

**EFFECTS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH ON STUDENT'S ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE IN THIKA SUB-COUNTY, KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA.**

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DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION

This Project is our original work and has not been presented for award of a degree or for any similar purpose in any other institution


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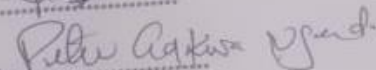
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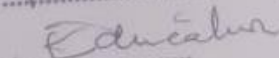
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

MS EXCEL: Microsoft Excel

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ABSTRACT

Mental health issues continue to be a significant challenge that impacts the academic performance of students in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya. This study looked at how psychological problems like stress, anxiety, and depression affect students' ability to succeed academically. Finding out how common mental health problems are among secondary school students, examining the impact these problems have on academic achievement, and evaluating the efficacy of school-based support networks were the goals. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, while interviews were conducted to gather qualitative viewpoints from instructors and students. The research aimed to connect mental health conditions with academic achievement while identifying gaps within institutions regarding the management of these issues. The results highlighted the degree to which mental health challenges impede academic performance, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. By addressing these issues, the research aids in the development of policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing student well-being and fostering academic achievement. In essence, it emphasizes the importance of mental health as a vital component of both educational success and overall personal growth.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0: Introduction

The impact of poor mental health on secondary school pupils' academic performance in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya, is examined in this section. The chapter provides an overview of the research problem and highlights the important influence that mental health has on academic experiences. It also outlines the objectives, research questions and conceptual framework, offering a clear explanation of the study focus.

1.1 Background of the Study

A person's emotional, psychological and overall state of well-being is referred to as their mental health. It is essential to the growth of the individual from infancy to maturity. It influences people's thoughts, choices, stress management, interpersonal relationships and reactions to various circumstances. Students' mental health has a significant impact on their capacity to learn, engage with others.

Mentally ill students often struggle with emotional regulation, concentration, and critical thinking. Biological factors like genetics or prenatal damage, family health history, financial strain and psychological problems like anxiety and depression are common causes of these difficulties.

Students' academic performance in Thika Sub-County is seriously at risk due to the rising prevalence of mental health problems. Investigating the connection between academic success and mental health was the aim of this study. Low achievement, irregular attendance, declining grades and absenteeism are often linked to poor mental health. Nola, K. M., Hargrove, L., King,

C. A., & Levine, S. (2020) is credited with drawing attention to the link between American high school students' mental health and academic performance.

1.2 Statement of research problem

Students' academic performance is significantly impacted by mental health issues. About 20% of high school dropouts in Thika Sub-County, for example, had mental health issues, 765 students participated in an Academy for Mental Health Practice (AMHP) survey (NAMI, 2014). Concerningly, only 12% of these students had sought mental health services. Fears of losing financial aid, ignorance, and stigma discouraged many people from getting help. Students with mental health problems frequently had poorer grades, increased absenteeism, and more suspensions and expulsions (Ringelsen et al., 2015).

More and more educational systems worldwide are beginning to consider the impact of mental health on learning. A vital component of mental health throughout life is social, emotional, and psychological well-being.. Many students still struggle in spite of current interventions, particularly when it comes to emotional stressors, drug abuse and financial difficulties. Substance abuse has become widespread among Kenyan students, exacerbating mental health issues. Poor mental health disrupts learning and lowers academic performance, according to prior research.

Thus, the goal of this study was to investigate the connection between secondary school students' academic achievement and mental health in Thika Sub-County.

1.3 purpose of the study

The study sought to investigate the effect of student mental health on academic performance within Thika Sub-County in Kiambu County.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

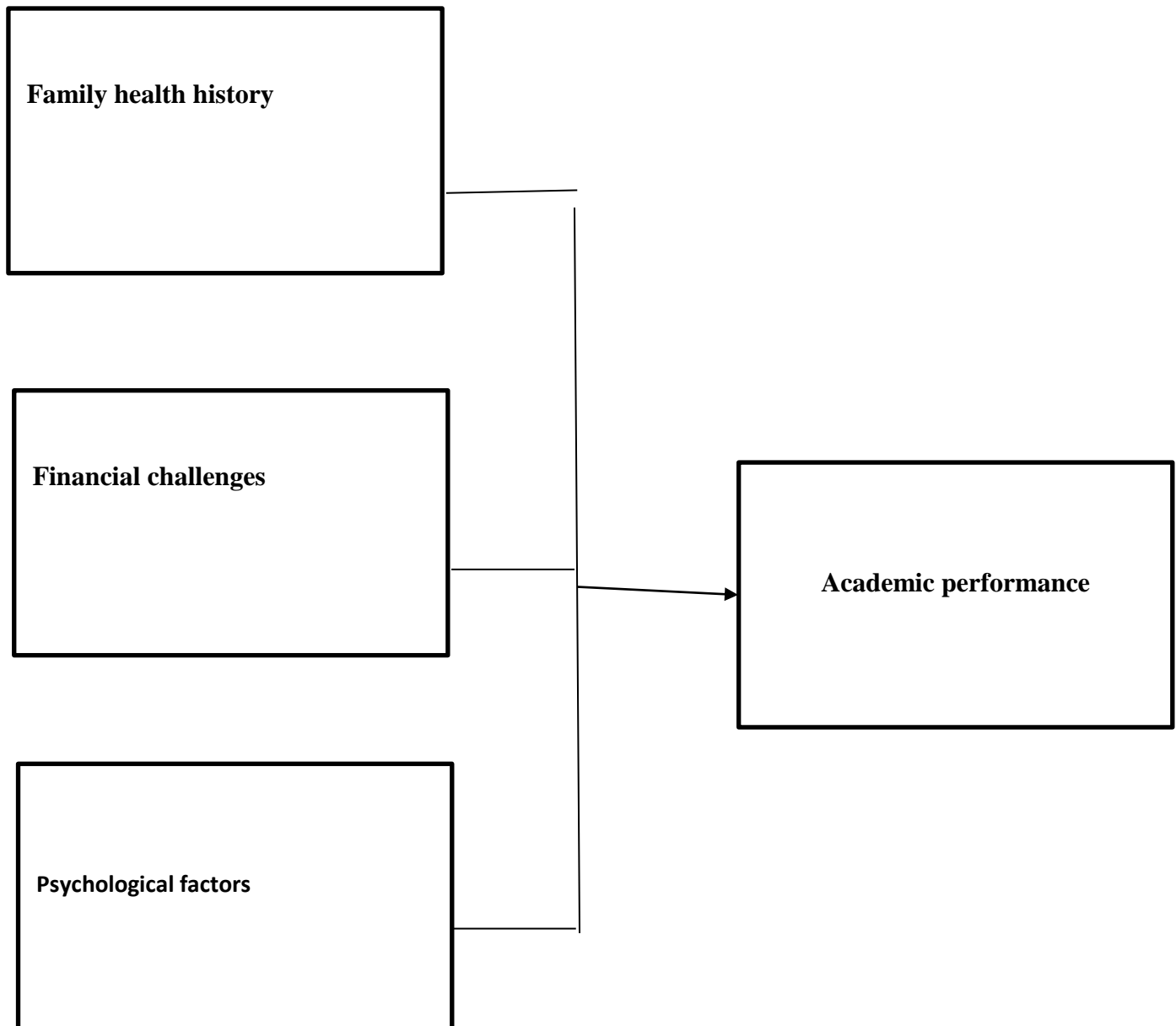


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

1.5 Research questions

1. How do the psychological factors affect student's academic performance in Thika Sub-County?
2. What impact does a student's family medical history have on their academic achievement in Thika Sub-County?
3. What impact do financial difficulties have on Thika Sub-County students' academic performance?

1.6 Objectives of the study

1.6.1 General objectives

To investigate how various causes of mental health issues affect students' academic performance.

1.6.2 Specific objectives of the study

- i. To determine how pupils' academic performance is impacted by their family's medical history.
- ii. To learn how pupils' academic performance is affected by psychological issues.
- iii. To identify how financial issues affect students' mental health.

1.7 Significance of the study

The Ministry of Education is expected to use the study's findings to draft policies that address mental health concerns that affect students' academic performance. Ultimately, the research will boost classroom efficiency by helping educators develop strategies for addressing students with mental health concerns.

1.8 Limitations

1. Inadequate resources which limited the research hence the focus only on Thika Sub-County.
2. The learners did not provide the adequate and true information that was required in the study since they preferred to protect their privacy.

1.10 The delimitations of study

The study was restricted to secondary school students in Thika Sub-County and did not include primary or postsecondary educational institutions. This focus provided a targeted and controllable population within the time and resource constraints. While ignoring uncommon or specialized illnesses, the study focused on typical mental health disorders like stress, anxiety, and depression. This kept the scope clear and useful

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we concentrated on the relevant literature. It was directed through the study objectives that are stated in Chapter One.

A theoretical framework, a synopsis of the literature review, and an examination of the effects of poor mental health on students' academic performance were also included in this chapter.

2.2 Review of the chapter

This chapter gives a summary of the many literature reviews that have already been written about our main research project. It focuses on the earlier studies that have been written about the topic and their relationships. Any observable research gaps have been revealed by the previous study projects that were conducted. The theories that are central to this inquiry were also analyzed.

2.3 Family health history

The medical history of a student's family has a significant influence on their academic achievement, particularly if there are mental health issues. These circumstances can affect a student's performance, according to numerous research. Family mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder often lead to stressful circumstances that impair academic performance by making it hard to concentrate, effectively manage time, and cope with academic demands. Either due to genetic predispositions or environmental circumstances, students from families with mental health difficulties also have mental health issues. These difficulties also result in memory issues, a decline in enthusiasm to complete assignments, and an

increase in absenteeism. Medical history also hinders academic performance, underscoring the need for supportive mental health resources in educational environments.

2.4. Psychological factors

A student's mental health was greatly impacted by psychological problems, which also led to subpar academic performance. Factors such as; stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and lack of motivation often affect a student's ability to focus, retain information and perform well in academic settings. High levels of stress from academic pressure, family expectations or social challenges lead to feelings of overwhelm and burnout. While sadness resulted in a complete lack of interest in academic work, anxiety made it impossible for pupils to focus on their studies or participate in exams. A sense of inadequacy brought on by low self-esteem resulted in negative self-talk and the conviction that academic achievement is unachievable, which further hampered performance. Additionally, lack of motivation often linked to feelings of hopelessness or disinterest which resulted in procrastination and neglect of studies. These psychological challenges created a cycle of poor academic performance, which worsen a student's mental health creating an ongoing struggle.

2.5 Financial challenges

Students from low-income families experienced mental health issues that affected their academic performance. They frequently felt worried and disturbed about how they were going to pay for necessities like food, clothing, and school supplies.. This worry distracted them from their studies, which reduced their motivation and focus. Their mental health is further harmed by the shame attached to not being able to pay for extracurricular activities, school events, or even necessities. This stigma caused feelings of guilt, shame, or loneliness. Children found it more

difficult to focus and perform well in class when their sleep patterns were disrupted by ongoing stress from unstable finances. These elements combined to produce a vicious cycle whereby poor mental health has an impact on academic performance, which in turn lowers grades and self-esteem and intensifies depressing and frustrating sentiments.

2.6 Theoretical framework

A theory is a compilation of the most recent concepts and data in a field. We distill and then convey the most fundamental concepts we know in a way that reveals their underlying relationships and patterns. Moore (1991:2).

Predicting, comprehending, and mastering phenomena like behavior systems, events, and activities can be accomplished with the help of theories. The theoretical framework recognizes that the subject or issues under study are real. It offers instructions on how to conduct a research study, which makes it crucial for researcher work.

A theoretical framework that incorporated several well-known sociological and psychological theories was created in order to comprehend how different factors affect students' academic achievement.

2.6.1 Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

This well-known theory emphasizes how behavior is shaped by motivation, self-control, and observational learning" A key element of scholastic achievement, in Bandura's view, is "self-efficacy," or the belief that one can succeed. Students who felt they could succeed in a subject, for instance, were more inclined to stick with it and put in the necessary work, which resulted in improved performance, according to Schunk (1984).

2.6.2 Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow

He contends that before students can concentrate on higher-level desires like self-esteem and self-actualization, which have an impact on academic performance, their basic physiological and safety needs must be met. Students experiencing homelessness or food hardship, for example, may find it challenging to concentrate and perform well academically since their attention is distracted from studying to meeting their basic needs. Duncan and Magnuson (2005) claim that because of unmet basic needs, Low-income pupils deal with greater problems that impact their academic achievement.

Each framework helps to explain how different factors whether social, emotional, cognitive, or environmental interact to influence students' academic performance. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that motivation, social support, and meeting basic requirements have a major impact on students' performance. All of which are essential components of the theoretical frameworks discussed.

2.7 Gaps Summary

Maintaining a strong interest and focus on the learner's mental health is critical to ensuring good academic performance. Both external and internal issues affecting a student's mental health should be addressed in order for the learner to be mentally healthy. This contributes to a learner's academic success.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The design, study area, target population, sampling strategies, sample size, instruments, measurement validity, data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations that the researcher adopted during a study are all explained by research methodology.

3.1 Research design

Descriptive survey design as a research method to describe and analyze the characteristics of a particular population or phenomenon. Researchers utilize this survey design to gather data regarding the present condition of a population or phenomenon. Data is frequently gathered using questionnaires, interviews, or observation techniques in the descriptive survey design. Information about the impact of psychological factors, family medical history, and financial hardships on academic achievement in Thika Sub-County was obtained by the researcher. Kiambu County, by using a descriptive survey methodology. This descriptive survey's design integrated both qualitative and quantitative information. Teachers and students at schools in Thika Sub-County were surveyed and interviewed in order to gather data.

3.2 Study area

The Thika Sub-County of Kiambu County, Kenya, was the study's location. The study's primary reason for selecting the area was its history of poor secondary school academic performance, which was linked to psychological problems, family medical histories, and financial hardships that led to poor mental health.

3.3 Target Population

According to Creswell (2017), a target population is any individual within a real or imagined group of people, events, or objects that a researcher wishes to use to develop the research project.

Teachers and students in the Thika sub-county participated in this study. 300 teachers and 900 students from 60 public and private schools in Thika Sub-County were chosen for the study.

Twenty of the schools were mixed, twenty were for girls, and twenty were for boys.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

According to Orodho and Kombo (2002), sampling is the process of selecting a smaller subset from a larger group to represent the population. This is carried out in a manner that guarantees the chosen individuals represent the salient features of the larger groups.

This experiment used a combination of purposive and random sampling strategies.

To ensure selection fairness and minimize bias, especially when working with big groups, the simple sample random procedure was employed to choose the participating students at random.

Additionally, this method reduced time because it did not require complex grouping. The teachers who took part in the activity were selected through the use of purposeful sampling.

Teachers who were educated on mental health were selected through the use of purposeful sampling. To reduce errors and ensure that every student had an equal chance of being chosen, simple random sampling was utilized to choose the students..

3.5 Sample size

A crucial component of empirical research is figuring out the right sample size, particularly when extrapolating findings about a broader population from a subset of participants (Taherdoost, 2017).

Yamane's (1967) formula, was employed to work out the sample size.

The formula is stated as:

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

Where:

n = the required sample size

N = the total population size

e = the level of precision (margin of error), typically 0.05

Given a population size of 1200 and a 5% margin of error, the sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{1200}{1 + 1200(0.05)^2} = 300$$

3.6 Measurements of variables

Table 1 Measurements of variables

VARIABLES	MEASURES	MEASUREMENT SCALE	QUESTION NUMBER
Family health history	chronic physical conditions e.g depression, anxiety genetic predispositions	Normal scale	2
Psychological factors	Academic pressure Low self-esteem Social compassion perfectionism	Normal scale	3
Financial challenges	School fees arrears Expense for basic needs Learning materials	Ratio scale	1
Cultural and societal pressure	Family expectations e.g cultural values Societal pressure e.g economic pressure Peer competition	nominal	4

3.7 Research instruments

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. Kothari (2013) asserts that utilizing a variety of tools enables more thorough and precise data collection. Because they can provide information that surveys might overlook, teachers were interviewed in order to collect data.

Both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires were distributed to students in order to assess

how psychological and economical factors affected their academic achievement. This method worked well for efficiently collecting information from a large number of people.

3.8 validity of measurement

.We made sure the research satisfied the proper validity criteria by consulting previous studies and getting advice from supervisors. To determine how well the tools measured the intended concepts, a preliminary test was carried out. A few students not included in the main sample took this pre-test. The trial's results assisted in improving the questionnaire.

3.9 Reliability of measurement

The consistency with which a research method is used is what O'Connor and Kleyner (2017) define as reliability. To pre-test the reliability of research instruments, a pilot study was conducted. Following the pre-testing phase, any mistakes in the questionnaire were fixed.

3.10. Data collection techniques

Students and teachers were given questionnaires and interviews respectively. During recess, students will be given questionnaires. During their free time, teachers were interviewed.

3.11 Data Analysis

We analyzed the data we gathered from questionnaires using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. We edited, coded, entered, and cleaned the completed questionnaires as part of the data preparation process before processing the data. This enabled us to verify the responses' accuracy. The qualitative information we gathered from the interviews was subjected to thematic analysis. With the aid of SPSS and MS Excel,

To provide a reliable conclusion to the appropriate audience, the data was displayed using tables, pie charts, and graphs.

3.12 Logical and Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in compliance with ethical and rational guidelines. Prior to taking part in this study, participants received information. Participants received guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality, and their information was kept private. Participants were not forced to participate in the study; all involvement was voluntary. The study adhered to the moral standards set out by the appropriate authorities. The study adopted a logical and methodical methodology to guarantee the validity and reliability of the findings. The study's findings were presented impartially, and the conclusions were derived from the information we collected..

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

A clear explanation of the findings is provided by this chapter's thorough assessment and analysis of the data, particularly with regard to the study's focus, County, Mental Health's Impact on Students' Academic Achievement in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu, Kenya. The researchers have carefully examined the collected data using rigorous analysis techniques in order to identify patterns, linkages, and other important insights related to the study's topic.

4.2 Response Rate

The researchers were able to obtain 240 completed questionnaires out of the 350 that were distributed to participants. About 80% of the sample size responds successfully. The response rate data is displayed in the table below.

<u>Role</u>	<u>Sample size</u>	<u>Successful response</u>	<u>Response percentage</u>
Teacher	100	60	60%
Students	250	180	72%
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>240</u>	<u>80%</u>

Table1.2 Response rate

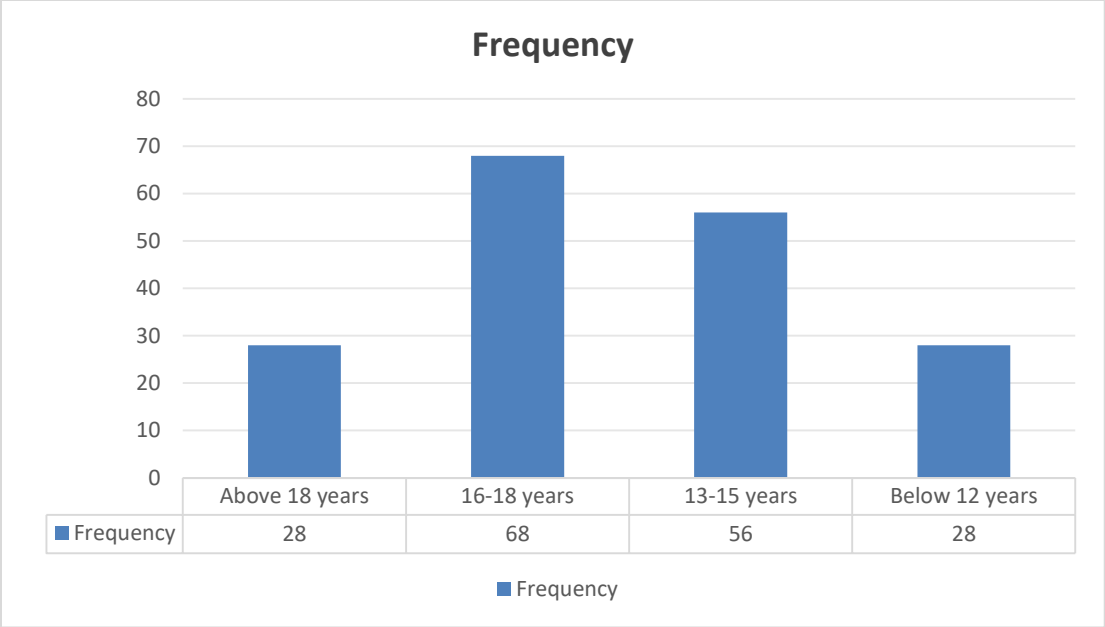
This response rate is above what is recommended by scholars such as (Kithinji ,2017) who recommended 50% successful response rate and (Mary,2020) who recommended 60%. The rate indicates the willingness of participation by the respondents.

4.3Demographics information

4.31 Age Category

According to the given age groups, the respondents had to declare their age for the study. The researcher's collected data is listed below.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Below 12 years	28	15.6%
13-15 years	56	31.1%
16-18 years	68	37.8%
Above 18 years	28	15.6%

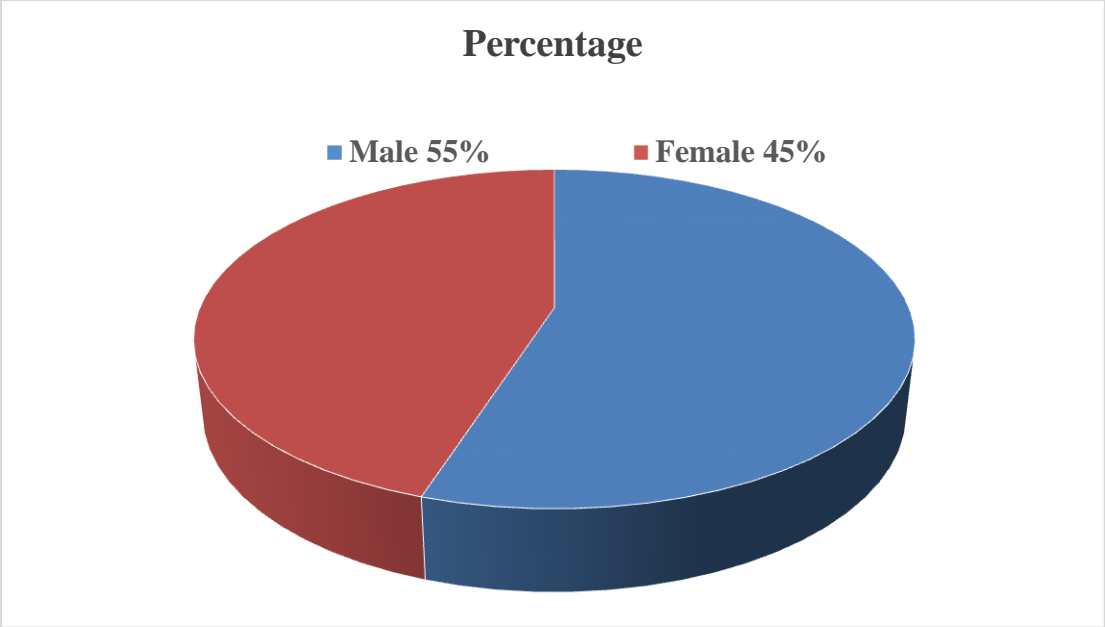


According to the data, the bulk of the students 37.8% of the sample as a whole—are between the ages of 16 and 18. followed by students between 13 and 15 years, being approximately 31.1%. Students above 18years and those below 12 years each represent 15.6% of the sample size.

4.32 Gender Category

The questionnaire required the students to indicate their gender. The data for the response is simplified in the chart below:

From the chart it is clear that there was exclusivity for both genders female being 45% while male being 55% of the population. The researcher used almost the equal participants as far as gender is concerned.



4.3.3 Students *Level*

Respondents who fell into the student category had to specify their educational background.

These were noted as follows:

Class	Frequency	percentage %
Form 4	60	33.3%
Form 3	52	28.9%
Form 2	38	21.1%
Form 1	30	16.7%

According to the data, the researcher selected responses from each class to obtain findings. As a result, secondary school pupils of all educational levels can provide data to the researchers.

4.4 Impacts of family health history on students' academic performance

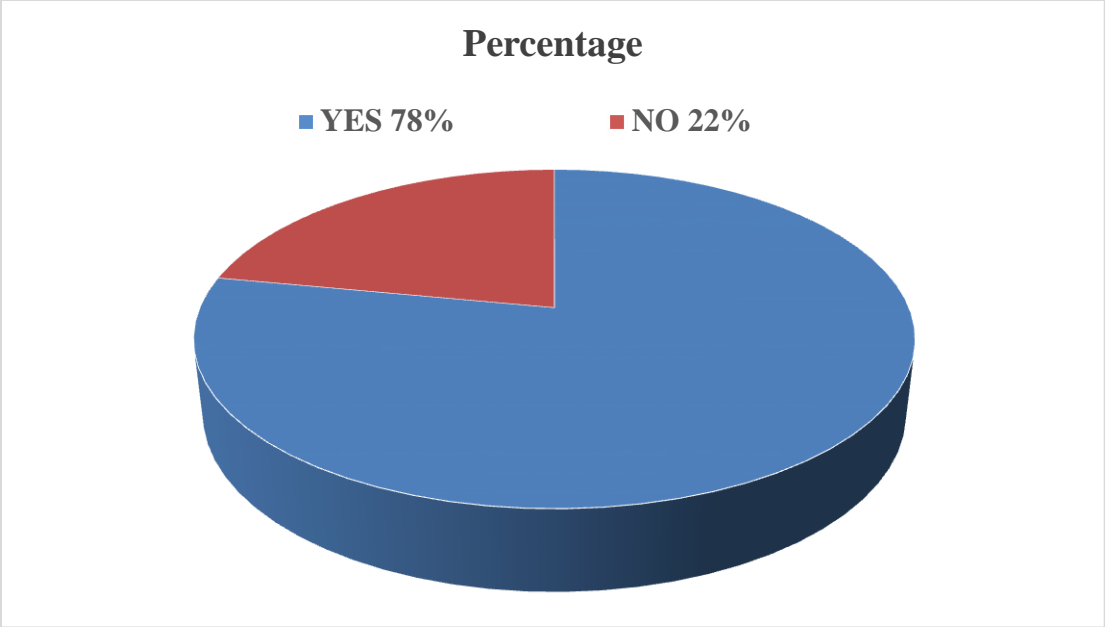
On a scale of 0–10, respondents rated how family health history has impacted their academic performance. The response is shown in the table below.

Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	0-3	30	16.6
Medium	4-6	74	41.1
High	7-10	76	42.2

The majority of respondents think that academic achievement is influenced by family health history, according to the findings. This is represented by 42.2% of all samples. 41.1% of the sample had a medium opinion on the effects; however, just 16.6% of respondents said that a student's family medical history had little bearing on their academic performance.

4.5 Psychological factors

The respondents (under students' category) were asked to answer with a yes or no whether psychological factors impact their academic progress in school. The response was recorded as below.



The findings show that a sizable majority of students—78%—agree that psychological factors hinder their ability to succeed academically. However, it is significant that 22% of the sample surveyed disagreed that psychological issues influence pupils' academic success in the classroom. This finding suggests that psychological issues may be causing the majority of students' difficulties. According to the data, there might be a problem with this, necessitating further investigation and action..

4.6 Financial Challenges

Respondents to the study were asked to specify whether they faced financial difficulties while attending school as well as the impact of those difficulties. Based on the data collected by the researcher, 98 out of 180 individuals reported having encountered financial difficulties. This suggests that eight out of ten students either experience or are affected by financial challenges.

The participants' answers about the impact of financial constraints included being sent home for not paying school fees on time. Lack of study materials, failing tests, and, in the worst case, quitting school and not being able to afford necessary supplies for learning and well-being

4.7 Culture and societal pressure

The questionnaire administered to participants sought to determine whether culture and societal pressure had impacted their academic progress in school. The findings showed that, of the 180 respondents, 144 (80% of the sample) verified that social pressure and culture had an impact on them. They proposed that girls might have fewer educational options in some cultures or be expected to put their family responsibilities ahead of their education. Boys may be discouraged from pursuing certain subjects (such the arts or social sciences) because of social beliefs.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the main conclusions drawn from the research on how culture and social pressure affect academic performance and associated variables. We make inferences from the data presented in the earlier chapters and offer suggestions for additional study and possible initiatives.

5.2 Summary

This study examined a number of variables that influence students' academic performance, such as family medical history, psychological issues, financial difficulties, and cultural and societal pressure.

According to the findings, the majority of respondents believe that family medical history has an impact on academic achievement. This is represented by 42.2% of all samples. While 41.1% of the sample had a medium opinion regarding the effects, only 16.6% of the sample said that a student's family health history had minimal bearing on their academic achievement.

Approximately 52% of participants reported having gone through financial difficulties, which can lead to a variety of issues like late payments for school fees, a shortage of study resources, subpar academic performance, and dropping out of school.

Of those that responded, 180 admitted that they were impacted by culture and social pressure. According to their suggestion, some cultures might restrict the educational alternatives accessible to girls or might expect them to put their family's needs ahead of their education. Because of

societal views, boys may be discouraged from pursuing certain subjects due to their societal beliefs.

The vast majority of students (78%) agreed that psychological factors make learning more difficult. 22% of the sample surveyed disagreed that psychological factors affect students' performance in the classroom, which is unworthy. According to this result, psychological problems may be the cause of most students' difficulties.

5.3 Conclusions

Many students acknowledged that culture and social pressure have a significant impact on their academic progress.

Financial challenges affect a significant number of students, leading to various academic setbacks and even dropouts.

The majority of students agreed that psychological factors make learning more difficult. Conditions like anxiety, depression, and chronic stress significantly hinder students' ability to concentrate and perform well in exams or classwork.

Most respondents think academic performance is influenced by family health history. Inherited health conditions may lead to frequent absenteeism or learning difficulties that affect consistent academic progress.

5.4 Recommendations

5.41 Recommendations for policies and practices

The researchers recommend the following:

Learning institution should employ trained school counselors dealing with family illness-related stress and offer confidential sessions to help student's process emotional issues caused by sick family members or their own health concerns.

Learning institution should add life skills education such as emotional regulation, time management and stress coping strategies into the curriculum and provide workshops on goal setting.

The learning institution should address gender and social norms by actively working to eliminate harmful cultural norms such as gender roles that limit students' ambitions and ensuring equal participation in academic and extracurricular activities regardless of gender, religion, or background.

Learning institution, governments, and NGOs should provide more scholarships and bursaries to solve financial challenges that lead to academic setbacks and dropouts.

5.4.2 Recommendation for Future Research

To create more focused interventions, future research should examine the real effects of psychological factors, family medical history, financial difficulties, cultural and societal pressure on academic performance. Expansive studies can be conducted with sufficient resources for comparison on the same research topic in various regions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Student Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Age(years)

Below 12

13-15

16-18

Above 18

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Class

Form 1

Form 2

Form 3

Form 4

Section 2: Survey Questions

4. In A Scale Of 0-10, how do psychological Factors affect you Academically Here In School:

0-3

4-6

7-10

5. Did Culture and Societal pressure affect you academically?

Yes

No

6. Do You Have Any Financial Challenges?

Yes

No

If yes, how does it affect you academically:

.....

.....

.....

7. According To You How Can You Rate Your Level Of Self- Esteem

High

Low

Medium

8. Is There Any Family Related Mental Health Related Issue In Your Family?

Yes

No

If yes ,How Has It Affected Your Academic Performance?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix 2. Teacher's Questionnaire

Section A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. AGE.....

2. YEARS OF TEACHING:.....

3. RANK.....

SECTION B:

1. Have mental health concerns ever come up in your classroom?

Yes

No

2.Does Mental Health Affect Academics?

Yes

No

3.What Can Be Done To Deal With The Effects Of Mental Health-Related Issues In School?

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Appendix 3: Budget Constrain

ITEM	COSTS
PRINTING	3500 KSH
TRANSPORT	2000 KSH
PETTY CASH	3000 KSH
TOTAL	8500 KSH