

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## Emotional Adjustment and Coping Strategies of University of Cape Coast Freshmen, Ghana

Sylvester Tenkorang

Research Assistant, Department of Counselling Centre,  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana

### **Abstract:**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the emotional adjustment challenges freshmen in the University of Cape Coast experience during their first year in school and their coping strategies in response to these challenges. The study adopted a mixed-methods model. 355 students made up of 235 males and 120 females were selected using purposive and proportional stratified random sampling techniques. Data were collected using questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively while qualitative data was analysed thematically. The study revealed that freshmen in the University of Cape Coast had issues handling stress, anxiety, sleep and their weight within their first few weeks in the university. Also, the most used category of coping strategies by freshmen in their first few weeks in the university was Playful Problem Solving. It was recommended that authorities of University of Cape Coast work through the University Counselling Centre to organize seminars for students to equip them with skills to manage stress and anxiety issues during their first few weeks in the University.*

**Keywords:** Emotional, adjustment, challenges, coping

### **1. Introduction**

Tertiary education has become both a necessity and a luxury. Getting a job or being employed is now contingent on acquiring a certificate from a tertiary institution thus making tertiary education a necessity. At the same time some people want to have tertiary education simply because everyone wants to, thus making tertiary education a luxury. University education in Ghana has become an interest to many young people because for many of these young people, university is the best time of life. However, these years of adjustment can be undermined by several adjustment situations and experiences in the university. As indicated by Dyson and Renk (2006), attending a university for the first time can be a stressful experience for university freshmen.

It has been found that many students get anxious and stressed up as they try to adjust to the academic, social, personal and lifestyle challenges that the university presents (Abdullah, Susran, & Hasan, 2006). Stress is one of the main characteristics of modern life, resulting from the rapid changes in human life. Students suffer from academic, personal social and emotional stress resulting from testing and other school requirements which may exceed their abilities, sometimes the same person suffers from different types of stress at the same time (Hussien & Hussien, 2006).

Some common adjustment issues identified by the National Health Ministries (2004) to be key stressors that university students face include greater academic demands, being on one's own in a new environment with new responsibilities and changes in one's social life and financial responsibilities. Other key stressors include exposure to new people, ideas and temptations, being away from home (often for the first time), making decisions on a higher level than one is used to, substance abuse, awareness of one's sexual identity and orientation and preparing for life after graduation. Most of these adjustment situations can be categorized as being academic, vocational or occupational and personal-social (Gaidzanwa, 2001).

The social environment of a university also arouses undeniable emotional experiences in university students in the course of their education, right from the beginning of learning through to the period of examination. Emotional experiences can be understood as a feeling or state characterized by one's appraisal of a stimulus which triggers off changes in bodily sensations and displays of peculiar expressive gestures (Parkinson, Fischer, & Manstead, 2005). Emotions have been identified by Kelly (2004) as being affected by an individual's thoughts and behaviour and in turn play a critical role in the thoughts and behaviour of individuals during the education process. Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, and Perry (2002) described nine different emotions which affect university students' academic achievements, physical and psychological situations and their thoughts. They called these emotions as academic emotions. Pekrun et al. (2002) described four of these emotions as positive emotions and five of them were described as negative emotions. The positive emotions included joy, hope, pride and relief. The negative emotions on the other hand included anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness and boredom. Pekrun et al. (2002) posited that it was crucial for stakeholders to know the positive and negative emotions so that they could create situations that can affect students' motivation and academic achievement in

positive ways. From the foregoing, Beder (1997) confirmed that first year at university is a critical stage at which students either form their beliefs and patterns of behaviour in terms of higher education or decide to drop from university.

Mushtaq and Khan (2012) have indicated that the quality of students' academic performance remains a top priority for educators thus making it necessary to regulate the academic, personal-social and emotional adjustment of students in order to affect students' academic achievement positively. A large number of studies such as that Sampson (2004) and Abdullah et al. (2006) have indicated that freshmen in the university encounter many challenges that arouse a myriad of emotions. As a result, when there is poor adjustment to university life, a student's academic achievement may be affected or even curtailed (Roland as cited in Mudhovozi, 2012). This has been confirmed by Rausch and Hamilton (2006) who opined that the majority of students who drop out of college do so in the first year. This is true since, Rice, Cunningham, and Young (1997) revealed that the college freshman is confronted with the adaptation challenges of living apart from family and friends, adjusting to the academic environment, assuming responsibility for the tasks of daily living and developing a new array of social relationships with peers and faculty.

In the University of Cape Coast, freshmen are likely to be faced with the same challenges that freshmen in other schools in other parts of the world face. Per the observation of the researcher in the University of Cape Coast, when freshmen enter the university, most of them have difficulty meeting the demands and pressures of academic work such as waking up early for lectures and quizzes. Again, some of them appear to be alienated in their social lives since the university environment is new to them and associating with all the new peers and colleagues seem difficult to them.

Several studies have been conducted on the coping and adjustment of first year university students such as that of Hatchett and Park (2004), Dunkley, Zuroff, and Blankstein (2003) and Grebot and Barumandzadeh (2005). Most of these researchers found the presence of stressful situations in the first year of University education. Grebot and Barumandzadeh (2005) particularly found that during first year there is an increase in the perception of stress. Dunkley et al. (2003) also reported that the absence of effective and active coping in response to the increasing level of stress in university can increase the likelihood of poor health symptoms of students.

In Ghana, some studies such as those by Forde and Brenya (2012), Akwensivie, Ntiamoah and Obro-Adibo (2013) and Ackah and Kuranchie (2015) have been conducted about students' adjustment in Universities. However, all these studies focused only on foreign students' adjustment experience in Ghanaian tertiary institutions. Further, these studies, both local and international did not study the emotional adjustment problems that students experienced in their first year of university life. This current study therefore aimed to bridge this gap created by studying the emotional adjustment issues of freshmen. Again, by paying attention to local students, this current study would cover what had been left by most of the studies done in Ghana. On this basis, this current study on the adjustment problems of local university students in Ghana was therefore considered urgent.

The purpose of this study was to find out the common adjustment problems freshmen in the University of Cape Coast experience during their first year in school and the coping strategies they adopted to cope with the adjustment problems. This study sought to provide answers to this aspect of students' life which appeared to have been ignored by earlier studies. Specifically, the study was aimed at finding out the following:

- The common emotional adjustment problems of freshmen to adjustment problems,
- The coping strategies that freshmen adopt to the adjustment problems.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Concept of Students' Adjustment

Adjustment has been defined by Benoy (2006) as a positive capacity of an individual which require appreciating reality, harmonizing with the environment and a consistent attempt to change the environment in the way it satisfies personal needs. Student adjustment however, has been defined by Baker and Siryk (1989) as a combination of students' social, personal-emotional, and academic adjustment along with their reported feelings of commitment to the institution. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) opined that adjusting to university life involves the complementary processes of desocialisation and socialization. Desocialisation involves the changing of core values, beliefs and traits one brings to university in response to the university experience. Socialization, however, has been explained by Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) as the process of being exposed to and taking on some of the new values, attitudes beliefs and perspectives to which one is exposed at university. These complementary processes are what influence how well an individual freshman will adjust to the university environment.

### 2.2. Emotional Adjustment Problems Experienced by Freshmen

Adjustment issues of individuals can cause an arousal in the emotions of the individuals. Kelly (2004) stated that positive and negative emotions affected university students' attention, motivation and limit performance in an optimal way. He indicated that negative emotions decrease the academic achievements of students by affecting their focus on the subject, understanding and all intellectual functions in a negative way. This interaction according to Kelly takes an important place during the education process. Emotions can interfere with students' learning in several ways including limiting the capacity to balance emotional issues with schoolwork, creating anxiety specifically about schoolwork, and triggering emotional responses to classroom events. When emotions are heightened, our intellectual resources are used up (Ellis, Ottaway, Varner, Becker, & Moore, 1997).

Hertel and Rude (1991) stated that some students may have difficulty learning because their minds are cluttered with distracting thoughts and memories. Wong, Cheung, Chan, Ma and Tang (2006) conducted a web-based survey of

depression, anxiety and stress in first year tertiary education students in Hong Kong. The results showed that 27.5% of the sample of 7915 students had a moderate severity level of depression, anxiety and stress. Similarly, Kranz (2008) in his study evaluated stress levels experienced by students in a pharmacy curriculum. Data were collected using an individual interview that consisted of both a demographic and stress questionnaire. The results indicated that: students rated stress to be average or above average, with a mean score of 3.8 out of a maximum score of 5.

A study conducted by Landow (2006) also found that maladjustment to university led to negative emotional states such as depression, stress and anxiety. The findings of Landow was confirmed by Yau, Sun, and Cheng (2012) who found that low level of social adjustment led to depression. The claims of a relationship between adjustment and emotional reactions has been confirmed through several studies including that of Kaur (2012) who found that there was a strong relationship between adjustment and negative emotions.

Guridham (1999) opined that the ability to deal with and/or manage emotional adjustment issues in interactions with people from another culture is vital to successful adjustment. Some of the emotional adjustment problems identified by Guridham involve homesickness, physiological effects like headaches and stomachaches. Anxiety and stress are natural reactions to interacting intensively with members of other cultures or living in another culture. It can be implied from these studies that students go through several emotional adjustment problems in the first year of university life.

### *2.3. Coping Strategies of freshmen to Adjustment Problems*

Coping can be defined as cognitive and behavioural attempts or effort used to alter events or circumstances that are threatening (Dressler, as cited in Smith & Renk, 2007). Dressler suggested that the adaptive ability of new undergraduates depends a lot on their coping effort as well as the coping strategies used to deal with the challenges and demands faced on campus. Brissette, Scheier, and Carver (2002) carried out a study for 89 first year college students. They found a significant relationship between 'active coping' ( $r = -0.34, p < 0.01$ ) and 'positive reinterpretation and growth/PRG' ( $r = -0.38, p < 0.001$ ) thereby affecting academic work positively. Several studies have also supported this view that adjustment and coping among first year undergraduates have a strong impact on their academic achievement in the universities in which the students are enrolled in (Sennett, Finchilescu, Gibson, & Strauss, 2003).

In terms of specific coping strategies, Park and Adler (2003) investigated the effects of coping styles on 139 university incoming medical students from the University of California. Their findings pointed to the claim that coping affects academic work. Their study reported that students' coping styles was related to students' psychological well-being. Escape-avoidance coping was related to lower levels of psychological well-being, while both 'positive reappraisal' and 'planful problem solving' were marginally related to higher levels of psychological well-being. It was reported that these two coping strategies predict lesser deterioration in physical health. Dyson and Renk (2006) in their study also reported that the regular use of escape-avoidance coping among freshmen was related to higher levels of depression. Tao, Dong, Pratt, Hunsberger and Pancer (2000) also observed that among coping mechanisms, peer support and peer networks were critical in a person's adjustment to university life. In furtherance, Kranz (2008) in a study found that 70.5% of the participants reported using some form of active approach such as exercising, playing basketball or swimming to manage their stressful situations or adjustment problems.

Syedfatemi, Tafreshi, and Hagani (2007) found that among the coping strategies of students, majority of the respondents indicated they adopted active problem-solving strategies. Similarly, the study of Sreeramareddy et al. (2007) in Nepal revealed that the most used coping strategies among respondents were active coping strategies such as planning rather than avoidant strategies. In a similar vein, Al-Dubai, Al-Naggar, Alshagga and Rampal (2011) found that the students used active coping strategies such as planning more than avoidant strategies. The studies point to the fact that most students usually adopt positive and active coping strategies.

## **3. Methodology**

The mixed methods approach was adopted for this study. According to Creswell (2009), mixed methods research approach involves philosophical assumptions of qualitative and quantitative approaches and the mixing of both approaches in a study. Specifically, the concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach was used. The concurrent triangulation approach involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and then compares the two data to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combination. The research design adopted was the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 4729 freshmen from the University of Cape Coast. This consisted of 3136 males and 1593 females.

Using purposive and stratified random sampling techniques, 355 students made up of 235 males and 120 females were selected for the study. The sample size was based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample determination table. Purposive sampling was used in choosing freshmen as the target group for the study and also in getting the participants for the interview data. The eight respondents were stratified disproportionately or equally on the basis of gender. Thus, it was made up of four males and four females. Proportional Stratified random sampling was used to put the sample into strata of gender (male and female) and the four colleges. The sample size of each stratum was gotten by calculating on the basis of the size of each stratum within the main population.

Data was collected using adapted forms of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) developed by Baker and Stryk (1999) and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). The questionnaire was used in collecting the quantitative data. A researcher-designed, interview guide was used to collect the qualitative data.

The instrument was pilot tested with students in the University of Education, Winneba in validating the instrument. The Cronbach-alpha co-efficient was used in estimating the internal consistency. The r value that was obtained for the adapted version of the SACQ was 0.7 and that of the adapted version of the WCQ was also 0.7. The co-efficient values were deemed appropriate for the instrument to be used in the study. Consideration was given to ethical issues such as informed consent, autonomy, anonymity and confidentiality.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1. Common Emotional Adjustment Problems Experienced by Freshmen of the University of Cape Coast

In answering this question, respondents were provided with statements to which they had to indicate 'Yes', 'No' or 'Not Sure'. Under this research question, the data was analysed using frequency counts and percentages. The results are presented in Table 7. Again, direct quotations of respondents are also used as a form of analysis to corroborate the quantitative results. Names assigned to the quotations are dummy names and not the real names of the participants since that would be unethical.

	Yes		No		Not Sure	
	f	%	F	%	f	%
Felt depressed and moody	146	41.2	166	46.9	42	11.9
Had difficulty coping with stress	221	62.8	103	29.3	28	7.9
Experienced a considerable change in weight	257	72.6	65	18.4	32	9.0
Was unable to control my emotions	76	21.5	214	60.4	64	18.1
Was unable to sleep well	171	48.3	150	42.4	33	9.3
Had issues with my appetite	144	40.6	185	52.1	26	7.3
Was in very good health	199	56.2	109	30.8	46	13.0
Had a lot of anxiety	210	59.3	95	26.8	49	13.8

Table 1: Emotional and Health Adjustment Problems of UCC Freshmen

Table 1 shows the common emotional adjustment problems of the respondents. It is shown that 257 (72.6%) respondents indicated 'Yes' to the statement 'Experienced a considerable change in weight'. This implies that majority of the respondents experienced considerable change in weight within their first few weeks in school. In response to the statement 'Had a lot of difficulty coping with stress' in the first few weeks in the university, 221 (62.8%) respondents indicated 'Yes'. The respondents also indicated 'No' to being able to control emotions (214, 60.4%). Some other issues expressed by the respondents included having a lot of anxiety (210, 59.3%), issues with appetite (185, 52.1%) and inability to sleep well (171, 48.3%).

The findings imply that the common emotional adjustment problems of the respondents in the first few weeks in the university included: considerable change in weight, difficulty coping with stress, difficulty controlling emotions, having a lot of anxiety and inability to sleep well.

These findings bear close resemblance with the findings from the interview data. When the respondents were asked about the common emotional adjustment problems they had faced since they came to school, their responses revolved around the theme of stress. All the eight respondents interviewed indicated that they had issues with the level of stress in school. This was supportive of the findings from the quantitative data since 62.8% of the respondents indicated that they had difficulty coping with stress in their first few weeks in the university.

Some of the specific statements include:

*"Because of the way our time table was structured, you don't have time for yourself, it's very stressful and really affects you. You can't even eat good food of your choice", Ben.*

*"This was my first time travelling out of Kumasi and I couldn't also cook for myself because my mum did everything for me in the house...so yes, the stress was difficult", Agnes.*

##### 4.2. Coping Strategies of Freshmen of the University of Cape Coast

This research question sought to find the coping strategies of freshmen of the University of Cape Coast in mitigating the adjustment problems they experience. In answering this question, respondents were provided with statements which reflected specific coping strategies. The respondents were tasked to indicate the degree to which they used the specific coping strategy in dealing with their adjustment problems.

The categories of coping strategies are Escape Avoidance, Planful Problem Solving and Seeking Social Support. Each category consisted of five specific coping strategies. The data under this research question were analysed descriptively using means and standard deviations. The responses under each category of coping strategy were put together and their means and standard deviations computed. The results are presented in Table 2.

Direct quotations of respondents are also used as a form of analysis to corroborate the quantitative results. Dummy names were assigned to the statements of the participants.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Escape Avoidance	4.79	3.11
Planful Problem Solving	9.99	3.96
Seeking Social Support	6.99	4.15

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Coping Strategies of UCC Freshmen N=355

Source: Field Survey, Tenkorang (2016)

Table 2 shows the coping strategies that were used by the respondents in coping with the adjustment problems they encountered in their first few weeks in the university. It was revealed that Escape Avoidance coping strategies had a mean of 4.79 and a standard deviation of 3.11. Responses to 'Planful Problem Solving' had a mean of 9.99 and a standard deviation of 3.96 and responses to 'Seeking Social Support' had a mean of 6.99 and a standard deviation of 4.15.

In answering the question on what coping strategies freshmen use to mitigate the adjustment problems they experience, what was found therefore was that freshmen adopted planful problem solving strategies in mitigating adjustment problems. This finding implies that the most used category of coping strategies was Planful Problem Solving with a mean of 9.99 and a standard deviation of 3.96. Next to Planful Problem Solving was Seeking Social Support while Escape Avoidance was the least used category of coping strategies. This means that most of the respondents in the current study used strategies such as simply concentrating on what I had to next, making a plan of action and following it and changing something so things would turn out all right. Other strategies within Planful Problems Solving category included; drawing on strategies/lessons learnt in earlier times and coming up with different solutions to problems faced.

The findings were supported by the findings from the interview data which made known that most of the respondents interviewed indicated that they usually planned and took action to cope with adjustment problems. Thus, the major theme from the interview data was the respondents positive and planful approach to solving their adjustment problems. Some of the specific statements of the respondents include:

*"I handled most of the things I encountered on my own, I apportioned my time well", Ben.*

*"In terms of my academics I learnt more and I learnt before the lecturer came to teach", Pearl.*

*"I allocated time for myself to be able to handle the academic pressure and the stress in the university", Kofi.*

## 5. Discussion

The findings imply that the common emotional adjustment problems of the respondents in the first few weeks in the university included: considerable change in weight, difficulty coping with stress, difficulty controlling emotions, having a lot of anxiety and inability to sleep well. The findings of the current study are in line with the findings of Wong et al., (2006) in Hong Kong that students had a moderate severity level of anxiety and stress. In a similar vein, the findings of the current study supported the findings of Kranz (2008) that students rated stress to be average or above average. The findings also confirmed the findings of Landow (2006) that maladjustment to university leads to negative emotional states such as stress and anxiety. However, the findings of the current study contradicted the findings of Yau et al. (2012) who found that social adjustment problems lead to depression. The difference between the findings of the current study and that of Yau et al. (2012) could be explained to be due to the fact that the current study sought to find out the adjustment problems of freshmen within their first few weeks in the university and therefore the respondents could not be depressed. Depression usually happens after a long period of time and this study focused only on the first few weeks of the semester. As a result, the respondents in the current study could not be depressed.

In the University of Cape Coast, freshmen are more likely to experience emotional instability. This is because, for most of these freshmen balancing the difficult academic work with the pressures of writing quizzes and assignments can prove to be too stressful. This stress creates an anxiety for these freshmen. However, for most of these freshmen, their ability to cope with the stress increases with time and so the probability of them developing more chronic emotional problems like depression.

In terms of coping strategies adopted by the students, the study revealed that students simply concentrated on what next to do, made plans of action and followed it, changed something so things would turn out all right, drew on strategies/lessons learnt in earlier times and came up with different solutions to problems faced. All these strategies are part of the Planful Problem Solving category of coping strategies. The findings are in line with the findings of Seyedfatemi et al. (2007) that the coping strategies that respondents adopted were active problems solving strategies. Similarly, the findings of the current study give support to the findings of Sreeramareddy et al. (2007) in Nepal that the most used coping strategies among respondents were active coping strategies such as planning rather than avoidant strategies. In further confirmation, the findings of the current study are in consonance with the findings of Al-Dubai et al. (2011) that the students used active coping strategies such as planning more than avoidant strategies. This implies that most students in any location usually adopt positive, planning and active coping strategies.

In the University of Cape Coast specifically, the findings under this research question is not surprising. Freshmen are passed through orientation within their first week in the school and taught several life-management practices such as how to manage their time within the high academic pressure of the university environment. With this knowledge, it is expected that freshmen would adopt coping strategies that are more positive and involve life management strategies whenever they experience some adjustment problems.

## 6. Conclusions

The common emotional adjustment problems of freshmen in their first few weeks in the university include: experiencing a considerable change in weight, having a lot of difficulty coping with stress, difficulty controlling emotions, having a lot of anxiety and being unable to sleep well. The conclusion is that emotionally, freshmen in the University of Cape Coast have issues handling stress, anxiety, sleep and their weight within their first few weeks in the university. The most used category of coping strategies by freshmen in their first few weeks in the university was Planful Problem Solving. It can therefore be concluded that freshmen in the University of Cape Coast adopt more positive plan-oriented strategies in mitigating the adjustment problems that they experience within their first few weeks in the university.

## 7. Recommendations

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

- Authorities of University of Cape Coast should work through the University Counselling Centre to organize seminars for students to equip them with skills to manage stress and anxiety issues during their first few weeks in the University.
- Freshmen should be encouraged by University of Cape Coast authorities during orientation programmes to adopt positive coping strategies whenever they face adjustment challenges during their stay on campus.

## 8. References

- i. Abdullah, I., Susran, E. E., & Hasan, B. (2006). Research of university students' academic emotions regarding some variables: Selçuk university faculty of education sample. *GESJ: Education Science and Psychology*, 2(9), 1512-1524.
- ii. Ackah, J. Y., & Kuranchie, A. (2015). Foreign students' adjustment in early days of their university education: The stress and strains. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(2), 399-405.
- iii. Akwensivie M, D., Ntiamoah, A. J., & Obro-Adibo, G. (2013). Foreign students' experience in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(28), 99-106.
- iv. Al-Dubai, S. A. R., Al-Naggar, R. A., Alshagga, M. A., & Rampal, K. G. (2011). Stress and coping strategies of students in a medical faculty in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Medical Science*, 18(3), 57-64.
- v. Baker, R. W., & Siryk, B. (1989). *Student adaptation to college questionnaire manual*. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.
- vi. Baker, R. W., & Siryk B. (1999). *SACQ: Student adaptation to college questionnaire manual* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.
- vii. Beder, S. (1997). *Addressing the issues of social and academic integration for first year students*. Retrieved on April, 2016 from <http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au>.
- viii. Benoy, J. (2006). *Adjustment problems*. Retrieved on August 27, 2015 from <http://www.ArticlesGratuits.com>.
- ix. Brissette, I., Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (2002). The role of optimism in social network development, coping, and psychological adjustment during a life transition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 102-111.
- x. Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications Inc.
- xi. Dunkley, D. M., Zuroff, D. C., & Blankstein, K. R. (2003). Self-critical perfectionism and daily affect: Dispositional and situational influences on stress and coping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 234-252.
- xii. Dyson, R., & Renk, K. (2006). Freshmen adaptation to university life: Depressive symptoms, stress, and coping. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 62(10), 1231-1244.
- xiii. Ellis, H. C., Ottaway, S. A., Varner, L. J., Becker, A. S., & Moore, B. A. (1997). Depressed mood, task organization, cognitive interference, and memory: Irrelevant thoughts predict recall performance. *Journal of Social Behaviour & Personality*, 12(2), 453-470.
- xiv. Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1988). *Manual for the ways of coping questionnaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- xv. Forde, L. D., & Brenya, E. E. (2012). Adjustment needs and coping patterns of international students in the University of Cape Coast. *International Council on Education for Teaching*, 56, 214-231.
- xvi. Gaidzanwa, R. B. (Ed). (2001). *Speaking for ourselves: Masculinities and Femininities amongst students at the University of Zimbabwe*. Harare: UZ AAP/GSA Ford Foundation.
- xvii. Grebot, E., & Barumandzadeh, T. (2005). Access of university: The situation, stressors, the origin and certain strategies for adjustment dysfunctions. *Journal of Medical Psychology*, 163, 561-567.
- xviii. Gullahorn, J. T., & Gullahorn, J. E. (1963). An extension of the U-curve hypothesis. *The Journal of Social Issues*, 19(3), 33-47.
- xix. Guridham, M. (1999). *Communicating across cultures*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- xx. Hatchett, G. T., & Park, H. L. (2004). Relationships among optimism, coping styles, psychopathology, and counseling outcome. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 1755.
- xxi. Hertel, P. T., & Rude, S. S. (1991). Depressive deficits in memory: Focusing attention improves subsequent recall. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 120(3), 301-309.
- xxii. Hussien, T., & Hussien, S. (2006). *Strategies for coping educational and psychological stress*. Dar Alfiker: Amman.

- xxiii. Kaur, J. (2012). Adjustment of college students in relation to their wellbeing. *International Journal of Research in Education Methodology*, 1(2), 37-38.
- xxiv. Kelly, W. (2004). Academic emotions. *Teaching at Trent*, 6 (3), 2-3.
- xxv. Kranz, P. (2008). Perceived Stress by students in pharmacy curriculum. *Education*, 129(1), 71-78.
- xxvi. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.
- xxvii. Landow, M. V. (2006). *Stress and mental health of college students*. Retrieved on April, 2016 from <http://books.google.com.my>
- xxviii. Mudhovozi, P. (2012). Social and academic adjustment of first-year university students. *Journal of Social Science*, 33(2), 251-259
- xxix. Mushtaq, I., & Khan, S. N. (2012). Factors affecting students' academic performance. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 12(9), 12-17.
- xxx. National Health Ministries (2004). *Stress and the college student*. USA: National Health Ministries.
- xxxi. Park, C. L., & Adler, N. E. (2003). Coping style as a predictor of health and well-being across the first year of medical school. *Health Psychology*, 22(6), 627-631.
- xxxii. Parkinson, B., Fischer, A. H., & Manstead, A. S. R. (2005). *Emotion in social relations: Cultural group and interpersonal processes*. New York: Psychology Press.
- xxxiii. Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzin, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- xxxiv. Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., Titz, W., & Perry, R. P. (2002). Academic emotions in students' self-regulated learning and achievement: A program of qualitative and quantitative research. *Educational Psychologist*, 37(2), 91-105.
- xxxv. Rausch, J. L., & Hamilton, M. W. (2006). Goals and distractions: Explanations of early attrition from traditional university freshmen. *The Qualitative Report*, 11, 317-334.
- xxxvi. Rice, K. G., Cunningham, T. J., & Young, M. B. (1997). Attachment to parents, social competence, and emotional well-being: A comparison of black and white adolescents. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 44, 89-101.
- xxxvii. Sampson, R. (2004). *Bullying in schools*. Problem-oriented guides for police; problem-specific guides series, guide no. 12. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- xxxviii. Sennett, J., Finchilescu, G., Gibson, K. & Strauss, R. (2003). Adjustment of black students at a historically white South African university. *Educational Psychology*, 23(1), 107-116.
- xxxix. Seyedfatemi, N., Tafreshi, M., & Hagani, H. (2007). Experienced stressors and coping strategies among Iranian nursing students. *BMC Nursing*, 6(11), DOI: 10.1186/1472-6955-6-11.
- xl. Smith, T., & Renk, K. (2007). Predictors of academic-related stress in college students: An examination of coping, social support, parenting, and anxiety. *NASPA Journal*, 44(3), 405-431.
- xli. Sreeramareddy, C. T., Shankar, P. R., Binu, V. S., Mukhopadhyay, C., Ray, B., & Menezes, R. G. (2007). Psychological morbidity, sources of stress and coping strategies among undergraduate medical students of Nepal. *BMC Med Education*, 7(26).
- xlii. Tao, S., Dong, Q., Pratt, M., Hunsberger, W., & Pancer, S. (2000). Social support: Relations to coping and adjustment during the transition to university in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15, 123-144.
- xliii. Wong, J. G., Cheung, E. P., Chan, K. K., Ma, K. M., & Tang, S. W. (2006). Web based survey of depression, anxiety and stress in first year tertiary education students in Hong Kong. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 40, 777-782.
- xliv. Yau, H. K., Sun, H., & Cheng, A. L. F. (2012) Adjusting to university: the Hong Kong experience. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 34(1), 15-27.