

THE PSYCHOSOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH WEST AND THE EFFECT OF THESE  
EXPERIENCES ON THE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BY

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submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
Social Science (Clinical Psychology) in the faculty of Human and Social Sciences  
in the department of Psychology at the University of North West.

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(i)

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to all young persons out there.

Young people, enjoy your youth. Be happy while you are still young. Do what you want to do and follow your heart's desire. But remember, God is going to judge you for whatever you do. Ecclesiastes 11: 9 (Good News Bible)

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Thilivhali Musehane, declare that the dissertation for the Degree of Masters in Clinical Psychology hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my original work and execution and that all material contained herein has been fully acknowledged.

## **ABSTRACT.**

The objective of the study is to show whether there is a relationship between first year students' psychosocial experiences and their academic performance. One hundred and five (105) first year students participated, of whom 64,8% were females and 35,2% males.

The results of the study indicate that most of the first year students did not feel accepted in their first day at University of North West and that they had feelings of insecurity and fear about the future. They felt intimidated or threatened and did not want to join social and cultural activities on campus. The results of the study show that a large percentage of students believed that there was an importance in involving oneself in social and cultural activities. Students who were performing well academically recommended involvement in cultural and social activities. Students who made use of the academic support at the University had their marks improving. Students in residence and those living with their friends showed a high motivation in their studies. These students interacted more frequently with their peers and with academic staff.

It is recommended that the university should create opportunities and conditions that will foster acceptance of first year students. There should be a joint partnership in the involvement of parents' lecturers and senior students in their handling of first-year students on arrival at university. This partnership will enable first year students' entrance to campus an easy task that they can handle. It is further recommended that the student representative council as the mother body of the student organization should initiate programmes in consultation with all existing student organizations and university organizations to work collaboratively in enhancing first year students' experiences.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE
<b>CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION</b>	
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Statement of the problem	1
1.3. Objectives of the study	2
1.4. Significance of the study	2
1.5. Rationale	2
1.6. Definition of concepts	3
<b>CHAPTER TWO : LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1. Literature study	
2.1.1. Introduction	4
2.1.2. Academic performance and success	8
2.1.3. Responsibilities of the university	14
2.1.4. Orientation program	16
2.1.5. Student interaction with faculty and the transition from high school to college	18
2.1.6. Student development programs	20
2.1.7. Campus activities and the university experience	21
2.1.8. Student residences	26
2.2. Theoretical framework	26
2.2.1. Student Development	26
2.2.1.1. Erickson's Psychosocial Theory of Development	27
2.2.1.1.1. Adolescence: identity versus role confusion	27
2.2.1.1.2. Young adulthood: intimacy versus isolation	31
2.2.2 Chickering's vector development theory	32
2.2.3. Astin's theory of student development	33

2.3. Conclusion	37
-----------------	----

### **CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1. Research design	38
3.1.1. Survey design	
3.1.2. Quantitative design	38
3.2 Sample	40
3.3. Procedure	45
3.4. Instrument	45
3.5. Hypotheses	46
3.6. Data analysis	46

### **CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS**

4.1. Analysis of hypotheses	47
-----------------------------	----

### **CHAPTER FIVE : INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

5.1. Discussion	61
5.2. Summary	66

### **CHAPTER SIX : RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

6.1. Introduction	67
6.2. Recommendations	67
6.2. Limitations	69

<b>REFERENCES</b>	71
-------------------	----

<b>APPENDICES</b>	79
-------------------	----

COVER LETTER	80
--------------	----

QUESTIONNAIRE	81
---------------	----

## LIST OF FIGURES

Page.

Figure 3.1.	Graph of students' religious affiliation	41
Figure 3.2.	Graph of students' age	41
Figure 3.3.	Graph of students' marital status	42
Figure 3.3.	Graph of students' sex	42
Figure 3.5.	Graph of students' status	43
Figure 3.6.	Graph of students' choice of residence	43
Figure 3.7.	Graph of students' faculty	44
Figure 4.1..	Graph of students' rate of religious attendance	50
Figure 4.2.	Graph of the students' choice of study area.	51
Figure 4.3.	Graph of reasons why it is important to participate in extracurricular activities.	53
Figure 4.4.	Pie chart on 'After the library orientation, I found my way easily around the library'	60

## LIST OF TABLES

Page.

Table 4.1.	Frequency table on student's responses to some of the questions.	47
Table 4.2.	Cross tabulation amongst variables sex, residence, religious affiliation with the question "On my first day at UNW I felt at home".	48
Table 4.3	Cross tabulation Do you think that spending time with friend and Do you participate in sporting activities?	51
Table 4.4.	A cross tabulation of variables 'Sex and The guidance and counseling center is an important resource for developing students	54
Table 4.5.	Cross tabulation of ' Since I came to UNW, my marks have improved' with 'The guidance and counseling center is an important resource in developing students	55
Table 4.6.	Frequency table on response to some questions	56
Table 4.7.	Cross tabulation of the two variables Marks getting poor and Lecturer's availability for consultation	57
Table 4.8.	Sample t-test ('Marks getting poor' and 'Interacting with students of other cultures outside class'.	58
Table 4.9.	Cross tabulation of ' Since I came to UNW my marks are remains the same and 'When I have a problem with courses I find it easy to discuss it with my lecturer'	59
Table 1	Chi-Square	56
Table2	Chi-Square	58
Table3	Chi-Square	61
Table 4	Chi-Square	63

## CHAPTER ONE

### ORIENTATION

#### **1.1. Introduction.**

First year at university presents many challenges for students. It is a time of transition from high school to university and requires adaptation and the meeting of many expectations. For some it is a time of freedom as they are leaving their home for the first time. It gives them an opportunity to be responsible in their parents' absence.

First year also gives institutions of higher learning a chance to welcome and develop these young people. The orientation programme forms the basic part of initiating the first year students. Students have diverse experiences during the first year. These experiences cause emotional, social as well as spiritual growth in the individual student (Beyer, 1990).

The high failure rate amongst first year students also raises a question about the relationship between the psychosocial experiences and students' academic performance (Badenhorst, Foster and Lea, 1990).

#### **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The initiation, coupled with the first-year students' experience, have an effect on students' academic performance. First-year students' orientation experience has an impact on the students' academic performance. What are the universities' ways of developing and equipping their students, socially and psychologically? Does the orientation programme meet the students' needs and serve its intended function and purpose?

### **1.3. Objectives of the study.**

1.3.1. This research study will show whether there is a relationship between first year students' social and psychological experiences and their academic performance.

1.3.2. It will help universities to develop their first year's psychological and social world in order to maximise their academic success.

1.3.3. The study will help first-year students' to understand and acknowledge their experiences to optimise both psychological and social growth.

### **1.4. Significance of the study.**

The high failure rate among first year students is a problem faced by many universities in South Africa. Gounden (1979) describes a student's failure at university as painful both emotionally and financially. It is necessary, therefore, for the university to make provision for adequate selection procedures so that the student has a reasonable chance of passing. This is particularly important in view of dwindling financial subsidies from the government (Gounden, 1979).

It is necessary to raise the awareness of universities of the need for socialisation and initiation of first-year students. Universities should develop and equip their first-year students psychologically and socially to cope with the demands of university life. This study investigates how first year students respond to university reception on campus, and what their attitudes and feelings towards this reception are.

### **1.5. Rationale of the study.**

The problem of socialisation at a university need to be studied in terms of first day experiences, orientation programme experiences and subsequent year experiences as they proceed and how these influence students' academic performance and progress. This research looks at how the students' attitudes and feelings towards these experiences impact on their academic performance.

The study will help institutions of higher learning to understand the needs of the first-year students' when they enter a university for the first time and will also help first year students' to acknowledge and understand the kind of experiences they have during their first year.

The study will provide answers to some questions confronting the University community as a whole. These questions may include:

1. What experiences do students undergo on their first day at university?
2. Is there a relationship between student experiences and students' academic performance?
3. Do these experiences affect individual student differently in relation to their academic performance?

#### **1.6. Definition of concepts.**

- 1.6.1. First-year students or freshmen, students who are registered for the first time at university, that is. they are in their first year level of studying ( Upcraft, Gardner and Associates, 1989)
- 1.6.2. Psychosocial experiences, "the process of maturing" Baird (1990). Experiences pertaining to the emotional and social well being of an individual, (Penguin Dictionary of Psychology)
- 1.6.3. Effect, an impact on something or consequences of an action, experience (Oxford English Dictionary)
- 1.6.4. Academic performance, how students' progress towards attaining their academic success, this is the amount of effort the students puts to their studies and the type of results they obtain. (Oxford English Dictionary)

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Literature study.

##### 2.1.1. Introduction

The word "freshmen" first appeared in the English language in 1550, when it was used to describe a newcomer or a novice in any field of endeavour. Only in the 1590's did the word come to have specific reference to first-year students in an English University. The term was taken to America in the following century. (Upcraft, Gardner and Associates, 1989).

For Lewis (1984) the term "fresher" as applied to all new students, carries with it associations of innocence, ignorance, naiveté, 'greenness' although it is perhaps impossible to retain one's freshness after the first week. It is interesting that the freshers' themselves do not appear to object to the personal application of the term, but second and third years are very indignant if mistakenly so addressed, considering it to be a very derogatory label.

On arrival at a university, a common feeling among students will be that of strangeness. They are unlikely to know many other people; they are away from their own families and familiar circumstances. For many of them this will be their first experience of independence and staff and other students who are already familiar with the routines and customs of the place will surround them. (Cox and Hedge, 1981:28)

Before the freshmen can begin their studies, they find that it is necessary to be initiated into the society of scholars they have chosen to join. Older students tease and torment the freshmen, then welcome them as comrades.

According to Crocker (1981:8) adjustment to this new life is expensive for the freshman. Since freshmen are often attracted to a university because of the opportunities for vocational study, they soon seek instruction in ways to manage their semi-independent affairs.

Crocker, (1981:1) describes freshmen in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To him they are 'parishioners'. They have to become accustomed to being told what to do, and to learn from direction and experience. Freshmen should remember that the change from high school to college is tremendous: they are no longer high school boys and girls; they are college men and women. The university is a place of freedom, but they should remember that independence does mean anarchy and license.

In Crocker's (1981) study, the freshmen were put under a microscope. They were told who they were and how they were to behave; they became the subjects of scrutiny by scholars. Most studies in this field have sought to identify problems peculiar to freshmen and to propose solutions. Most writers of the 1920s and 1930s identified these problems in general terms, using categories such as curriculum adjustment, influence of older students, budgeting of time and money, student activities and the difficulties of transition from home to school Crocker, (1981:10)

In their overall satisfaction first year students are apprehensive about the future. They think that the political system around them is working well and are satisfied with college. In terms of their job concerns they worry about job prospects. If they could get the same job now as after graduation, they would take it. If college was not improving their job prospects they would drop out.

Beyer (1990: 10) defines a college or a university as a community; students on campus are in search of a community. A college is an

“educational purposeful community, a place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on campus”

“ open community, a place where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected and where civil rights of individuals are powerfully affirmed. This is the quality of communication on campus”.

A college goes on further to be a just community, a place where the sacredness of each person is honoured and where diversity is aggressively pursued (Beyer, 1990). Higher learning rejects prejudicial judgements, celebrates diversity, and seeks to serve the full range of citizens in our society effectively. In strengthening campus life institutions of higher learning must commit themselves to building a just community, one that is both equitable and fair.

Cox and Hedge (1983) understand that students, especially those, who feel vulnerable, want to meet together. Indeed, self-generated activity by student groups brings vitality to the campus. Frequently, it is a student’ most effective means of creating a fundamental sense of belonging, and through this, gaining a feeling of belonging to a larger campus community. But there are also tensions created as subgroups organise themselves along racial, ethnic or gender lines. Universities worry about the racial tensions on campus, the lack of trust, the singular lack of success many colleges and universities have had in creating a climate in which minority students feel fully accepted on campus. (Cox and Hedge, 1983:130)

Beyer (1990:37) continues to view the university as “a disciplined community”, which is a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well defined governance procedures guide behaviour for the common good. When it comes to regulations, students live in two separate worlds; the academic world where the requirements are spelled out in great detail and the non-academic world where standards are ambiguous. All campuses should have a clearly stated code of conduct, one that is widely disseminated and consistently enforced. Every campus should involve faculty and students in periodic review and update of campus codes. A campus code of conduct should define standards of behaviour in both social and academic matters.

The university as a caring community, continues to be

“A place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged” (Beyer, 1990: 28).

In reflecting the impact of community colleges, Beyer (1990) is reminded that the spirit of community must be measured, not by the length of time on campus, but by the quality of caring. It is how the student thinks and feels about a place that matters most. Even students who come to campus for just several hours a week will feel part of a community, if there is a supportive climate in the classroom, if they are treated with dignity by registrars and financial aid officers and if office hours are arranged to serve the needs of the students and not the system.

Students should make a connection between what they learn and how they live. Beyer (1990) views a college as “a human enterprise which is more than mere sentiment to suggest that its quality depends upon the heads and the hearts of individuals in it.” The goal of educators should be to help students see that they are not only autonomous individuals but also members of a larger community to which they are accountable. Specifically, students are urged to complete a community project as an integral part of the undergraduate experience. Universities are concerned that students reach out to others, to children, to the elderly, to build bridges across the generations. Students should also be brought in touch with those genuinely in need, and through field experiences build relationships that are intergenerational, intercultural, and international too. In the end, the campus should be viewed not only as a place of inspection but also as a staging ground for action.

First-year is a time when social bounds are tenuous; students should discover the reality of their dependence on each other. Students must understand what it means to share, and understand the benefits of giving. Community must be built; thus a caring community not only enables students to gain knowledge, but also helps them to channel that knowledge to human ends.

The university or college should be a community that celebrates one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared. Beyer (1990) saw the university community celebrating using ceremony and ritual to recall the past, to affirm tradition and build stronger loyalties on campus. But as colleges and universities become more richly inclusive as the student body becomes more and more diverse, campuses should find ways to celebrate not only tradition but also change and innovation. Beyer, (1990) claims that while leaving space for individual interest and privacy, it is believed that a university at its best encourages people to share rituals and traditions that connect them to the campus community and that improve the civic culture and diversity of the institution. The academic mission and the integrity of the higher learning institution, as well as the diversity of people who make up the community and should inform all celebrations on campus, formal and informal, academic and non-academic.

The scope of students' influence on one another is enormous, ranging from their academic lives to their personal lives. The peer group helps freshmen to achieve independence from home and family support, provides educational support, develops interpersonal skills, changes or reinforces values and influences career decisions. Peer groups provide norms and provide behaviour guidelines that are enforced through direct rewards and punishment.

### **2.1.2. Academic Performance and Success.**

The key to freshmen success is involvement. Freshmen must be committed to involving themselves in the intellectual and extra-curricular life on campus. To help them, institutions must provide enriched opportunities for such involvement. Involvement is enhanced by interaction between freshmen and others in the academic community including faculty, staff, student affairs personnel, professionals, and other students. Those who isolate themselves from peers, staff, and especially the faculty will gain much less from the college experience.

Demographic factors such as age, race, and gender of the individual have an impact on the freshman's success. Cultural characteristics, family influences and the students' ethnic background also affect the students' academic achievement. Institutional characteristics, climate and congruence of the institution, whether it is a welcoming one or not also have an effect on freshmen success (Astin, 1985).

Lou (1994) conducted a study that investigated factors contributing to the academic performance of first-year entering freshmen at California State University, Los Angeles. The primary focus of the study was to apply Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theoretical concept to three academic performance variables. The subjects comprised of 248 Latino students, 163 females and 85 males, who were registered at the University in the fall quarter of 1991. Their ages ranged from 17-26 years.

The study developed and tested a model to explain the predictors of self-efficacy which in turn relate to three academic performance outcomes and seven independent variables, namely: family support, institutional climate, generation college, gender, verbal encouragement and role models were hypothesised to impact on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was hypothesised to impact on the three academic variables of retention, cumulative grade point average and cumulative units earned. The relationship between the individual variables and the academic outcome variables was also tested.

Analysis of the data suggests that Bandura's theoretical concept of self-efficacy was the most important predictor of retention, cumulative grade points and cumulative units earned. Family and peer support had a significant impact on the cumulative grade point. The results also suggested the importance of self-efficacy and family support.

Lou (1994) claimed that there were very specific and proven ways of enhancing freshmen success, if there was an institutional commitment to do so. It is no longer a time to experimenting, of trying things that may work or not work out. Specific interventions, both inside and outside the classroom bring increased student satisfaction, personal growth, academic achievement and retention. There were variables that affected

freshmen's success. They included personal characteristics of individuals, the academic success of the individual, the intellectual ability prior academic achievement and motivation

Bullock-McNeill (1992) conducted a study that investigated the extent to which academic success of African-American students enrolled in a freshmen seminar at a predominantly white university is affected by:

1. Pre-collegiate characteristics
2. Sedlack's Non-Cognitive Questionnaire (NCQ).

Institutional databases were used to collect data. The RSQUARE procedure of multiple regression was used to select the predictors of grade performance. This empirical study presented three major findings.

1. Socio-economic status does not significantly correlate with freshmen's grade point average for African American students. The pre-collegiate variables that do have a significant correlation are high school grade points, Senior Aptitude Test (SAT) verbal score and gender.
2. The collegiate variables that significantly relate to the freshmen grade point average of African-American students are admission index, grades in the freshmen student seminar and receiving financial aid. The total amount of scholarship and grants received by students has a positive correlation with freshmen grade point average whereas low average scores have a negative correlation.
3. The ability to understand and deal with racism has a positive relationship to the freshmen grade point average of African American students.

Miller (1993) conducted a descriptive study on the sense of fulfilment that black students experienced in their social and academic life on a predominantly white campus. Factors that black freshmen identified as most important to their social integration and with which they were most satisfied were:

1. Relationships with black students, their roommates and non-black students.
2. Their participation in non-membership campus-wide student activities. Women students were slightly more satisfied with the factors contributing to their social life.

Factors that black freshmen identified as most important to their academic integration and with which they were not satisfied were:

1. Regular classroom attendance.
2. Coursework completion.
3. Discussion of their academic performance with their instructors. Black females were more satisfied with and more actively involved in the factors contributing to their academic integration than were males.

Zibili (1987) conducted a study to determine the effects of counselling on self-concept and academic achievement of black college freshmen in Texas, during the autumn semester of 1985. The Tennessee Self-concept Scale was utilised as pre-test and post-test measures to ascertain the profile self-concept of the study. Zibili concluded that time-limited group counselling was an effective method for assisting low achieving black college freshmen in developing their self-concept. He also found that the programme of counselling achieved some success in raising academic achievement of black college freshmen. There was a positive relationship between the self-concept and academic achievement of subjects in this study.

Zibili (1987) made the following recommendations:

1. Direct attention should be given to improving the achievement levels while observing the changes in self-concept".
3. A larger sample of low-achieving black college freshmen should be used in subsequent studies.

4. Direct attempts should be made to determine the composition of the variables in counselling that produce consistently positive results in areas of academic achievement.
5. Educational institutions should explore the possibility of including compulsory counselling sessions as a part of the orientation schedules of new incoming college freshmen.

Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) believe that to enhance freshmen success, institutions must develop a clearer and broader definition of success. They must commit to a set of beliefs that create maximum opportunities. They need knowledge and an understanding of the variables that affect this success. Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) go further to describe freshmen success as “being when students make progress toward fulfilling their educational and personal goals”. In other words students develop academic and intellectual competence, establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, develop an identity, decide on a career and lifestyle, maintain personal health and wellness and develop an integrated philosophy of life. Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) explain that student success is largely determined by experiences during the freshmen year.

Glenn (1990) conducted a study on beliefs and expectations of college freshmen at UNC-Charlotte. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which black and white students enrolled as freshmen in a predominantly white university differed in their beliefs and expectations prior to entering college. A comparison of the demographic characteristics, beliefs, expectations and later academic success of the black and white students was made. The data on the students was obtained from the entering freshmen class of autumn 1989. The survey on college life at UNC-Charlotte was developed and pilot tested on freshmen students who had entered university during autumn of 1988. Significant findings were that black students, regardless of college generation, perceived the need to attend orientation sessions to learn about college and the students’ role. Black students also indicated a preference for discussing academic problems.

White students instead chose to speak to other students when experiencing problems with academic performance. They consistently expressed comfort in the notion of being a college student, adhering to a sense of certainty in their success. Results indicated that differences existed in demographic characteristics, beliefs, and expectations. In the end of first-year academic success among the students as outlined by race and by college generation status was low. Among the black and white students significant differences existed in perception of the need for orientation to college life and student roles, choices of academic assistance resources, preference of faculty to discuss problems with and expectations of attending college (Glenn, 1990).

The findings in Glenn's (1990) study suggest the need for further exploration of the influence of beliefs and expectations on academic success. The need for in-depth investigation of the probable impact of college generation status on academic success also emerged as a research issue for future study.

Huysamen and Raubenheimer (1999) conducted a study on demographic group differences in the prediction of tertiary academic performance. Admission authorities at South African Universities are faced with several dilemmas. On the one hand socio-political considerations dictate that students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds be admitted at a higher rate than before. On the other hand, these students' educational background may fail to prepare them to cope with the demands of tertiary education. Scarce state funds prevent the admission and subsidisation for extended periods of time, of large numbers of students who have limited chances of achieving tertiary academic success. Differences in performance between racial, ethnic, cultural and or socio-economic subgroups is a well known phenomenon world wide for example, studies in the United States of America show that on standard ability tests, white students tend to perform one standard deviation better than African Americans (Linn 1982). Gender presents another demographic variable that reveals differences on ability tests, although these are generally less pronounced than those for different racial or ethnic groups.

Badenhorst, Foster, and Lea (1990) conducted a study on factors affecting academic performance in first year Psychology at the University of Cape Town. Previous research in South Africa on factors associated with university performance has consistently found that the final school aggregate is the strongest predictor of academic performance. A review of twelve South African studies in this area between 1957 and 1977 reported, "that success at school did to a fairly large degree extend to achievement at university, particularly first-year achievement". Most of these studies however were conducted only at white, mainly Afrikaans speaking universities. It is interesting to note that matriculation results have a strong relationship with university performance.

Badenhost, Foster and Lea (1990) saw early concerns as largely due to the relatively high failure rate of first-year students. Certain factors were taken into consideration. Economic issues and public costs, academic criteria, the appropriate admission criteria and good selection packages, psychological questions, demoralising effects of failure, political level, discrimination and separate educational authorities were all considered. Freshmen success constitutes earning sufficient grade point average to graduate. It is making progress in educational and personal development in the above-mentioned ways. It means taking advantage of the environment by growing and developing one's maximum potential.

### **2.1.3. Responsibilities of the University.**

Institutions have an obligation to support and enhance the freshmen year, not only because dropping out of students may be increased, but because it is the institution's moral and educational obligation to create a collegiate environment with the maximum opportunity for student success. It can also be argued that the national interest is served by giving attention to the freshman experience (Gounden, 1979).

Astin (1985) purports that institutions should take into account the racial, cultural, ethnic, age and gender diversity of freshmen. Programmes should be based on this diversity.

Faculty involvement is important for freshmen success. Faculty must balance commitments to their disciplines with commitments to educating freshmen by teaching them and getting them involved as soon as they arrive on campus

Universities have the responsibility to introduce health education to freshmen during orientation when students arrive on campus. They should be able to establish and maintain it, communicating and marketing it to students. The campus environment should be created to promote wellness.

In the coming decade colleges and universities will have to commit themselves to increase the enrolment of black students so that their participation in higher education at least matches their representation in the population Beyer (1990:35). The larger goal for higher learning must be to build academic communities in which people learn to respect and value one another for their differences, while at the same time defining values shared by all those who join the university as a scholar or citizen.

Newman (1995) purports that institutions must understand the relationship between freshmen and the campus environment. They should know their campus characteristics. They should study the transition and congruence between the receiving, which is the university and the sending environment, which is the high school. There should be programmes designed to produce small, interest-centred niche environments.

Ideas about reforming the curriculum are that undergraduate education would be more effective if all courses were elective. If grades were abolished, it would be specialised that is more general; one year's service was required. According to Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) "the curriculum suffers from specialisation, college is irrelevant to the world". Personal goals from a college education include a detailed grasp of a specialised field, training and skills for a job. Learn to get along with people, formulate goals and values for life.

According to Astin (1985) campus activity programmes cannot occur without the strong support of professionals trained in programming skills. They must be creative people who

are in tune with the needs and interests of first year-students at their institution. The resources of the institution and the community should be mobilised to develop campus activity programming. Administrative staff should also be involved.

Educational and developmental programmes should be based on freshmen's developmental needs. Programs should be attractive and interesting but they should be based on valued freshmen developmental needs. Colleges must provide adequate resources to develop a strong campus activity programme.

Institutions can intentionally and successfully help freshmen achieve their academic and personal goals by providing not only supportive and challenging classroom experiences but enriched out-of-classroom experiences as well. This can and should be done without compromising academic standards. The freshmen seminar is a proven and effective way of enhancing freshmen success, (Astin, 1968). It can be the glue that holds and solidifies all efforts to enhance freshmen academic and personal success. It can provide students with vital information, promote their involvement in campus life, enhance their academic skills, and stimulate their intellectual characteristics.

#### **2.1.4. The Orientation Programme.**

Cox and Hedge (1981:128) describe the value of library orientation. This should be provided to all students at the beginning of the first term. Such orientation should include an introduction to a bibliography, both general and with reference to the particular subjects to be taught in the first term. Advanced instruction on the use of libraries and bibliographic methods can be used such as the use of the Internet, the catalogue and many more to enhance freshmen success. Bronfenbrenner (1979) defines an orientation programme as "any effort to help freshmen make the transition from their previous environment to the collegiate environment and to enhance their success".

Miller (1979) saw orientation as one of the major factors affecting the performance of first year students in trying to adapt to the transition between high school and university. Students find themselves in a new environment with strange people and a totally new

approach to education. Many students find this intimidating and fail to adapt fully or in time. This has been recognised at many institutions, with the result that these institutions have instituted various types of orientation programmes to prepare students for university study. Mentors, academic skills program, and academic excellence workshops support these orientation programmes.

Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) proposed an orientation course with its own goals and objectives. In this course students are required to identify the differences between high school and college. They learnt college survival skills; time management and study skills. They learnt college regulations and procedures, understood their health needs, including alcohol and drug abuse as well as human sexuality. They developed an awareness of their learning styles and their applications, identified and clarified their values and learnt stress and conflict management. They also learnt the principles of career development and making decisions.

Orientation programmes should take into account both freshmen needs and the campus environment. Environments should be designed to capture the positive outcomes of undermanned settings. The freshmen seminar should have value and benefit in higher education. It should provide information on the nature of education processes, cognitive learning, writing, and communication and library skills. It should provide information about the curriculum, including general and major requirements, student learning styles, teaching students how to think, critical reasoning, and problem solving and learning. It should provide ways and means of applying this knowledge in and out of the classroom (Newman, 1995).

Lincoln (1990) conducted a study on the relationship between orientation and student effort. The purpose of the study was to determine whether the insertion of a freshman orientation programme into the experience of one college class would increase the students' quality effort when compared to that of other classes at the same college, which did not have such an experience. The study was exploratory using the College Student

Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ) developed by Robert Pace to compare two classes of students from La Grange College.

The results of the American College Tertiary Programs (ACT) and the Entering Student Survey (ESS) were analysed to determine the homogeneity of the two groups. Prior to analysis the students were assigned to risk tri-sections based upon predicted grade point averages. Lincoln concluded that the ESS result showed homogeneity between freshmen and second-years in the twelve scores. The freshmen did not differ from second-years in the twelve effort scores. The second-years did not report higher gains in all twelve-gain scores. The freshmen group I cohort reported statistically significant effort scores compared to the freshmen group II. The effort scores were not significant when the results were compared to other similar institutions and in fact reported higher effort scales.

The freshmen year is a pleasing one socially but a relatively difficult one academically and it is characterised by experiences that fall short of initial expectations. Students' self-reports indicate that they are more comfortable in social than in academic activities. They are more likely to have an active social life than to do well academically and are more likely to mention social aspects when writing about the best thing about their freshman year, and academic aspects when writing about one thing that they would like to change. (<http://www.colorado.edu/pba/surveys/entfrosh/report.htm>)

#### **2.1.5. Student Interaction with Faculty and the Transition from High School to University.**

Schmidt's (1998/9) study reveal freshman's self-reported the ability to interact with professors, study effectively and deal with academic pressure decreases from autumn to spring. In Spring freshmen reported having the highest ability in making new friends and interacting with students and the lowest ability to interact with professors, to study effectively and to deal with academic pressures. Making new friends was high from autumn to spring. The ability to interact with professors, to study effectively and to deal

with academic pressures was low from autumn to spring. On average freshmen reported being comfortable in each of the activities. They reported a high comfort level in attending football/basketball games, going to student parties and get-togethers, studying with students and a low comfort in interacting with faculty and getting advice on courses

Freshmen should be treated with dignity and respect. "Rites of passage" should be constructive and freshmen should be the target of inclusion, not exclusion. They should be weeded instead of being weeded out. Institutions should have deliberate goals for freshmen. These students cannot be left to sink or swim. Institutions should have a clear definition of freshman success and the freshman year must be strategically planned. The success goals should be clear not only to faculty and staff, but also to prospective students. In this way the institution maintains the integrity between what it says it is and what it really is Lewis (1984).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) presents the concepts of ecological transition. He believes that the freshman year is one of ecological transition and ecological congruence. This is a time whenever a person's position in the ecological environment is altered as the result of changes in role or setting or both. This ecological transition can be very stressful. It can be both a consequence and an instigator of developmental process. If the transition is made successfully, then growth and development of the individual can be expected. An unsuccessful transition is more likely to lead to stress and failure. From this perspective the first impact that a collegiate environment may have on the freshmen is an ecological transition from the previous high school environment to the college environment. Specifically, if the sending environment of school is different from the receiving environment of college, the degree of stress will be higher and perhaps the likelihood of failure greater. If the receiving environment is similar to the sending environment, then the ecological transition will be less stressful, but so will the potential for growth and development.

Miller (1993) conducted a study on the transition from a high school in a small mid-western farming community to the state's land grant university. It may not be nearly as

traumatic as going to an eastern urban institute. Once the student has arrived on campus, the fit between student and institution may well determine whether the collegiate environment is going to have a positive impact of remaining in college or a negative impact of dropping out of college.

#### **2.1. 6. Student Development Programmes.**

Programmes and workshops should provide opportunities for students to explore feelings and developmental issues, especially in the areas of autonomy and interpersonal relationships. They should promote stress reduction and biofeedback. Gender issues and human sexuality provide opportunities for students to explore their emotions, as do various self-growth and support groups. Resident settings offer excellent opportunities for exploring relationships and for relationship building.

According to Cox and Hedge (1981), campus activities and programmes should be heavily publicised. Student organisations such as student government, special interest organisations, fraternities and sororities and other groups must be heavily involved in the developmental, promotional, planning and implementation of campus activity programmes. The physical facilities of the institution should be made available and be used to the maximum.

Counselling services can assist freshmen by helping them to make the transition to college successfully through,

1. *Personal development*, adjusting personally and socially to the collegiate environment by establishing effective interpersonal relations, developing effective coping skills for dealing with anxiety and stress, and maintaining quality mental health and generally enjoying life.
2. *Academic development*, selecting appropriate courses of study and performing academically at a level that is consistent with their abilities and expectations.

3. *Career development*, exploring and clarify career-related interests, abilities and life values, making informed education and career decisions that reflect these factor and establishing linkages between their academic plans and life and career goals.

Sanders and Burton (1996) found in their study that student assessment programmes generally provide an excellent conceptual model for supporting quality enhancement initiatives. Regular assessment of a broad range of student outcomes would enhance continuous improvement in student academic and support programmes and services. Assessment efforts need to cut across courses to make connections within the academic experience to better understand the degree to which attending college is meeting students' educational and social needs.

#### **2.1.7. Campus Activities and the Student Experience.**

Britt and Hirt (1999) conducted a study on student experiences and institutional practices affecting the spring semester of students transferred from one institution to the other. Students reported adjustment problems. These included.

1. *Academic Problems*, having lower average grade point averages after one semester in the four-year school and lower persistence and graduation rates.
2. *Social Problems*, activities like making new friends and maintaining self-confidence, identifying opportunities for extracurricular involvement, dating and adjustment to the social climate of the four-year institution.
3. *Personal Problems*, financial aid and work opportunities are frequently limited during the first year after transferring. Finding housing and roommates, feeling out of place or older than other students and adjusting to an environment that is typically more impersonal also inhibits personal adjustment.

Britt and Hirt (1999) saw the effects of adjustment problems on the institutional practice. Colleges and universities have also introduced services that facilitate the social and personal adjustment of transferred students. Special orientation programmes that address

the social problems experienced by transfer students have been developed on many campuses. In order to facilitate personal adjustment some colleges and Universities have increase financial aid packages and created scholarships specifically for transfer students. Pascarella (1996) conducted a study on influences of students' internal locus of attribution for academic success in the first-year of college. The initial pre-enrolment characteristics of students, the environmental or organisational emphasis of the institution attended student academic experiences and students' social or non-academic experiences were taken into consideration. It was important to measure not only the nature and the extent of students' actual involvement (e.g. time spent studying, courses taken, full-time versus part-time) but also the character of the students' classroom and out of class interaction with major agents of socialisation on campus (e.g. peers, faculty). Consequently, in assessing student academic experiences they included not only measures of the kinds of course work taken, hours studied and the extent of exposure to post-secondary education but also measures of the kinds of teaching received and the nature of their informal interaction with faculty. Similarities in assessing student social or non-academic experiences were included not only as measures of participation in work, clubs and extra-curricular activities but also as measures of the nature of interaction with peers on campus.

A number of first-year students experienced a challenge in adjusting to the demands of university level writing. Some of the writing challenges facing first year students are:

1. Difficulty to cross the boundary between descriptive and analytical papers.
2. Belief that their writing errors are surface ones (grammar, style), whereas they may exhibit more profound thinking and structural problems.
3. Difficulty to adapt to the heavy assignment load associated with the semester system, and as a result they spend too little time on essay preparation and even less on revision.
4. Difficulty to recognise the need to adapt to style, format, and audience to match the discipline and purpose of various assignments; students' felt that the style they had developed in the past was applicable to all situations.

5. Lack of recognition that the concepts of writing and effective communication of ideas are integrally related. "Many students in disciplines other than English dismiss 'writing skills' issues as aspects not important to their discipline" Pascarella (1996). The challenge is to help first-year students develop or select the more self-reliant, active learning strategies required for successful participation in a learner-centred institution.

At Michigan State University after the first month, many first year students just quietly attend their classes on a regular basis. They are depressed and quiet; either because they do not know how to handle the stress or because they have already handled it in a wrong way. Wilson (1995-2000) believe that "Grades drop when you party too much, but they also drop when there is no motivation to do well, in a place where you don't want to be". Halstead (one of the freshmen) remembers his freshman year as a very busy time ([http://studentadvantage.com/article\\_story1,1075,c8-i0-t0a11325,00.html](http://studentadvantage.com/article_story1,1075,c8-i0-t0a11325,00.html)). He joined many groups and organisations both in and outside his residence hall. He said that "staying active is a way for freshmen to make friends and find their niche on campus. You have to prioritise. It is important to do well, but it's more important to get involved. "You are on your own to make friends here".

Despite efforts by the University of Arizona and organisations providing avenues for freshmen to be involved on campus, some students feel that heavy class loads and intimidation; cause some to shy away from joining campus groups. However intimidation and lack of information also keep freshmen from joining the clubs (<http://www.studentadvantage.com>).

The College Living Experience (<http://www.clein.net/>) is a place where they have supportive housing and students living in a beautiful garden apartment complex within walking distance of school. A resident advisor lives on site and the College Living Experience maintains a corporate apartment used for tutoring group meetings. Students are encouraged to participate in a myriad of sports and recreation facilities at the complex. "Intensive academic support is offered. Ongoing one-on-one tutoring, daily class reviews with College Living Experience instructors supervised study hall, instructor

liaison, advocacy and academic counselling all are provided". Independent living is provided to guide students in the successful transition to independent living and daily student support is also provided. Major emphasis is placed on time management, financial skills, and household organisation and meal preparation.

The purpose of this American system of student support is extensive and explicit. The system partners undergraduate, graduate and professional students as they undertake their academic programmes, fulfil their educational objectives and engage in learning, service and leadership activities. The system improves the quality of campus life for students and other members of the university community. It promotes a caring, supportive and humane campus community in which the dignity and value of each individual is respected and the diversity of the community is nourished and sustained (Silver and Silver, 1997).

In the report "The transition to college study: the freshman year experiences of Georgia Southern dozen" ([http://www.2gasou.edu/plan\\_ana/transit.hmt.](http://www.2gasou.edu/plan_ana/transit.hmt.)) (1995), the institutional replication of Terenzini and associate's (1991) Transition to college project was described. Year long focus group interviews with a cross-section of freshmen students explored the ways in which they became or failed to become involved in the academic and social systems of Georgia Southern and the important people and experiences that facilitated or impeded the transition to college life. The study results focused upon the importance of interaction with peers, the personal and interpersonal aspects of the transition and crucial validating experiences. The conclusions highlighted student responsibility and quality of effort and how they can be facilitated by institutional actions. ([http://www2.gasou.edu/plan\\_ana/transit.htm.](http://www2.gasou.edu/plan_ana/transit.htm.))

Sheehan and Tanael's (1994) study of the psychological development of Asian and American freshmen at Ohio University examined the psychosocial development of Asian freshmen compared with that of American freshmen. The Student Development Task and Lifestyle Inventory which measure's certain aspects of Chickering's theory were utilised. Univariate analyses were conducted to test the significance differences at the 0,05% level. Significant gender differences within two groups on all subtasks and scales of the

instrument except on the cultural participation subtask. They concluded that Asian international freshmen students were less developed than American freshmen students in educational involvement, life management, peer relationships and intimacy. Female Asian international students were more developed than male Asian freshmen in cultural participation whereas both male and female American freshmen did not differ significantly in their psychosocial development.

Grant (1974) identifies stimulation, security, order, freedom and territoriality from the first-year students' experience. The milieu should be interesting and challenging, yet students should feel secure against undesirable stimuli and circumstances. Order is necessary to support security and intellectual freedom allows students to create and respond to the environment in their own way. Territoriality means the "ability of a student to stake out the piece of the environment over which he or she can have optimum control, and in which there are acceptable levels of security, stimulation order and freedom" Grant (1974).

Miller (1979:11) purports that in the ideal learning environment the various elements serve institutional goals. There is a purposeful relationship between formal learning and the student's growth outside the classroom; a degree of compatibility exists between an individual and the institution. There is an understandable relationship between what occurs on campus and what happens in the real world and the milieu responds to the developmental needs of its students. The effect of the college experience is to socialise the individual to allow him to refine, polish, or shape up his values so that he can fit comfortably into the ranks of American college alumni.

The benefits derived from the college experience were that:

1. Most students make an initial career choice in college or at least career inclinations are developed this there.

2. College acquaints students with man's past with peer's issues and with future opportunities, needs and problems. Students begin to see the world outside them and to take some steps towards analysing and understanding it.
3. College represents a symbolic loosening of ties between parents and children.

The influence of the peer group is more powerful than parental influences in many instances. This is a dominant factor in the teen years and it continues to be persuasive in college (Miller, 1993).

Ballantyne (2000) in (<http://cleo.murdoch.edu.au/confs/tlf/tlf2000/ballantyne.html>) administered a questionnaire in his study that looked at satisfaction with the physical environment of the university and with a variety of student services, academic and personal issues that impinge on student experience and self-assessment of generic skills. Significant differences found between the responses of the two age groups, school leavers and mature age students, were examined. It was found that the younger groups of students were somewhat less positive about the student experience.

#### **2.1.8. Student Residence.**

Friendships in residence exert a major influence on freshmen's, values, attitudes and behaviour. The roommate relationship is especially important and roommates influence each other. Assigning two freshmen that do not know each other to a room is indeed a difficult situation and the resulting adjustment problems can have a very powerful effect on academic and personal development. Roommates challenge each other's confidence and self-understanding. They force each other to be more tolerant and to express themselves more clearly and affecting each other's attitudes. Highly dissatisfied pairs of roommates have significantly lower grades than those who have a little satisfaction. Roommates affect each other's study habits; when high achieving students are assigned to lesser achieving roommates, the latter earn higher grades (Astin, 1985: 33)

Newman (1995) suggested that freshmen should be assigned to co-educational residence halls. Freshmen should be placed with second or third year students. A mix of these

students with freshmen provides a better living environment, but the evidence on academic achievement is mixed. Halls and buildings should not be overcrowded, which can be detrimental to the student's health. There should be selection, training and supervision of residence hall staff. Educational activities and programmes should be in place in residences. Involvement and participation promote freshmen's success (Newman 1995).

Astin (1985) concluded that students in residence halls expressed more satisfaction than commuters with their undergraduate experience, particularly student friendships, faculty student interactions, institutional reputation and social life. They were more likely to earn higher grades and showed slightly greater increases in artistic interests, liberalism and interpersonal self-esteem.

Beyer (1990) believes that the residence committee should assign freshmen by academic major. Their academic achievement is then improved, and scholarly orientation is greater compared with randomly assigned students. The students should be assigned according to their academic ability. There is some evidence that when high ability students are assigned to the same floor or house they earn higher grades than high ability students who are assigned randomly. They report their environment as stimulating and academically oriented.

Chickering (1974) conducted a highly controlled study involving 170,000 students in one analysis and 5,400 in another. He concluded that even when background variables were taken into account, students living in residence halls exceeded the learning and personal development predicted when their advantages in ability, prior education, extracurricular, community and family backgrounds were considered. They were more involved in academic and extracurricular activities with other students and earned higher grade point averages even when differences in ability were taken into account.

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework.**

### **2.2.1. Student Development**

The view of student development as propounded by Astin (1985) considers students as children and their institution as their parents. Character development was installed by strict rules and regulations enforced by rigid discipline. The development of character (i.e. traditional Christian values) was substantially more important to American colleges than the development of their intellect. This parent-child theory persisted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In mid the 20<sup>th</sup> century a combination student activism and developing psychological and sociological theories changed the thinking about student development.

#### **2.2.1.1. Erickson's Psychosocial Theory of Development.**

Erickson (1971) explained development in eight stages from birth until old age. The stage that best describes the first-year in a higher institution of learning is the adolescent stage, which is characterised by identity formation versus role confusion, and also the young adulthood stage, which is characterised by intimacy versus isolation.

##### **2.2.1.1.1. Adolescence: Identity versus Role Confusion**

Erickson (1971) studied the concept of identity formation as the most important aspect of this stage. The concept of the identity crisis has become an accepted part of our thinking about student development. Erickson (1971) defined identity as “the organised set of images and sense of self that express who and what we really are”. Identity development depends on our physical stage, our encounter with society and societal roles we play and our internal ordering of these experiences. The word “Youth” is relevant to adolescent college students. Erickson (1971) believed that the task of establishing one's identity is especially critical during this stage because of the change in physical maturation and society's demands on young adults.

This stage starts with the onset of puberty and ends with the beginning of maturity (that can be anywhere between 13 and 24 years, depending on the culture and the duration of training required for the individual's vocation. Youths must be able to redefine themselves, but this process may create an identity crisis. For others, the stage creates a temporary period of uncertainty that passes as a new sense of identity develops. For others still this period can be a time of emotional turmoil and even massive personality disorientation (Engler, 1983)

It is important for adolescents carefully to question what they are in the eyes of other people, what images others have of them and whether these correlate with their self-image and how their previously acquired roles and skills fit into the career world and their projected future. Erickson (1971) calls this quest for self-image, continuity in life and congruence between the self-image and the expectations of society the search for identity. This concept of ego identity is one of the most important contributions Erickson has made to psychology. Ego identity can be defined as "the individual's image of himself", including the feeling that a thread of continuity runs through one's life and that one's self-image and the view others have of him are essentially in agreement (Meyer, Moore and Viljoen 1989).

The individual has a sense of identity when he manages to integrate all his identifications, his drives, wishes and expectations, abilities and skills with the opportunities his society offers him. This quest for identity often causes the young adolescent to clash with the rules of society and with persons who are close to him or her, such as parents. The danger of this stage is that the adolescent may be confused in the search for identity and a suitable social role. Typical adolescent behaviour patterns such as participation in-group activities; falling in love and the pre-direction of youth movements are part of the search for identity.

Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1989) claim that society accommodates the adolescent's search for identity by providing a psychosocial moratorium, which is a period of grace for youth to pursue their quest for identity relatively undisturbed. This is a period in

which the adolescent is allowed to experiment with various identities. Society is not only exceptionally tolerant of adolescent behaviour, but also provides active support in the form of social institutions such as universities, colleges, tribal school, military services and extended vocational training. Erickson calls the ego gain that results from a satisfactory resolution of the identity crisis reliability or fidelity. This ego strength is characterised by certainty about one's own identity, an awareness of other possible identity choices which one could have made and a capacity for loyalty towards one's social roles.

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Engler (1983) explained the process of forming an “ego identity” as one that requires one to compare how one sees oneself with how significant others appear to expect one to be. Ego identity, then, is a subjective aspect, an awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego synthesising methods and continuity of one's meaning for others. According to Engler (1983) ego identity results in a sense of ‘coherence in individuals’ that enables one to resolve one's conflicts adaptively. The danger of this stage is that of role confusion i.e. the inability to conceive of oneself as a productive member of one's society.

Role confusion usually arises out of the adolescent difficulty of finding an occupational identity, but it may also express a general inability to find a meaningful place in one's culture. The adolescent who cannot find a meaningful adult role runs the risk of an identity crisis, a transitory failure to establish a stable identity. Some young people may drop out of society for a short period of time as Erickson (1971) himself did. Some may adopt a negative identity, one that is opposed to the dominant values of their upbringing, (Gerdes 1988).

The ritualization of this stage is ideology. Ideology indicates a readiness to assume a constructive role in technological and political systems of one's culture and to commit oneself firmly to its values. The young person is able to engage actively in those rites and ceremonies, be they of religious, national or military nature, which reflect the ideological commitments of society. The corresponding ritualistic element is totalism, which is a fanatical and exclusive preoccupation with what seems to be right and that excludes any other point of view.

Papalia and Olds (1992) describe the identity formation in adolescents. The chief task of adolescents is to resolve the conflict of identity versus role confusion, to become a unique adult with an important role in life. The search for identity is lifelong; it comes into focus during adolescence and may recur from time to time during adulthood. The conflicts involved spur growth and development. One of the dangers is identity confusion. However, a certain amount of identity confusion is normal and necessary and accounts for the chaotic, volatile character of much adolescent behaviour as well as self-consciousness about appearance. Cliquishness and intolerance of differences both hallmarks the adolescent social scene and are also defences against identity confusion.

There is a period in the psychosocial moratorium that is provided to the adolescent and youth when they search for commitments to which they can be faithful. This searching helps explain many adolescents' susceptibility to cults and gang loyalties. The extent to which young people can be true to ideological and personal commitments determines their ability to resolve the crisis of identity formation. There is a fundamental virtue of fidelity, which is sustained loyalty, faith or a sense of belonging to friends and companions, to a loved one, or to a set of values, an ideology, a religion, a movement or an ethnic group. Fidelity represents a higher level of the virtue of trust (Papalia and Olds, 1992).

Gerdes (1988) describes this sense of identity as defined by Erickson (1971) as encompassing:

1. A consistent view of one's public identity related to one's place in society and the roles one fulfils, for example, as a student, as a son, daughter, as a member of a political organisation.
2. A conscious sense of one's personal identity i.e. the feeling of continuity and of being one and the same person throughout life and in different situations.

3. A sense of individual identity which relates to the perception of one's personal characteristics and uniqueness as well as to an awareness of what one has in common with certain other individuals and groups.

Several specific issues must be confronted and resolved if a sense of identity is to be achieved. A decision concerning vocational choice must be reached; a synthesis between personal needs and societal demands must be achieved. A personal ideology concerning what one believes and values must be formulated, and a set of moral principles must be evolved. In a complex and changing society these are difficult issues to deal with and if a sense of identity is not achieved there is role confusion (Gerdes, 1988).

#### **2.2.1.2. Young Adulthood: Intimacy versus Isolation.**

Papalia and Olds (1992) saw young adults needing and wanting intimacy they need to make deep personal commitments to others. If they are unable or afraid to do this they may become isolated and self-absorbed. The ability to achieve an intimate relationship that demands sacrifice and compromise depends on the sense of identity, supposedly acquired in adolescence.

However, psychologically healthy people are willing to risk temporary loss of self in coitus and orgasm, very close friendships and other situations requiring self-abandonment. The virtue that develops in young adulthood is love or mutuality of devotion between partners who have chosen to share their lives. Individuals also need a certain amount of temporary isolation during this period in order to think about their lives on their own. As young adults resolve conflicting demands of intimacy, competitiveness and distance they develop an ethical sense that Erickson considers the mark of the adult.

Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1989) believe that the achievement of identity enables the individual to share his identity with another person that is to have ongoing relationships

and develop the ethical strength to continue the relationship despite the sacrifices and compromises this might demand. The evasion of such experiences is the result of identity confusion that in turn leads to a feeling of isolation and preoccupation with the self. The young adult finds himself in the crisis of having to choose between two extremes. The ideal solution to this crisis leads to love or true geniality. In order to be of lasting social significance, the utopia of geniality should include mutuality of orgasm with a loved partner of the opposite sex with whom one is able and willingly to regulate the cycles of work, procreation, and recreation so as to secure to the offspring, all the stages of satisfactory development.

Engler (1983) defines intimacy as “the ability to develop a close and meaningful relationship with another person”. Young adults add an affiliate element to the list of rituals, participating and sharing with others in work, friendships and love. Its distortion is elitism, the focus on an exclusive group that shuts out to others.

### **2.2.2. Chickering's Vector Development Theory.**

Chickering (1993) identified six areas of development in students. He called these areas of development ‘vectors’. He suggested that college can either accelerate or decelerate these vectors depending upon the institution's clarity of objectives, its size, its curriculum, residence hall arrangements, faculty and administration, friends, groups and student culture. The vectors were:

1. *Developing competence*, students must be able to cope intellectually and interpersonally with what comes and what they set out to do.
2. *Becoming autonomous*, students must establish emotional independence from parents and peers and break free from the continuous need for reassurance, affection and approval. They must be able to do things on their own, but to ask for help when needed.
3. *Managing emotions*, students must be aware of their emotions, learn how to control and integrate them into ongoing decisions and behaviour.

3. *Establishing identity*, students must establish a sense of self by clarifying physical needs, characteristics and personal appearance and by establishing appropriate sexual identification, roles and behaviours.
4. *Freeing interpersonal relationships*, students must develop an increased tolerance for others, a capacity for intimacy and relationships based on trust, independence and individuality.
5. *Clarifying purposes*, students must develop a sense of purpose in their lives, leading to plans and priorities for their careers, vocations and their lifestyles.
6. *Developing integrity*, students must develop a personally valid set of beliefs that has internal consistency and provides a guide for behaviour (Chickering 1993).

### **2.2.3. Astin's Theory of Student Involvement.**

Astin (1985:33) defines involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience”. A highly involved student is one that, for example devotes, considerable energy to studying, spends a lot of time on campus, participates actively in student organisations and frequently interacts with faculty members and other students on the other hand an uninvolved student may neglect studies, spend a little time on campus, abstain from extracurricular activities and have little contact with faculty members or other students.

Astin (1985:133-134) goes on to postulate the five basics of involvement theory. Students learn by becoming involved;

1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various "objects". The objects may be highly generalised, e.g. student experience, or highly specific e.g. preparing for a Chemistry examination.
2. Regardless of its objects, involvement occurs along a continuum. Different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object and the same students manifest different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.

3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of the student's involvement in academic work can be measured quantitatively, that is how many hours the student spends studying, and qualitatively, that is does the student review and comprehend reading assignments or does the student simply stare at the textbook and daydream?
4. The degree of student learning and personal development associated with any educational programme is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that programme.
5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that practice or policy to increase student involvement.

Astin (1985:147) claims that students who have contacts with the faculty are more likely to succeed academically or earn better grades than those who do not express satisfaction with all aspects of their institutional experience, including student friendships, the variety of courses, the intellectual environment and even administration of the institution. Effect on athletic involvement, is associated with academic success.

Astin (1985) discusses the effect of student governance and concluded that students who became heavily involved in student governance interact frequently with their peers and this interaction appears to accentuate the changes normally resulting from the college experience. There are different forms of experiences, determined by quality versus quantity of involvement. Involvement and developmental outcomes, role of peer groups and locus of control and attribution have an impact on academic performance.

Baird (1990) studied in depth student involvement. The most pre-dominant character of student experience involves class work, studying and interacting with friends. A great deal of experiences involves individual, solo, and academic activities. However these activities seem to represent a fairly low level of involvement. If we consider the low level of out-of-class experience in community colleges, with the fact that the majority of first time freshmen enrol in these colleges, it suggests that many students may not become involved in higher education with negative consequences for their performance and

persistence. It appears that the level of activity and involvement for American freshmen students is concentrated in class work and studying. Relatively few students have rich, intense college experiences. Astin (1985) argues that lack of involvement may have serious negative effects on academic performance.

Bourner *et.al* (1991) explained student involvement in terms of social identity. The students felt responsible for promoting social interaction with and among them. In terms of academic support, part-time students sometimes had to miss classes due to unforeseen domestic or work commitments. Their satisfaction was related to expectations. Part-time students had difficulty in finding the time to study, such as organising their time in an ineffective way, coping with stress of examinations, developing appropriate study skills, remembering important parts of their courses, keeping up with their academic level of the course, being able to grasp the meaning of specialised terms and concepts, and developing confidence in their academic ability. They have difficulty in coming to terms with the academic way of looking at things, getting used to a different approach to learning and the college environment. Coping with competing demands of hobbies or other interests, job demands, family commitments, the financial cost of the course and travelling to and from college was also difficult for part-time students.

Mason (1993) conducted a study in which he explored the concept of student involvement from commuter college students' perspective. He focused on both Astin's (1985) theory of student involvement and Pace's (1993) work on quality effort. It was hypothesised that "there were differences between highly involved commuter college students and commuter college students who were minimally involved in that college experience". The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine involvement. It was concluded that highly involved commuter college students differed from those students who were minimally involved in the college experience. Students described a variety of opportunities for involvement that did exist on a commuter campus. Students who were highly involved in the college experience were diverse with regard to age, gender and other characteristics. Overall, those students who were enrolled full-time and were younger than 26 years tended to put more effort into the

utilisation of group facilities and participating in organised activities than did part-time students who were 26 years of age or older.

### **2.3 Conclusion.**

In the light of the above discussion it was evident that student involvement in extracurricular activities had an effect on the student academic performance. The involvement in these activities comprised the first-year university experience. Universities have responsibility in ensuring a safe learning environment. Chapter four is going to present results obtained from the University of North West first-year students' concerning their university experiences of their year 2000.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design.

##### 3.1.1. Survey Design.

The present study utilised a survey design. Data or information was collected directly from the subjects. A questionnaire was used to collecting subjects' attitudes, ideas and perceptions. Fink and Kosecoff (1998) define a survey as "a method of collecting information directly from people about their ideas, feelings, health, plans, beliefs, and social, educational and financial background". All surveys rely directly on asking people questions to elicit information.

Babbie (1998) describes a survey as "a process of the administration of questionnaires to a sample of respondents selected from some population". On the other hand, (Nachmias and Nachmias, 2000) describes a survey as "a method of collecting data in which a specifically defined group of individuals are asked to answer a number of identical questions". Survey research is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population, making large samples feasible and flexible.

Survey designs are used primarily to measure characteristics of a population. Through a survey design it is possible not only to describe population parameters but also to predict relationships between those characteristics. Typically, surveys are conducted with large samples. The advantages of the survey are that the researcher can reach a large number of respondents with relatively minimal expenditure. A single instrument can measure numerous variables and statistical manipulation during the data analytic phase can permit multiple uses of the data set (Babbie, 1998).

Huysamen (1994:97) saw survey design as “dealing with the examination of relationships that occur between two or more variables without any planned intervention”. Fowler (1984), on the other hand, saw the purpose of a survey being to produce statistics i.e. quantitative or numerical descriptions of some aspects of the study population. The chief method of collecting information is asking people questions, their answers constituting the data to be analysed. Generally, information is collected only from a fraction of the population that is from a sample rather than from every member of the population.

Using a survey approach has many benefits. Data are gathered from a natural setting. The variables are examined as they are found in the social milieu. A large amount of data can also be gathered at a fairly reasonable price. Surveys using a questionnaire are likely to cover a wide geographical area, to reach many people, to ensure respondent's anonymity and require fewer skills to administer (Fowler, 1995). With careful pre-testing of the instrument and with the use of random sampling techniques, the survey has a considerable degree of representative. No other method can reach as large population as rapidly and be as accurate as the survey.

There are however pitfalls to the survey method. For instance, it only collects self-reports. This means that recall may be selective or that the respondents may not be willing to express attitudes on sensitive topics. Standardisation of the questionnaire also means that the least denominator is represented. The response rate may be low, thereby introducing a bias. Unless the researcher uses the interview, which is more expensive he or she is not able to observe the study subjects directly, thereby losing the feel of the situation (Fowler, 1984).

Babbie (1998) saw the survey method as giving the researcher a quantitative method of establishing relationships and of making generalisations about known populations. The survey is able to do this because of its standardised data collection procedures, which involves a systematically selected sample of individuals who are exposed to a fixed set of questions. Reactions to these questions are systematically classified so that quantitative comparisons can be made.

According to Babbie (1998) the survey method operates in the following way:

1. It involves a problem of theoretical importance, and explicitly stated hypotheses.
2. There are operational definitions of the major variables in the hypotheses.
3. These hypotheses are converted into a questionnaire for gathering data to estimate or measure the variables.
4. It involves the systematic exposure of a group of individuals to those questions and the systematic classification of their responses.
4. Response patterns are sorted and counted to establish quantitative relationships amongst variables and thus test initial hypotheses or suggest new ones.

This study has utilised Babbie's (1998) way that the survey design operates. The problem of the university experience and its' relationship to the academic performance of first-year students was identified. Then hypotheses were stated, Then the hypotheses were converted into a questionnaire that was exposed to individual first year students. Data were collected and classified using the SPSS version 9. Responses were then sorted out and quantitative relationships were made. Finally recommendations were made.

### **3.1.2. Quantitative Design.**

This research study used a quantitative design. Nachmias and Nachmias (2000) define a quantitative design as "one that is concerned with measurement, measuring the magnitude, size or extent of a phenomenon. It counts, measures and analyses data statistically". Burns and Grove (1987) define a quantitative research as "a formal, objective systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the world".

Quantifiers show how they are able to measure phenomena reliably and validly and contend that they are therefore able to interrelate measurements in order to elicit predictions and explanations from what they have studied. Quantification is primarily oriented towards a cumulative tradition of gaining empirically based scientific

knowledge. For instance, the researcher can estimate the probability of a population will hold true (O'Barr, Spain and Tessler, 1973: 36).

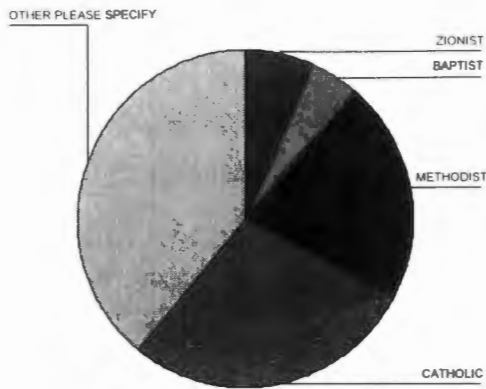
Quantification is directed towards specified, often-exclusive experiences rather than toward the integrated social whole. Its intellectual model is that of natural science, in which a theoretical edifice is constructed step by step and piece by piece. The quantitatively oriented researcher is directed toward different goals. He hopes to test, to establish or to observe relationships among abstract ideas, concepts, variables and measurements in an effort to understand what regularities underlie observable social reality.

### 3.2. **Sample.**

First year students registered for the first time in 2000 at the University of North West completed One hundred and five questionnaires. These students were selected, using a stratified random sampling technique according to their sex, and their faculties. A random seed number of five was generated using SPSS version 9 and thus selecting the sample as specified in the foregoing. The sample has the following characteristics.

From the results 63,8% of the respondents are adolescents and 36,2% of the sample are young adults. According to Erickson's (1971) theory of psychosocial development these adolescents and young adults fall into his two stages that of identity versus role confusion and intimacy versus isolation respectively.

Students' were affiliated to different churches as outlined by figure 3.1.



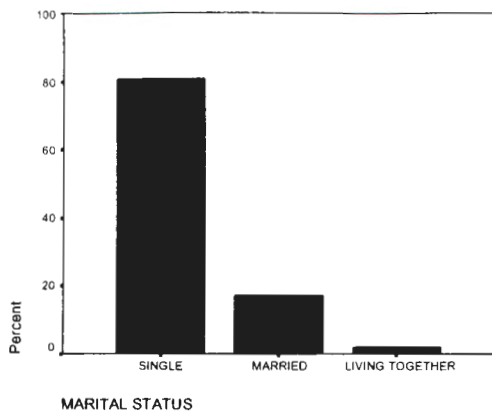
**Figure 3.1. Graph of students' religious affiliation.**

Figure 3.1. Shows that 6,9% were Zionists, 4,9% were Baptists, 21,2% were Methodists, 27,5% were Catholics and 39,1% belonged to other churches.



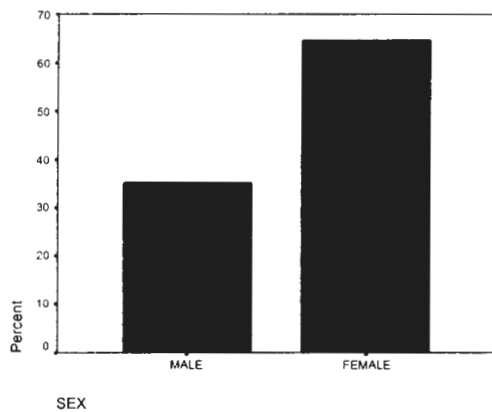
**Figure 3.2 Graph of students' age.**

Figure 3.2. indicates that 17.1% of the respondents were between 16 & 18 years. 25,7% of respondents were between 19 & 21 years old, 21% were between 22 & 24 years old. The highest frequency of respondents was 36,2% which are individuals who were 25 years and older.



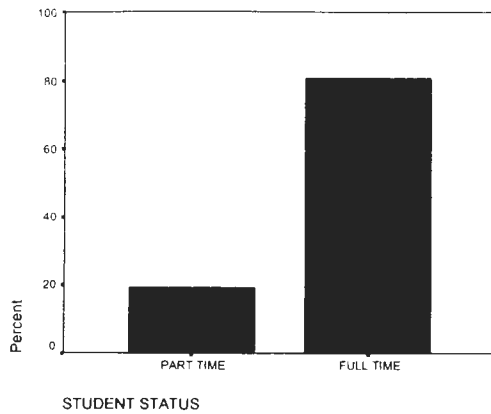
**Figure 3.3. Graph of students' marital status.**

Figure 3.3. Shows that 81% were single people, 17.1% were married and 1.9% lived together with boyfriend, and none of the students was widowed.



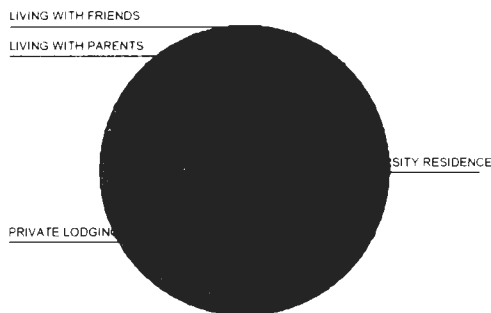
**Figure 3.4. Graph of students' status.**

Figure 3.4. shows that 35.2% of the respondents were male and 64.8% were female.



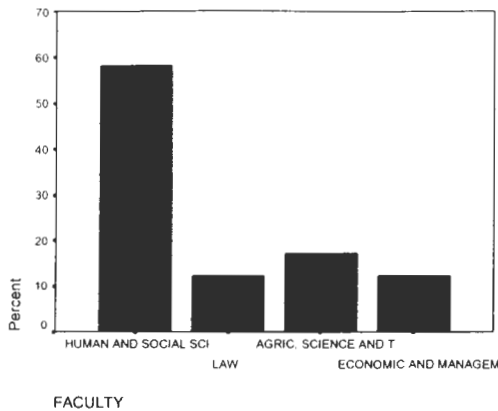
**Figure 3.5. Graph of students' academic status**

The results show that 81% were full-time students and 19% were part-time students as outlined by figure 3.5.



**Figure 3.6. Graph of students' choice of residence.**

The results reveal that 50,3% of the students stayed in University residences, 32,4% Privately stayed on their own, 13,3% stayed with their parents and 3,3% stayed with their friends as summarised by figure 3.6.



**Figure 3.7. Graph of students' faculties.**

It is evident from figure 3.7. that 58.1% of students were from the Human and Social Sciences Faculty, 12,4 % were from the Law Faculty, 17,1% were students from Agriculture Science and Technology Faculty and 12,1% were from the Economic and Management Sciences Faculty.

### **3.4. Procedure.**

Because students' were identified either by course affiliation or domicile lecturers of the selected first-year level classes were contacted or the aim of the study explained to them. They were asked for permission for the researcher to use their classes for questionnaire administration.

The questionnaire was administered to students in their respective classes. The lecturer was asked to give the researcher time after his class for administration of the questionnaire. Students were asked to complete the questionnaires in their own time and to return them in the next class. This was done to save the time of the students. During the next class not all students returned the questionnaires. Students who did not return the questionnaires were noted and their questionnaires were collected individually from where they were living or from a friend. In this way questionnaire collection became a daunting task.

### 3.5. Instrument.

A self-administered questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was piloted at the University of North West on colleagues, then students who were not in the sample. The exercise was to make sure that question items were comprehensible.

Questions in the survey covered the overall student experience of first-year, examining particularly issues that could impact on student academic success. Around 20% of all students drop out in their first year (Huysamen and Raubenheimer, 1999) and information collected in this survey may help identify initiatives, which could be taken to reduce this number.

The questionnaire was also constructed using the College Outcomes Measures Project Objective (COMP-O) and the College Student Experience Questionnaire (COSEQ). The COMP-O purports to measure student performance in the content areas of functioning within social institutions, using science and technology, using the arts and in the process areas of communicating, solving problems and clarifying values (Davis and Murrel, 1990)

Pike (1989 in Davis and Murrel 1990) factored the COMP-O using a principal components analysis and suggested that the COMP-O is defined by a strong general factor containing all six sub-scales and the presence of a possible weak second factor defined by using the arts and solving problems.

The COSEQ was developed by Pace in 1979. Broadly it is a wide range inventory of the campus experiences generally thought to facilitate student learning. Specifically, the COSEQ measures the quality of effort that students put into their collegiate experience as represented by usage of college facilities, clubs, residence facilities and interaction with other students, student groups, faculty and administration. The COSEQ has 14 quality of

effort scales. Multiple regression studies have revealed that quality of student effort was the most important factor in accounting for student's attainment of college objectives.

### **3.6. Hypotheses.**

1. First-year university students feel accepted on their first day on campus as members of the university community.
2. First year students who involve themselves in cultural and other social activities on campus feel initiated to life on campus.
3. The academic support and involvement offered to first-year students by the university has a positive effect on their academic performance.

### **4. Data Analysis.**

The collected data was then subjected to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 9). In this case both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### 4.1. Analysis of Hypotheses.

##### Hypothesis 1.

*First-year university students feel accepted on their first day on campus as members of the university community.*

Generally, new students did not seem to feel at home on their first day at University of North West. In regard to the question about this issue students responded as outlined in table 4.1. With regard to the question “ I feel often feel lonely and isolated at UNW” “I feel very motivated by my studies”. , “Belonging to various sporting codes is a waste of time” students responded in the following way.

**Table 4.1. Frequency table on student’s responses to some of the questions.**

Question		Response					Total
		SD	D	NAD	A	SA	
On my first day I felt at home	<b>f</b>	34	33	16	18	5	105
	<b>%</b>	32,4	31,4	15,2	17,1	3,8	100
I often feel lonely and Isolated here at UNW	<b>f</b>	34	38	14	8	11	105
	<b>%</b>	32,4	36,2	13,3	7,6	10,5	100
I feel very motivated in my studies	<b>f</b>	10	11	11	43	30	105
	<b>%</b>	9,5	10,5	10,5	41	28,6	100
Belonging to various sport codes is a waste of time.	<b>f</b>	40	32	25	8	0	105
	<b>%</b>	38,1	30,5	23,8	7,6	0	100

Key: SD = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

NAD = Neither Agree nor Disagree

A = Agree

SA = Strongly Agree

(f=frequency, and % =percentage).

Table 4.1. reveal that students seemed not to feel lonely and isolated, as indicated by the fact that 68,6% disagreed with this statement as compared with 13,3% who were unsure and 18,1% who were really lonely and isolated. Most of the students seemed motivated by their studies as indicated by 69,5% that agreed with the statement, compared with the 10,5% who were unsure and 20% who were not motivated in their studies. On the other hand belonging to various sporting codes on campus was seen as a waste of time by 7,6%, who agreed 23,8% were unsure and 68,6% disagreed with the statement.

A cross-tabulation of the Question ‘On my first day at UNW I felt at home with the variables sex, religious affiliation and residence elicited the following result.

**Table 4.2. Cross tabulation of sex, residence, and religious affiliation with the question “On my first day at UNW I felt at home”.**

Variable	Response					Total%
	SD	D	NAD	A	SA	
<b>SEX</b>						
Male	10,5%	9,5%	7,6%	7,6%	0%	35,2%
Female	21,9%	21,9%	7,6%	9,5%	3,8%	64,8%
<b>Total</b>	32,4%	31,4%	15,2%	17,1%	3,8%	100%
<b>RESIDENCE</b>						
University	15,2%	15,2%	6,7%	9,5%	3,8%	50,5%
Private	11,4%	10,5%	5,7%	4,8%	0%	32,4%
Living with Parents	5,7%	5,7%	1,0%	1%	0%	13,3%
Living With Friends	0%	0%	1,9%	1,9%	0%	3,8%
<b>Total</b>	31,3%	31,4%	15,3%	17,3%	3,8%	100%
<b>RELIGION</b>						
Zionist	2,9%	1%	1%	1%	1%	6,9%
Baptist	1%	1,9%	1%	1%	0%	4,9%

Methodist	5,7%	10,5%	2,9%	1%	1%	21,2%
Catholic	4,8%	8,6%	5,7%	8,6%	1%	27,5%
Other (specify)	18,1%	9,5%	4,8%	5,7%	1%	39,1%
Total	32,5%	31,5%	15,4%	17,2%	4%	100%

There seem to be more females who did not feel at home at UNW as indicated by 45,8% who strongly disagreed, 7,6% who neither agreed nor disagreed and 7,6% who agreed with the statement. There were fewer males who felt accepted at UNW on their first day as indicated by 7,6% who agreed, 7,6% who were not sure and 20% who disagreed. The chi-square was computed to test the relationship between the variable sex and student's acceptance on their first day with ( $\chi^2 = 4,894$  df = 4 p = 0,303).

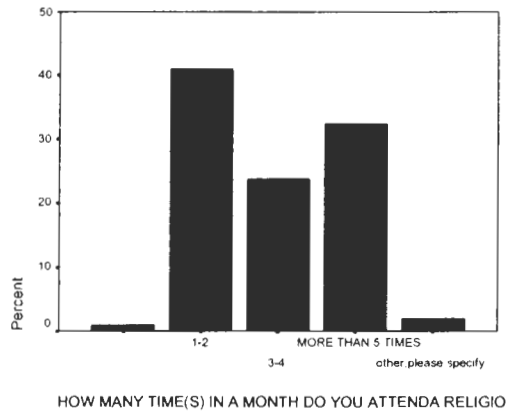
The religious affiliation of students and their feelings during the first day were examined by computing the chi-square with ( $\chi^2 = 17,665$  df = 16 p = 0,344). The cross tabulation above shows that 9,6% of Catholics felt at home during their first day, 15,4% did not feel at home and 5,7% were not sure of the statement. Of the 21% Methodists, 16,2% did not feel at home, 2,9% were not sure and 2% feel at home. Of the 6,7% Zionists, 2% felt at home, 1% were not sure and 3,9% did not feel at home. Of the 4,8% Baptists, 1% felt at home, 1% were not sure and 2,9% did not feel at home. The remaining 39% comprised other affiliations; 27,6% did not feel at home, 4,8% were not sure and 6,7% did feel at home.

Most students in university residences did not feel accepted on their first as indicated by 30,4% who disagreed, 6,7% who were unsure and 13,3% who agreed. For those students living privately on their own 21,9% did not feel accepted, 3,7% were unsure and 4,8% felt accepted. Most students who lived with their parents did not feel accepted as indicated by 11,4% that disagreed, 15% who were unsure and 1% did feel accepted.

For those students living with their friends none of them felt at home and none felt accepted and only 3,8% were unsure of their acceptance. The relationship between the two variables namely: Residence and "On my first day I felt at home at UNW" was examined with ( $\chi^2 = 15,329$  df = 12 p = 0,224).

## Hypothesis 2.

*First year students who involve themselves in cultural and other social activities on campus feel initiated to campus life.*

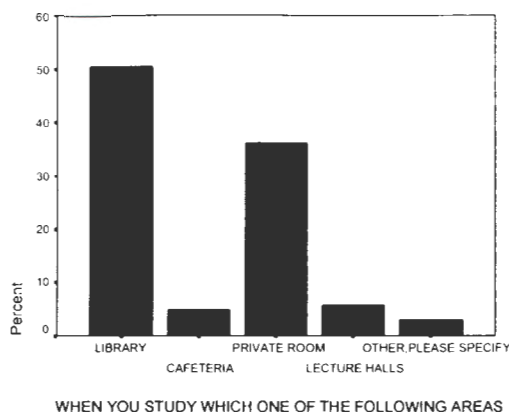


**Figure 4.1. Graph of students' rate of religious attendance.**

As far as religious services were concerned 42% of the students attended once or twice a month, 23,8% attended three to four times in a month, 32,4% more than five times and 1,9% did not attend religious services at all. The results are indicated in figure 4.1.

Of the students' involved 28,6% said they took part in social or cultural activities and 71,4% were not involved. 39% participated in sports and 61% did not participate in sports. 86,7% did not participate in politics on campus whereas 13,3% participated. It is interesting to note that most of the students did not actually participate in extramural activity as indicated by 28% who participated and 71,4% that did not participate. It was also evident that first year students did not participate in political organisations on campus as shown by 86,7% compared to 13,3% who actually participated. In sporting activities only 61% participated and 39% did not participate.

Most of the students listened to the radio during their spare time as indicated by 44,8%, 19% did shopping, 8,6% went to movies, 4,8% played indoor games and 22,9% indicated other activities.



**Figure 4.2. Graph of the students' choice of study area.**

Figure 4.2. indicates that when students' study they mostly utilised the library as indicated by 50,5%. 36,2% utilised a private room, 5,7% utilised lecture halls and 4,8 used the cafeteria for studying. The use of the library may be associated with the new, unfamiliar study area that these students are now exposed to at the university.

Fewer students felt that spending time with friends could improve their marks, as indicated by 47,6 %, of responses and 52,4 % felt that it would not improve their marks. A cross tabulation of the above findings with the variable "Do you participate in sporting activities" with the chi-square computed to test the relationship between the two variables with ( $\chi^2 = 0,948$  df = 1 p= 0,321) is outlined by table 4.3.

**Table 4.3. Cross tabulation of the question "Do you think that spending time with friends might improve your marks" with "Do you participate in sporting activities"?**

			Do you participate in sporting activities?		Total
			Yes	No	
Do you think that spending time with friends might improve your marks?	Yes	Observed	22	28	50
		Expected	19	31	
	No	Observed	18	37	55
		Expected	21	34	
Total		Observed	40	65	105

**Chi-square table 1.****Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.897 <sup>a</sup>	5	.564

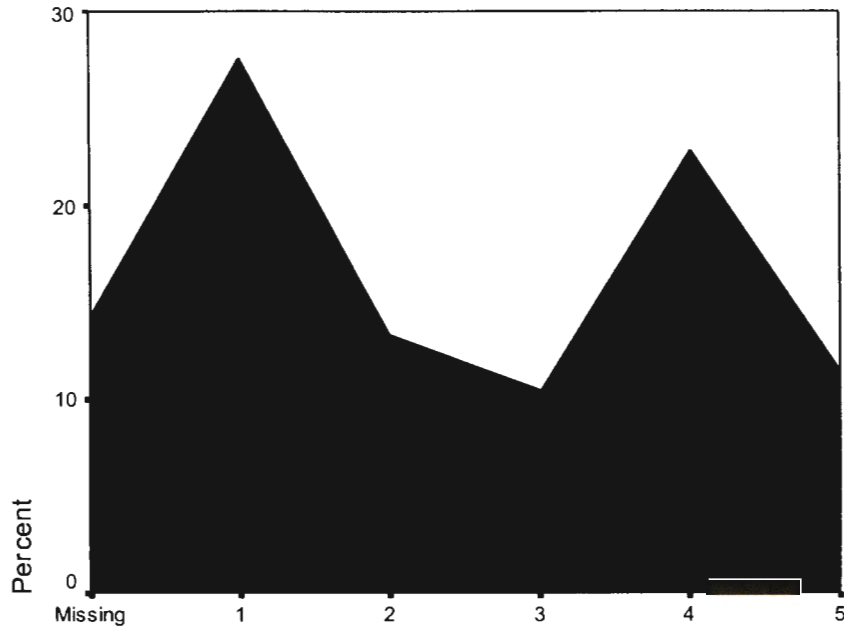
a. 7 cells (58.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.38.

Chi-square table 1. indicates that there is no statistical significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis “that spending time with friends might improve first year student’s marks” and has no association with “participation in sporting activities”.

Of the 39% respondents who participated in sports, 21% agreed that spending time with friends might improve their marks, whereas 18,1% saw spending time with friends as a waste of time and energy. Of the 61% who did not participate in sports, 26,7% saw spending time with friends as improving one's marks and 14,3% did not agree, seeing it as waste of time.

Of the students who saw spending time with friends as improving one's marks, 11,4% of them attributed spending time with friends as a way to share ideas. 7,6% attributed time with friends to having fun, 8,6% responded that it depended on the kind of friends one had. 8.6% of the students attributed spending time with friends to improving one’s life and one’s academic knowledge and 1% attributed it to other reasons. Among students who saw spending time with friends as not improving one’s academic performance, 14,3% said friends discuss personal or social issues instead of academic ones. 7% saw their friends’ discussions as not constructive. 17,1% said it is a waste of time and 13,3% gave other reasons.

A t-test was computed to test the relationship between the variables “spending time with friends” and “residence” and elicited the following result. ( $t= 1,697$   $df=3$   $p=0,638$ ).



why do you think that participating in extracurricular activities is i

**Figure 4.3. Graph on reasons why it is important to participate in extracurricular activities.**

Of the students who thought that participating to extracurricular activities was important, 27,6% attributed this to maintaining their health, 13,3% to socialising, 10,5% to keeping one occupied and broadening one's knowledge, 22,9% to rejuvenating and refreshing themselves and 11,4% gave other reasons.

In recommending that one should participate in extracurricular activities, 12,4%of the students attributed this to interacting and socialising 40% to maintaining ones health, 14,3% said it kept them refreshed, 7,6% said it kept them busy and occupied and 17,1% gave other reasons. For those students who did not recommend participation 2,9% were less interested, 2,9% attributed it to a waste of time and 2,9% gave other reasons. This shows that the high percentage of students was positive about participation in extracurricular activities.

### Hypothesis 3.

*The academic support and involvement offered to year-students by the University of North West first has an effect on their academic performance.*

**Table 4.4. A cross tabulation of variables “Sex” with “The guidance counselling centre is an important resource for developing students”.**

			The guidance and counseling centre is an important resource for students		Total
			Yes	No	
Sex	Male	Observed	35	2	37
		Expected	35	2	
	Female	Observed	64	4	68
		Expected	64	4	
Total		Observed	99	6	105

In response to the question on the guidance and counselling centre as an important resource for developing students, students responded in the following way. 94% (f=99) of the students regarded it as important and 6%(f=6) regarded it as unimportant. A cross-tabulation on the above finding with the variable on sex yielded the following result ( $\chi^2 = 0,146$  df = 1 p =0,702). There were fewer males who saw the guidance centre as unimportant as indicated by 1,9%(f=2) and females were 3,8%(f=4). Those who saw it as vital were 60%9 (f=64) of females and 33,3%(f=35) males.

### Chi-square table 2.

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.010 <sup>b</sup>	1	.920

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.11.

From cross-tabulation (table 4.4.) on the question “The guidance and counselling centre as an important resource” with the variable “Since I came to the UNW, my

marks have improved a lot,” it is interesting to note that students who saw the guidance and counselling centre as important also improved their marks. This is indicative from the 48,5% of students who saw their marks improving and also the vitality of the guidance and counselling centre as compared to 21% who disagreed and 23,8% that were not sure. Of the 6,7% of the students who saw the guidance and counselling centre as unimportant 2% had their improved their marks, 1% were unsure about their not improved their marks.

A chi-square was computed to test the relationship between the variable “Marks improving” and “The importance of the guidance and counselling centre” and yielded the following result ( $\chi^2=6,345^*$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0,609$ ). The chi-square results show that there is no statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis that “The guidance and counselling centre is an important resource” and has no association with “Since I came to UNW my marks have improved”.

**Table 4.5. Cross tabulation of “ Since I came to UNW, my marks have improved” with “The guidance and counselling centre is an important resource in developing students”.**

	The guidance and counselling centre is an important resource in developing students.		
Since I came to UNW my marks have improved.	Yes	No	Total
Disagree	21%	2%	8,6%
Neutral	23,8%	1%	24,8%
Agree	48,5%	3,8%	42,3%
Total	93,3%	6,7%	100%

The health care centre (clinic) was seen as important by 98,1% and 1,9% saw it as unimportant. Of the 98,1% who were positive about the health centre, 46,7% said it helped students on campus and handled emergencies, 13,3% attributed to the provision

of health education, 13,3% said it provided medication, 17,1% said it was near and accessible to students and 6.7% gave other reasons.

Students' responses showed that there was an availability of lecturer's for consultation In response to the question on this issue, students responded in the following way;

**Table 4.6. Frequency table of student's response to some questions.**

Response	SD	D	NAD	A	SA	Total %
Lecturer's are available for consultation	13,3	11,4	22,9	42,9	9,5	100
Marks have improved	8,6	14,3	24,8	37,1	15,2	100
Marks remains the same	24,8	26,7	30,5	10,5	7,6	100
Marks getting poor	39	30,5	16,2	5,7	8,6	100
Easy to discussion of academic problems with lectures	14,3	21,9	14,3	31,4	18,1	100

13,3% Strongly disagreed, 11,4% Disagree, 22,9% neither agreed nor disagreed, 42,9% Agreed and 9,5% Strongly Agreed with the statement. In response to the question "When I have a problem with a course I find it easy to discuss with my lecturer", students responded in the following manner. 14,3% strongly disagree 21,9% Disagree 14,3% neither agreed nor disagreed 31,4% Agreed and 18,1% strongly agreed with the statement. Students found it easy to discuss their academic problems with lecturers whenever necessary. It was also evident that the students whose marks remained the same were not discussing their problems with their lecturers. As indicated by table 4.6.

A cross-tabulation on the variables "Lecturers are available for consultation" and "Marks getting poor" elicited the following result.

**Table 4.7. Cross tabulation of the two variables Marks getting poor and Lecturer's availability for consultation**

**Table H3**

			Since I came to UNW, my marks are getting poor.			Total
			Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
Lecturers are available for consultation.	Disagree	Observed	16	5	5	26
		Expected	18	4	4	
	Neutral	Observed	20	2	2	24
		Expected	17	4	3	
	Agree	Observed	37	10	8	55
		Expected	38	9	8	
Total	Observed	73	17	15	105	

**Chi-square table 3.**

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.178 <sup>a</sup>	4	.528

a. 4 cells (44.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.43.

Table 4.7. shows that marks were indeed deteriorating as indicated by 53,1%(f=55) who agreed, 22,9%(f=24) who were neutral and 24% (f=26) who denied that marks were deteriorating. This can be related to the variable "lecture's who were available for consultation" as indicated by the 69,5%(f=73) who disagreed, 16,2%(f=17) who were not sure and 14,3% (f=15) who agreed to the statement.

In testing the relationship between "The marks of students deteriorating since they came to UNW" and the variable "I often interact with students of other cultures outside class", the t-test was used at the 95% confidence interval and yielded the following finding:

t=17,656 df=104 Sig (2tailed)=0,000 Mean diff=2,14 Lower=1,90 Upper= 2,38

t=28,350 df=104 Sig (2tailed)=0,000 Mean diff=3,43 Lower=3,19 Upper=3,67.

This indicates that the interaction between students of different cultures is high in comparison with the variable marks deteriorating. There was no highly positive relationship that yielded to this result to be significant.

The one sample statistic was computed and it further tested the relationship of “Marks deteriorating” and “Interacting with students outside class” as outlined by table 4.8. When we compare the mean between these two variables “Interacting with students of other cultures outside class” had a higher average than “Students’ marks deteriorating”

**Table 4.8. Sample t-test on “Marks deteriorating” and “Interacting among students of different cultures outside class”.**

	Mean	SD	SEM
Marks deteriorating	2,14	1,24	0,12
Interacting with students outside class	3,43	1,24	0,12

A cross-tabulation of the two variables “Marks remaining the same and “I find it easy to discuss academic problems with my lecturer”, yielded the following result as outlined by table 4.9.

**Table 4.9. Cross tabulation of “Since I came to UNW my marks have remained the same” with “When I have a problem with courses I find it easy to discuss it with my lecturer”**

			When I have a problem with courses I find it easy to discuss it with my lecturer.			Total
			Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	
Since I came to UNW, my marks remains the same.	Disagree	Observed	14	7	33	54
		Expected	20	8	27	
	Neutral	Observed	16	5	11	32
		Expected	12	5	16	
	Agree	Observed	8	3	8	19
		Expected	7	3	9	
Total		Observed	38	15	52	105

#### Chi-square table 4.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.736 <sup>a</sup>	4	.150

a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.71.

Chi-square table 4 indicates that 36,2% (f=32) of students marks did not remain the same, 49,5% (f=54) of student marks remained the same and 14,3% (f=15) of the students were not sure of their marks. This indicates that fewer students' marks have remained the same, neither improving nor getting worse. When students had a problem it was easy for them to discuss this with a lecturer as indicated by 51,5% (f=52) of respondents. 36,5%(f=38) found it difficult to discuss an academic problem with their lectures and 14,3%(f=15) were not sure. A chi-square was computed to test the relationship between the two variables, "Marks remaining the same" and 'Easy discussion of academic work with the lecturer'. The chi-square yielded the following finding. (t= 25,207 df=16 p =0,066)

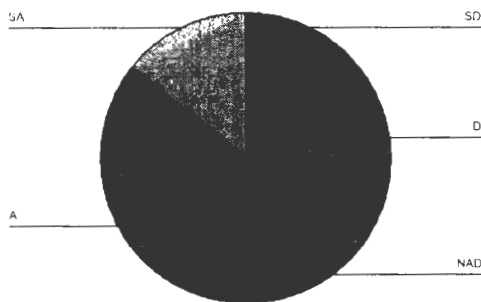


Figure 4.4. Pie graph on 'After the library orientation I found my way easily around the library'.

In response to the question about 'Finding your way easily after the library orientation, students' responses were: 14,3% strongly disagree, 17,1% disagree, 17,1% neither agree nor disagree, 37,1% agree and 14,3% strongly agree as outlined by figure 4.4.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### INTEPRETATION OF FINDINGS.

#### 5.1. Discussion.

From the results it is clear that first year students of the University of North West did not receive a good reception on their first day. This may indicate what Cox and Hedge (1981) have cited in their literature. They found that on arrival to university a common feature for first-year students is that of strangeness. These students are unlikely to know many other people and are away from their families. For many of these students it will be their first experience of independence and staff members and other students who are already familiar with the routines and customs of the university or college will surround them.

During the students' early days of arrival on campus they develop autonomy. According to Chickering (1985) they establish emotional independence from parents and peers and break free from the continuous need for reassurance, affection and approval. They develop an increased tolerance for others, a greater capacity for intimacy and relationships based on trust, independence and individuality.

Although students are in a new environment the results however show that they are not isolated. Students living with friends and those living in university residences were most motivated in their studies. It may be that parents pressure those living with parents. They may be lonely and lack time to interact with others. Students residing privately may have no contact with other students after class. Those residing with friends and in university residences have a chance to interact with peers hence they were more motivation.

Interaction and participation in cultural and other social activities was recommended by 96% of the students and only 4% did not recommend it. This, is however, contrary

to the 24.8% of students who actually participated and 75.2% of students who did not participate in any cultural or social activity. This shows the difference in how students think and how they are actually involved.

It can also be compared to the 12.5% of students who participated in a particular political party on campus and the 87.5% of students who did not participate in any political organisation. This may be indicative of what Wilson (2000) claimed that students are intimidated and their lack of information keeps them from joining clubs and organisations.

Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1989) described particular adolescent behaviours such as participating in-group activities in Erickson's (1971) theory as part of the search for identity. Society provides active support in the form of social institutions like colleges, universities, tribal schools and extended vocational training. Papalia and Olds (1992) describe the fundamental virtue of fidelity, which is sustained loyalty, faith, or a sense of belonging to friends and companions or to a set of values, a religion, a movement or an ethnic group.

Young adults add an affiliate element to the list of rituals, participating and sharing with others in work, friendships and love. Bourner *et.al* (1991) described involvement in terms of social identity. This is the students' felt responsibility towards promoting social interaction with and among them. Baird (1990) states that if we consider the low level of out of class experiences in colleges it suggests that many students may not become involved in campus activities with the consequence of their performance in class.

It is evident from the results that a sense of belonging is one of the main issues faced by the young first-year students. Individuals want to affiliate to different activities on campus. This becomes the individual's integration of all his drives, wishes, expectations and their skills. Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1989) describe this quest for

uniqueness as the search for identity. The young person is trying to search for a meaningful role in the society or community he or she finds himself or herself in.

The results further indicate that spending time with friends may not improve the students' marks. There was no statistical evidence to reject that there is no association between participating in sports and spending time with friends improving one's marks. Most students who participated in sports thought that spending time with friends might not improve their marks. This could be indicative of what Beyer (1993) discusses. Students during their college years should discover their reality for dependence on each other. Astin (1985:13) goes on to describe the scope of students influence on each other as enormous, ranging from their academic lives to their personal lives. Friendships are a major influence for first-year students, affecting their values and behaviour.

More than half (57%) of students who believed that spending time with friends might not improve their marks whereas 47,6% believe that it may improve their marks. This may be related to what Mason's (1993) study on the exploration of student involvement in the commuter college student experience. The study concluded that highly involved commuter college students differed from those students minimally involved in the college experience. Students who were involved were diverse in age, gender and other characteristics. Overall, those students who were enrolled full-time and were younger put more effort into the utilisation of group facilities and participating in organised activities than did part-time students of 26 years and older.

As far as interacting with students of other cultures outside class was concerned, 57% of the students indicated that they interacted, 19% were not sure and 27% did not interact. This may be what Baird (1990) meant when he said that the predominant character of student experience involves class work, studying and interacting with others. Relatively few students have rich intense college experience as seen by the 27% who do not interact with others. The 27% of students who are uninvolved and who according to Astin (1985) may neglect their studies, spend little time on campus, abstain from extracurricular activities and have little contact with faculty members or

other students. The 57% of students who interact are involved students on campus. These students are defined by Astin (1985) as “students who devote considerable time and energy to studying, spending a lot of time on campus, participating actively in students’ organisation and frequently interacting with faculty members and other students”.

The majority (93%) of the students regarded the guidance and counselling centre as an important resource for developing students. This may indicate what Astin’s (1985) programs provide opportunities for students to explore feelings and developmental issues, especially in areas of autonomy and interpersonal relationships. These programs promote stress reduction and stress management, women’s issues, men’s issues and human sexuality.

Academic support and involvement as provided by the guidance and counselling centre and the students’ marks were compared. The results show that students whose marks have improved were in favour of the importance of the guidance and counselling centre as a resource for developing students. There was no statistical evidence that may support the belief that academic support and involvement was associated with students’ academic performance. Bronfenbrenner (1979) postulated three reasons for the counselling centre to assist freshmen in making the transition to college.

1. *Personal development.*
2. *Academic development.*
3. *Career development.*

This can be compared to the 34,5% of students who saw the centre as important in personal counselling. 35,4% for career counselling and 13,3% for academic development. The guidance and counselling centre was seen by students as a way to bridge the gap between personal matters and academic affairs.

The support and involvement as given by the lecturers' availability for consultation was compared with student's marks getting poor. Results show that lecturers were indeed available by 9,5% who strongly agree and 42,9% who agree as compared to the unavailability as shown by 13,3% Strongly disagree and 11,4% who disagree. Students found it easier to discuss academic problems with lecturers and the student's marks remaining the same hence their marks improved. This may be that lecturer's are giving their academic and emotional support that enhances these first year's academic performance

The significant relationship between the academic staff being involved in the student's studies has a positive effect on their marks. The improving of one's marks makes one to feel good about oneself. There is a lot of fulfilment that comes after good performance. This also goes with academic performance because it is a reward of hard work to the student.

When students participate they try to confront some issues as in socialising and interacting with other students on campus. According to Gerdes (1988) the students must confront specific issues and resolve them if a sense of identity is to be achieved. This is a stage when a decision concerning vocational choice is reached and a synthesis between personal needs and societal demands are achieved. In a complex and changing society these are difficult issues to deal with as the student is in a new environment, and if a sense of identity is not achieved there is role confusion. Engler (1983)

During participation in different sports, cultural, social or political organisation students form interpersonal relationships. According to Meyer, More and Viljoen (1989) these students are able to share their identity with other people. They can now have ongoing personal relationships and develop the ethical strength to continue the relationship despite the sacrifices and compromises they might demand.

When lecturer's put time for consultation students seek emotional and reassurance from most lectures. It is not the academic work that they ask about it is about themselves in relation to their lecturers. What most students would want from the consultation is to be taken seriously as students.

## **5.2. SUMMARY**

This study focused on the psychosocial experiences of first-year students and their effect on students' academic performance at the University of North West. One hundred and five (105) first year students of both sexes were participants. Their ages ranged between 16 to 25 and older.

The results of the study showed that a relationship exists between the students' experiences and their academic performance. Students' marks improved after involvement in campus activities. Students who believed that involvement was important saw their marks improving. There was no statistical evidence to reject that there is no association between participation in cultural activities, sports and other social activities and spending time with friends.

First-year students at the University of North West did not receive a good reception at the University on their first day. The first year students did not have feelings of acceptance and belonging during their first year at UNW. These students were not isolated. Students believe that participating and involving themselves in cultural and social activities had an effect on their academic performance and their student experience. The conditions offered by the university community intimidated the students and discouraged them from involving themselves fully in campus activities.

The guidance and counselling centre and the health care centre, as examples of the student support programmes, were considered useful in giving student support. There was no statistical evidence to reject the association between the academic support and involvement the University has with student's academic performance. Academic staff

gave students the academic support that they needed for the entire first year. The academic support made student's marks improve. These student support programmes increase students' interaction with other students and with faculty members. They help to increase the intensity of the student experience.

## CHAPTER SIX

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS.

#### 6.1. Introduction.

The students' experiences cannot be studied in isolation. Involvement by different stakeholders inside and outside the university is very important. It takes a lot of courage and determination on the part of university management to create opportunities for student interaction especially, of first year-students.

#### 6.2. Recommendations.

1. Universities should create conditions that will make first-year students feel accepted during their first day on campus. These conditions will also enhance the teaching and learning culture to promote good academic performance and achievement. The venues and times during orientation should be clearly displayed to reduce the first year student's anxieties where to go and when to go.
2. Senior students involved in the orientation programme should provide a warm, welcoming environment for new students. Senior students should not take advantage of these new students by taking them to their rooms and seducing them or "date raping" them. This is the worst first day experience for many of the students.
3. Senior students should avoid labelling freshmen as "fresher" because this does not create a feeling of acceptance and warmth but promotes instead a feeling of isolation and segregation.

4. Student organisations on campus both cultural and social must reach out to students by publicly advertising their activities to every student, especially to new students, thereby promoting student involvement.
5. Leaders in student social organisations should encourage students to join their organisations on campus. This includes the full participation of all students responsible for their social organisations.
6. Students residing off the campus should maximise their use of student social activities by spending more time on campus and interacting more with other students and faculty members. Some of these students feel that spending time on campus is a waste of time. They believe that they are on campus to study and attend classes only. It is each and every students' duty and responsibility to involve him and her on campus in order to gain from the student experience.
7. Part-time students should also be encouraged to join some social activities or sports in order to have a more intense university experience. Part-time students must also try to spend more time on campus and interact more with other students.
8. The student representative council, as the mother student body, should initiate programmes in consultation with the entire student organisation on campus and work collaboratively to enhance student support. The student representative council has the greatest responsibility to serve students in academic, social and psychological matters by liaising with all the student support programmes on campus.
9. The student support department at the university should network with other academic and non-academic departments and organisations to work together on issues facing first-year students. They should also liaise with external companies or organisations that have the same objectives and aims, for example the student support associations of other universities in the country. This will lead to the

pursuance of common objectives and the enhancement of first-year student experience. The University will have a chance to get different views and ideas about first-year students then, it can choose some or create new ideas for implementation to fulfil the institution's mission and enhance student satisfaction on campus.

10. First-year students' need support from their parents when they leave home. The parent-child-relationship should continue as before, to encourage students to feel free to involve themselves in different cultural or social activities for emotional growth. Parents are the role models for their children. It is important for parents to project good values that will endure also in their children's academic world and survive the harsh conditions of life on campus.
11. There should be a good relationship between the academic and the non-academic staff and first-year students. Open communication between the university community and first year should characterise the relationships so that involvement on campus is not hindered.
12. The health centre should continue the services it offers on campus. There should be a 24-hour service on campus in order to help students who are in residence after hours. The 24-hour service is essential for crises that may occur in the middle of the night and require immediate attention.
13. The guidance and counselling centre should continue to offer the services of counselling. Involvement of students in campus should be encouraged to reduce and eventually prevent isolation. Isolation may have negative consequences such as depression, suicide and others. Involvement promotes satisfaction not dissatisfaction as in the case of a depressed individual.
14. It is recommended that universities help develop their first-year's psychological and social world in order to maximise their academic success. It is further recommended that students should utilise the guidance and counselling centre to its optimum, this

in turn having an impact on their psychological and social well being and their academic performance. The guidance and counselling centre together with the health centre will help first-year students' to understand and acknowledge their experiences to optimise both psychological and social growth.

### **6.3. Limitations.**

1. This research study was conducted at the University of the North West, so its conclusion cannot be generalised to all first year students in other institutions of higher learning.
2. The study was a cross-sectional survey with one measurement in one point; a longitudinal study may be conducted where a comparison of first-year students can be made over a longer period.
3. There were more females than males in the study and this may not be a true reflection and representative of both sexes. A study with an equal number of both sexes can be conducted and may yield different results.

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## **APPENDICES**

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Dear Student.

My name is Thilivhali Musehane, a Masters student in Clinical Psychology at the Department of Psychology of the University of North West. I am undertaking this research study as part of my Program.

The study examines the psychosocial experiences of first year students on their academic performance. You have been selected from a list of all registered first year students of the North West to participate in this study. Your participation in this study is very important. When you receive this questionnaire complete it and return it to the lecturer by the end of the class.

Your responses are confidential, no names or individual information will be released without your consent. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact Thilivhali at 389 2398.

Sincerely

Thilivhali Musehane.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

A SURVEY ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AND ITS EFFECT ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.

### Instructions

1. This questionnaire consist of three sections
  - A. Biographical information
  - B. Campus Involvement and Academic Performance.
  - C. Questions on campus Activities.
2. Answer all questions.
3. Using a pencil make a mark or cross in the appropriate box

### A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.

1. **Religious Affiliation:** Zionist

Baptist

Methodist

Catholic

Other, (please specify)

2. **Your age on your last birthday:**

16-18

19-21

22-24

25 and above

**3. Marital Status:**

Single

Married

Widowed

Living Together

Other, (please specify)

**4. Sex:**

Male

Female

**5. Student Status:**

Part-time

Full-time.

**6. Residence:**

University residences

Private lodging

Living with parents

Living with Friends

**7. Faculty:**

Human and Social Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agric, Science and Tech	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic and Management Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Programme Registered:**

Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.1. How long is your programme in years? \_\_\_\_\_

8.2. How long in years do you think it will take you to complete your programme? \_\_\_\_\_

8.3. What inspired you to choose the program you selected?

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**9. Economic status.**

9.1. What is the nature of your parent's employment?

**Mother:** Professional

Administrative

Technical

Labourer

Other, (please specify)

**Father:** Professional

Administrative

Technical

Labourer

Other, (please specify)

9.2. What are your parent's level of education?

**Mother:** Std 6

Std 8

Matric

Teacher's Certificate

University Degree

Other, (please specify)

**Father:** Std6

Std 8

Matric

Teacher's Certificate

University Degree

Other, (please specify)

9.3. At home, how many bedrooms are there in the house?

One

Two

Three

Four or more.

9.4. How many people live in the house?

Children	<input type="text"/>
Adults	<input type="text"/>

9.5. How would you rate your parent's joint income per month?

R 0.00 –R 999.00	<input type="text"/>
R 1000.00 –R1999.00	<input type="text"/>
R2000.00- R3999.00	<input type="text"/>
R4000.00 and above.	<input type="text"/>

### 10. Matric Information.

10.1. What symbol did you obtain in matric? \_\_\_\_\_

10.2. In Matric did you do any of these subjects?

Maths	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
English	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

### B. CAMPUS ACTIVITIES.

11. How many time(s) in a month do you attend a religious service?

1-2

3-4

More than 5 times.

12. Are you involved in a social or cultural activity here on campus?

Yes

No

If 'yes' which one? \_\_\_\_\_

- 13. Do you participate in sporting activities?  
Yes
- No

If 'yes', which sporting activity do you participate? \_\_\_\_\_

- 14. Do you participate in a student political organisation?  
Yes
- No.

If 'yes', which political organisation do you participate?

\_\_\_\_\_

- 15. What do you do in your leisure time?  
Listen to the radio
- Shopping
- Play indoor Games
- Go to movies
- Other, (please specify)

16. When you study, which one of the following study areas do you use?

- Library
- Cafeteria
- Private room
- Lecture Halls
- Other, (please specify)

17. Is this place that you use for studying quiet or noisy?

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you think that participating in extracurricular activities is important?

- Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. Do you recommend that one should participate in extracurricular activities?

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you think that having a study group might improve your marks?

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. Do you think that spending time with friends might improve your academic performance?

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. Do you think that having a job and attend class's part-time takes more of your time for studying and preparing for exams, classes and assignments.

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

23.The guidance and counselling centre is an important resource for developing students.

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

24.Do you think the health centre is an important resource on campus?

Yes

No

Elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

C. Below are statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-5 scale below to indicate your agreement with each item by crossing the appropriate number in line with that statement.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

25.On my first day at UNW, I felt at home.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

26. Belonging to various sporting codes on campus is a waste of time.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

27. I am not particularly interested in extra-curricular activities.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

28. I find it easy to make friends.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

29. I often feel very lonely and isolated here at UNW.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

30. I generally keep to myself here at UNW.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

31. I have not made friends at UNW.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

32. After the library orientation programme, I found my way easily around the library.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

33. Reading material for my registered courses is readily available in the Library.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

34. I feel very motivated in my studies.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

35. When I have a problem with courses, I find easy to discuss it with my lecturer.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

36. Lecturers are available to me for consultation.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

37. Most lecturers in my classes take interest in my progress.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

38. Lecturers made it clear from the start what to expect from students.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

39. Lecturer's here at UNW usually give helpful feedback on my progress.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

40. I would like to make use of University facilities if I could.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

41. I often interact with students of other cultures in class.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

42. I often interact with students of other cultures outside class.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

43. I have had difficulty in adjusting to the different style of teaching at UNW.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

44. My financial status has lowered my motivation for studying.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

45. University of NW hasn't lived to my expectations.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

46. There is a positive attitude towards learning amongst my fellow students

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

47. Commuting from home to University takes most of the time for studying.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

48. Residence wardens are helpful in residence matters

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

49. Since I came to UNW, my marks have improved a lot.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

50. Since I came to UNW, my marks are busy have deteriorated.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

51. Since I came to at UNW my marks have remained the same.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Thank you very much for your time.**