

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS POST COVID-19 AND ACADEMIC  
RESILIENCE: CASE OF DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY, ATHI RIVER  
CAMPUS, KENYA

By

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APPROVAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS POST COVID-19 AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: CASE OF DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY, ATHI RIVER CAMPUS, KENYA

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## DECLARATION

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS POST COVID-19 AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: CASE OF DAYSTAR  
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I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any  
other college or university for academic credit.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>APPROVAL</u> .....	ii
<u>DECLARATION</u> .....	iv
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u> .....	v
<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u> .....	vi
<u>LIST OF TABLES</u> .....	viii
<u>LIST OF FIGURES</u> .....	ix
<u>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</u> .....	x
<u>ABSTRACT</u> .....	xi
<u>DEDICATION</u> .....	xii
<u>CHAPTER ONE</u> .....	1
<u>INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY</u> .....	1
<u>Introduction</u> .....	1
<u>Background to the Study</u> .....	5
<u>Statement of the Problem</u> .....	12
<u>Purpose of the study</u> .....	13
<u>Objectives of the Study</u> .....	13
<u>Research Questions</u> .....	14
<u>Justification of the Study</u> .....	14
<u>Significance of the Study</u> .....	16
<u>Assumptions of the Study</u> .....	17
<u>Scope of the Study</u> .....	18
<u>Limitations and Delimitations of the Study</u> .....	18
<u>Definitions of Terms</u> .....	19
<u>Summary</u> .....	22
<u>CHAPTER TWO</u> .....	23
<u>LITERATURE REVIEW</u> .....	23
<u>Introduction</u> .....	23
<u>Theoretical Framework</u> .....	23
<u>General Literature Review</u> .....	35
<u>Empirical Literature Review</u> .....	47
<u>Conceptual Framework</u> .....	68
<u>Summary</u> .....	70
<u>CHAPTER THREE</u> .....	71
<u>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</u> .....	71
<u>Introduction</u> .....	71
<u>Research Design</u> .....	71
<u>Target Population</u> .....	74

<a href="#">Sample Size</a> .....	75
<a href="#">Sampling Technique</a> .....	77
<a href="#">Data Collection Instruments</a> .....	79
<a href="#">Reliability of Research Instruments</a> .....	82
<a href="#">Data Collection Procedures</a> .....	84
<a href="#">Pre-testing</a> .....	85
<a href="#">Ethical Considerations</a> .....	87
<a href="#">Summary</a> .....	89
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	<b>90</b>
<b><a href="#">DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION</a></b> .....	<b>90</b>
<a href="#">Introduction</a> .....	90
<a href="#">Analysis and Interpretation</a> .....	90
<a href="#">Response Rate</a> .....	90
<a href="#">Summary of Key Findings</a> .....	117
<a href="#">Summary</a> .....	118
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b> .....	<b>119</b>
<b><a href="#">DISCUSSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</a></b> .....	<b>119</b>
<a href="#">Introduction</a> .....	119
<a href="#">Discussion of Key Findings</a> .....	119
<a href="#">Conclusion</a> .....	122
<a href="#">Recommendations</a> .....	123
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>125</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>150</b>
<a href="#">Appendix A: Informed Consent Form</a> .....	150
<a href="#">Appendix B: Socio Demographic Questionnaire</a> .....	153
<a href="#">Appendix C: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21)</a> .....	155
<a href="#">Appendix D: Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30)</a> .....	157
<a href="#">Appendix E: Authorization from Daystar University</a> .....	161
<a href="#">Appendix F: Ethical Clearance</a> .....	162
<a href="#">Appendix G: Research Permit</a> .....	163
<a href="#">Appendix H: Plagiarism Report</a> .....	164

## LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 4.1: Response Rate</i> .....	90
<i>Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents' Gender</i> .....	91
<i>Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Age</i> .....	91
<i>Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status</i> .....	92
<i>Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents' Religious affiliation</i> .....	92
<i>Table 4.6: Respondents' Employment Status</i> .....	93
<i>Table 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by Family Size</i> .....	93
<i>Table 4.8: Distribution of Respondents by Field of Study</i> .....	94
<i>Table 4.9: Distribution of Respondents by Academic year of Study</i> .....	95
<i>Table 4.10: Depression, Anxiety, Stress Mean Scores</i> .....	96
<i>Table 4.11: Distribution of Stress Levels of among the Respondents</i> .....	97
<i>Table 4.12: Stress and Respondents Social Demographics Characteristics</i> .....	98
<i>Table 4.13: Stress and Respondents Social Demographics Characteristics Cont'd Field of Study</i> .....	98
<i>Table 4.14: Distribution of Anxiety Levels among Respondents</i> .....	99
<i>Table 4.15: Anxiety and Respondents Socio Demographic Characteristics</i> .....	101
<i>Table 4.16: Anxiety and Respondents Socio Demographic Characteristics Cont'd</i> .....	102
<i>Table 4.17: Distribution of Depression Levels among Respondents</i> .....	103
<i>Table 4.18: Depression and Respondents' Social Demographic Factors</i> .....	104
<i>Table 4.19: Depression and Respondents' Social Demographic Factors Cont...</i> .....	105
<i>Table 4.20: Overall Academic Resilience Scores</i> .....	106
<i>Table 4.21: Academic Resilience versus Gender</i> .....	107
<i>Table 4.22: Resilience Scores versus Age</i> .....	108
<i>Table 4.23: Academic Resilience versus Academic year</i> .....	109
<i>Table 4.24: Academic Resilience against Family Size</i> .....	110
<i>Table 4.25: Academic Resilience versus Religion</i> .....	110
<i>Table 4.26: Academic Resilience against Employment status</i> .....	111
<i>Table 4.27: Correlation between Stress and Academic Resilience Score</i> .....	112
<i>Table 4.28: Correlation between Anxiety and Academic Resilience Score</i> .....	113
<i>Table 4.29: Correlation between Depression and Academic Resilience Score</i> .....	114
<i>Table 4.30: Model summary for stress against academic resilience</i> .....	116
<i>Table 4.31: Regression Model coefficients</i> .....	116



LIST OF FIGURES

*Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework* ..... 68

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACHA	American College Health Association
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ARS-30	Academic Resilience Scale
ASE	Academic Self-Efficacy
COVID-19	Novel Coronavirus
DASS-21	Depression Anxiety Stress Scale
KFF	Kaiser Family Foundation
OL	Online Learning
SE	Self-Efficacy
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory
SLT	Social Learning Theory
TL	Traditional Learning
U.S	United States
UCLA	University of California Los Angeles
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

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## ABSTRACT

Numerous surveys conducted at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that university students experienced considerable increase in depression, anxiety, and stress. However, some researchers believed the findings reflected a persistent trend rather than a single spike, as higher education students were more prone to higher rates of psychological distress due to adjustment, academic, unemployment, financial, family, intrapersonal, and interpersonal challenges, all of which may impair their concentration and academic outcomes. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to analyze the psychological challenges among undergraduate university students post COVID-19 and academic resilience. The study was guided by the social cognitive and biopsychosocial theories. Utilizing a descriptive cross-sectional survey design, the study used stratified random sampling to select a sample of 151 undergraduate students at Daystar University, Athi River Campus, and Kenya. The instruments included a socio-demographic questionnaire, Depression and Anxiety Stress Scale-DASS-21, and Academic Resilience Scale-ARS-30. Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. Statistical significance was set at  $p < .05$ . The multiple linear regression indicated that one unit increase in the score of stress reduced academic resilience by 27%, one unit increase anxiety reduced academic resilience by 48% and finally one unit increase in depression reduced academic resilience by 72%. Therefore, depression had the highest impact on academic resilience and in addition it was the only independent predictor that was statistically significant. The study recommended that internal and external reliance building factors be promoted in higher learning institutions to build students' academic resiliency levels. Regular mental health and academic resilience programs was concluded as effective.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my Mum, Roseline Onyuka, for her never-ending love, encouragement, sacrifices, and support. This work is also dedicated to my late father Peter Paul Onyuka who had incredible commitment and dedication towards his family.

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