed. Other important works by researchers and scholars in the field were scrutinized to give proper direction to the study.

Major Findings

The study revealed that most students in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology attend study skill seminars and after the seminar they are able to apply the suggestions in their lives which ultimately increase their desire to stay on campus and happily pursue their programme. Also, the findings from the study established that there is psychosocial support for students who are dealing with suicidal thoughts and students are educated on how to properly manage suicidal ideation.

Furthermore, by the findings of the study it was clear that students were taken through practical means to manage situations which may pose stress to them while they stay on campus. More so, majority of respondents indicated that the presence of security personnel makes them feel safe and no significant difference was found in the perception of male and female with regard to campus security.

Conclusions

Based on findings of the study, the follow conclusions are made:

Firstly, attending study skills seminars and applying the suggestions and recommendation made by counsellors assist students to adjust positively to the university environment which contribute immensely to a happy stay on campus. Secondly, provision of assistance in the form of psychosocial education on suicidal ideation makes students aware of possible causes of suicide and this equip students with the strategies they need to effectively overcome suicidal thoughts. Thirdly, it is essential for students to be taken through stress management education especially the practical ways of handling stress. This is because stress is part and parcel of the daily lives of human being so equipping students with these live skills will enable them to adjust positively to the environment in which they find themselves.

Lastly, having adequate knowledge about something enables one to better understand the thing in question. Students are fully aware that security personal are there to ensure that the campus is free crime and other related activities which threaten lives of students on campus. Hence, irrespective of the gender of these students, whenever they see security personal around, it gives them the assurance that the campus is secured and safe for them.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. Students should continue to avail themselves to study skills seminars organized in their schools by the Counselling Centre to learn more about study skills and that they should put into practice the suggestions and recommendations they receive from professional counsellors.

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2. Counsellors at the university are encouraged to keep on assisting students going through depression to prevent them from having suicidal though let alone to commit suicide.

3. Students who do not have a scheduled plan for their activities, thus "to-do list" should develop one and follow it accordingly in order to reduce stress on campus. This is because having to do list will inform the student which activity to undertake at every point in time and this prevent procrastination.

4. Security personnel at the university are to ensure that they are always at post as well as to patrol the university environment since the presence of security personnel gives students more confidence that the university environment is safe for them.

Implications for Guidance and Counselling

A major implication of the findings of this study is that counsellors need organize study skills seminars for their students on regular bases for the students to master study skills which are essential skills needed to succeed in their quest to acquire knowledge. This is because study skills expose students to how to study effectively, how to remember what one has learnt as well as how to manage one's time. Another implication is that counsellors who are not well vested in the area suicide can invite suicidologist to serve as resource personnel when counsellors organize suicide awareness and prevention programmes in their various schools for their students. This is because suicidologists are individuals who have specialise in the area of suicidology.

Also, counsellors need to create awareness of security issues on campus and encourage students to take responsibility for their own safety but

not to rely solely on security personnel on campus. For instance counsellors can educate students on the need to avoid dark places and to avoid walking alone especially in the evening. Another implication that can be drawn from this study is that apart from the usual orientation which is organised for newly/ fresh students, counsellors from time to time can organise guidance programmes for their students. This is because students who could not benefit from orientation programme as a result of reporting to school after the orientation programme can benefit from other guidance programmes which will be organised later in the course of their stay on campus.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following suggestions are made for further research:

1. The study used quantitative research approach to delve into how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment to the university environment. The results have shown that psycho-education positively affects students' adjustment. However, the researcher suggests that further research could be done using qualitative research approach to the study. The effort could augment the existing findings or produce new understandings of the phenomena.

2. This study could be replicated in other universities in Ghana to bring to the lime light how psychosocial education affects students' adjustment in university environment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Questionnaire

The following is a set of questions designed to elicit appropriate responses from research respondents on the phenomena under study. You are please requested to complete the questions below in your best knowledge. The research is purely academic endeavour and therefore all the responses that you provide will be used for the intended purpose. You can be rest assured of maximum confidentiality and anonymity. That none of the responses you provide will be used elsewhere or transferred to any other person. Please do not provide your name or any other clue that can be used to identify you. The questionnaire is divided into two main sections. The first part contains the demographic characteristics of respondents. The second section has four subscales with questions under each. Kindly answer all the questions and remember that there is no wrong answer.

Demographic Data

1.Gender: Male [ ]   Female [ ]

2. Age

18 yrs and below [ ]   19 yrs – 24 yrs [ ]   25 yrs – 29 yrs [ ]

30 yrs – 34 yrs [ ]   35 yrs and above [ ]

3. Year/Level: One/100 [ ]   Two/200 [ ] Three/300 [ ] Four/400

4. College/School: Art and Social Sciences [ ]   Business [ ]

Planning and Architecture [ ]   Engineering [ ]

Medical Sciences [ ] Agric. and Natural Resources [ ]

Instructions:

Check the most appropriate box with a tick [√] by the response that best captures your answer to the question.

Study skills seminar and students' adjustment to the university environment

5. I know the counseling unit of the university organizes study skills seminar for students

1. Yes [ ]   2.Not sure [ ]   3. No [ ]

6. I attend study skills seminars organized by the counselling unit of the university

1. Always [ ]   2. Sometimes [ ]   3. Never [ ]

7. I apply suggestions from the study skills seminar organized by the counselling unit

1. Yes [ ]   2. No [ ]

8. The suggestions from the study skills seminar help me improve on my study habits

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

Suicidal ideation management and students' adjustment to the university environment

9. There is help for students dealing with depression

 1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

10. The university provides timely intervention for students on identifying and handling suicidal thoughts

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

11. Programmes are organized to educate students on causes of suicidal thoughts

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

Stress management and students' adjustment to the university environment

12. I do receive education on the causes of stress

1. Yes [   ]   2. No [   ]

13. I have fixed plans for studies

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

14. I apply suggestions on stress management from seminars

1. Yes [   ]   2. No [   ]

15. I seek help when I feel stressed

1. Always [   ]   2. Sometimes [   ]   3. Never [   ]

16. Properly handling stress helps me enjoy life as a student

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

Students' security and adjustment to the university environment

17. I have knowledge of campus security

1. Yes [   ]   2. No [   ]

18. Campus is well lit during the night

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

19. Fellow students bully me on campus

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

20. The presence of university security personnel makes me feel safe on campus

1. Strongly Agree [   ] 2. Agree [   ] 3. Never [ ] 4. Disagree [ ] 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

Thanks for your precious time and participation.

APPENDIX B

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucc.edu/V3/19-52

Date: 4th March, 2019

Your Ref: ....

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786680

The bearer, Joseph Asamoah-Gyawu Reg. No. ED/GCP/17/0013. is an M.Phil. / Ph.D. student in the Department of ..Guidance..and Counselling.................... in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. He / She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Effects of psychosocial education on students' adjustment to Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.................................

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed his/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence his/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give him/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

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APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

Consent for participation in the study

I have received information about the project and I consent to participate.

………………………………………………………………………………

(Signature of respondents, date)