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## Contribution of Psychological Support to Risky Behavior Management of Selected High-Learning Institution Students: A Case of Kepler College, Rwanda

Eugenie Nikuze

Student Research, Department of Psychology, Mount Kenya University, Rwanda

Dr. Ernest Safari

Research, Department of Psychology, Mount Kenya University, Rwanda

### **Abstract:**

*The students at universities have many things that affect their mental health, including peer pressure, heavy workload, substance abuse, and relationship management. It is a great job to evaluate the contribution of psychological support that mainly helps these students attain a good level of emotional and social interaction and spiritual and mental stability with their families and the community at large as a tool for risky behavior management. The purpose of the study is to assess how psychological support affects managing risky behavior and mental health in university students. The study emphasizes the need to address elements that have an impact on students' mental health, including peer pressure, a demanding workload, drug misuse, and relationship management. Students are given psychological assistance in controlling risky behavior through the application of the theoretical frameworks of Choice Theory, Behavior Theory, and Cognitive Behavior Theory. The study technique includes a census of 100 people: 97 students from cohort 2019B, a career and alumni affairs coordinator, a school counsellor, and an academic advisor. To classify results, data analysis uses coding and tabulation. The study findings dispel the misconception that college students are mature people who do not need help and show that all of them need psychological treatment. According to the report, institutions should provide young people's mental health care a high priority while they are still developing into adolescents. With a correlation value of 0.285, the study found that obtaining mental help and preserving mental stability had notable beneficial associations. Additionally, there was a positive association between seeking out counselling services and using mental assistance to manage activities, with correlation values of 0.500 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and 0.001 ( $p < 0.001$ , respectively). With a correlation value of 0.625 ( $p < 0.001$ ), a strong positive relationship, social interactions and emotional support were shown to be related.*

**Keywords:** Psychological support, mental health, risky behaviors, mental stability, social interactions

### **1. Introduction**

Risky behaviors have the potential to expose young people to harm or a significant risk of harm and prevent them from reaching their life goals and lead to significant morbidity or mortality (Ansari & al., 2016). Adolescence is a developmental stage that is characterized by physical and mental change, which rapidly occurs and shapes a person's values. It is a great time for adolescents to explore all their potential; they develop an independent spirit and identity discovery. This stage brings a lot of stressful things to university students who are categorized under this stage (Getaneh & Wondimu, 2022). Psychological support is the actions that help to maintain the emotional, social, mental, and spiritual needs of a person. Mental health is the ability everyone has to feel, think and act in a way that helps to enjoy life and cope with challenges (Manwell et al., 2015)

This paper has the following objectives:

- To evaluate the importance of mental support to students for risky behavior management at Kepler College.
- To examine the contribution of emotional support to students for behavior management at Kepler College.

### **2. Review of Literature**

The prevalence of risky behaviors among university students is (Ansari & al., 2016), smoking, drifting, fast driving and physical inactivity were the riskiest activities students engaged in, with 28% being smokers, 25.2% being involved in drifting, 60.9% being involved in fast driving and 66.4% being physically inactive. This indicates how serious the problem is and there is a need to raise awareness and diversify the psychological support.

The risky behaviors prevent university students from reaching their potential goals and can stress the significance of morbidity and mortality. Students at universities are still undergoing the adolescent stages where they experiment with emotional, cognitive, and social development, which influence their behaviors, which are considered to be harmful to

themselves and the society at large. These behaviors include unintentional injuries and violence, tobacco use, alcohol, drug use, sexual behaviors, and unhealthy diet (Kwan, Nicitopoulos, Duku & Faulkner, 2016)

According to Sengesho, Niyonsenga, Muhayisa and Mutabaruka (2021), there is a gravity of mental disorders among university students in Rwanda. The biggest part is substance abuse, which is associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression and interpersonal violence. All these risks affect students mentally and emotionally. Different factors contribute to college students' stress, such as extensive academic course load, substantial studying, time management, class competition, financial crises, family pressure, and adaptability to the new environment. This stress reduces their motivation, hinders academic achievement and increases the college dropout rate (Barbaynnis et al., 2022).

### 3. Material Methods

According to Emertus (2023), the research design is a blueprint of a scientific study. It indicates the methodologies, tools and techniques to conduct the research. In this research paper, a census research method has been used. 97 students from C2019B of Kepler College and three Kepler College Staff members have been used. The questionnaire for students and interviews for staff have been used as data collection methods.

The primary data collected were analyzed by looking at how the independent variable influenced the dependent variable. Excel and SPSS tools were used to visualize the information from the research participants.

### 4. Results

		Mental Support on Academic Workload and Life Balance	Mental Stability
Mental support on academic workload and life balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.285**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	97	97
Mental stability	Pearson Correlation	.285**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	97	97

Table 1: Mental Support on Academic Workload and Life Balance with Mental Stability

According to the correlation findings, there is a statistically significant positive association (Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.285\*\*) between "Mental support on academic workload and life balance" and "Mental stability." This means that those who sense greater mental support in managing their academic workload and life balance are more likely to demonstrate greater mental stability. The low p-value of 0.005 implies that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (p 0.01).

Previous studies in psychology and well-being have found that mental support for academic workload is favorably connected with life balance and mental stability. Different supports have been discussed for contributing a lot and interpersonal ties have been shown in studies to be important in improving mental well-being. Some psychological support includes mindfulness-based interventions, psychological interventions, psychoeducation/interventions, recreation programmes, relaxation interventions, setting-based interventions, and stress management/reduction interventions. There was evidence that mindfulness-based interventions and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) were more used (Joanne, Pennington & Rhiannon, 2022). Furthermore, Rebecca A, Keith A, Laura A., & Ashley L. (2014) discussed and concluded that stigma is the reason behind the reluctance to seek mental support for college students. However, those who managed to seek support live with reduced feelings of stress and improved mental functioning, and they are able to solve their own problems. Ruth & Janet (2022) found that perceiving support from close relationships can improve mental resilience. This research showed that people who believe they have strong social support networks tend to have better emotional regulation and psychological well-being. The meaningful interactions can contribute to positive self-care and minimize loneliness, whatever the modality used, either physical or virtual. These findings support the idea that the positive relationship between mental support for managing academic workload and life balance and mental stability, as observed in this research paper, is consistent with the existing literature on the positive effects of social support on mental health.

		Frequencies for Emotional Support	Social Interactions
Frequencies for emotional support	Pearson Correlation	1	.201*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.049
	N	97	97
Social interactions	Pearson Correlation	.201*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.049	
	N	97	97

Table 2: Frequencies for Emotional Support with Social Interaction

The correlation test findings show a substantial positive association (Pearson's  $r = 0.201$ ,  $p = 0.049$ ) between emotional support and social contact among Kepler College students. This implies that the frequency of social encounters

rises as the amount of emotional support increases. At the 0.05 level, the p-value of 0.049 shows that the result is statistically significant.

		<b>Importance of Emotional Support (Cope With Stress, Relationship Management, Emotional Intelligence)</b>	<b>Social Interactions</b>
Importance of emotional support (Cope with stress, relationship management, emotional intelligence)	Pearson Correlation	1	.237*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019
	N	97	97
Social interactions	Pearson Correlation	.237*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	
	N	97	97

*Table 3: Importance of Emotional Support (Cope with Stress, Relationship Management, Emotional Intelligence) with Social Interaction*

The results of the correlation test revealed a positive and statistically significant correlation between the significance of emotional support (related to coping with stress, relationship management, and emotional intelligence) and social interactions among students at Kepler College (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.237,  $p = 0.019$ ). This suggests that students who value emotional support are more likely to engage in more positive social interactions.

## 5. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis aids in determining how much variance in a single answer (the dependent variable) is being accounted for by a collection of independent variables. Below is a discussion of the influence of the different supports given to the students at Kepler College on mental stability and social interaction.

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.535a	.286	.255	.705
a. Predictors: (Constant), Frequencies of Mental support, Frequencies for emotional support, on mental stability				
b. Dependent Variable: Mental stability.				

*Table 4: Model Summary (Given Support Influence on the Mental Stability)*

The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.286, meaning that the predictors can account for around 28.6% of the variation in mental stability. This indicates the implication of psychological support for mental stability among Kepler College Students.

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.456a	.208	.174	.849
a. Predictors: (Constant), Frequencies for Mental support, Frequencies for emotional support, on social interactions				
b. Dependent Variable: Social interactions				

*Table 5: Model Summary (Given Support on Social Interaction)*

The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.208, indicating that roughly 20.8% of the variation in social interactions can be accounted for by the predictors in the model. The study of mental and emotional support for risky behavior management discovered a weak and non-significant link between mental support for academic workload, life balance, and mental stability. Receiving counselling services and task management mental support had a substantial impact on mental stability, demonstrating that proper assistance and counselling increase students' abilities to control risky behaviour.

## 6. Discussion

This paper tried to describe the participants by gender; out of the 97 respondents, 52.6% identified as female and 47.4% identified as male. The age range of the respondents was 19 to 25 years, with the largest proportion (18.6%) being in the 23 years age group, followed by 16.5% in the 22 years age group.

To meet the first objective of the study, the study conducted at Kepler College to assess the impact of mental support on managing risky behavior showed significant positive correlations. The results indicated that there was a strong link between mental support for managing social interaction, life balance and mental stability, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.285\*\*. Additionally, seeking counseling services and mental support for task management were found to

have a significant positive correlation with mental stability, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.500 and p-values of less than 0.01 and 0.001, respectively. These findings suggest that receiving adequate mental and emotional support can help students manage their risky behaviors effectively.

The three Kepler College staff also discussed the importance of providing psychological, mental and emotional support to students to help them effectively deal with risky behaviors. They believe that the students can handle these circumstances and see the support given as a key element in achieving successful outcomes.

## 7. Conclusion

To conclude, this study indicated how all the objectives of the study have been met. The first objective was to evaluate the mental support to students for risky behavior management at Kepler College. The results showed how those who receive mental support on academic workload and life balance have mental stability that helps them stay safe and healthy at Kepler College.

The second objective is to examine the contribution of emotional support to students for behavior management at Kepler College. The results indicated the importance of emotional support that deals with coping with stress, relationship management, and emotional intelligence with social interaction. The research results showed that there is a somewhat favorable connection ( $R = 0.456$ ) between the predictors and social interactions while considering all of the support offered to students at Kepler College. The model explains around 20.8% of the variation in social interactions ( $R^2 = 0.208$ ), and when the number of variables is considered, the explanatory power significantly declines to 17.4% ( $\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.174$ ). The average difference between actual values and values predicted by the model is shown by the standard error of the estimate, which is 0.849.

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