

Transition in education mirrors the phase when students transfer from one level of education to another, triggering an internal process of the mind which occurs when individuals undergo change and pass from familiar to unknown. First year undergraduate students arrive at the university having very different academic and social skills and from different backgrounds and cultures. Some students adjust easily and are set up for successful university study whereas others become disoriented from their studies, underperform academically or drop out completely. At a public university, records indicate that transition rates from first year to second year are often below 100%. The scenario is a pointer to the fact that transition from secondary school to university life may be a challenge to first year undergraduate students. The purpose of this study therefore was to explore the relationship between transition and academic adjustment among first year undergraduate students. Objectives of the study were; to investigate the relationship between cognitive transition and academic adjustment; relationship between social transition and academic adjustment; relationship between emotional transition and academic adjustment and relationship between cultural transition and academic adjustment among first year undergraduate students. The study was guided by Carl Rogers' Person-Centred and Schlossberg's Transition Theory. The study population comprised 1,539 first year undergraduate students admitted at a public university main campus for the 2020/2021 academic year and 45 service providers. Stratified random sampling was used to select 306 students while purposive sampling was used to select 40 service providers for the study. Concurrent Triangulation Design was used within Mixed Methods Approach whereby data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaires for students and service providers together with interview schedules for service providers were employed. Focus Group Discussions were also held for 13 students divided into two groups. Validity of data instruments was established by presenting the instruments to experts in the Department of Psychology and Educational Foundations. Reliability was verified using pilot study. Internal consistency of the questionnaire yielded a Cronbach's alpha $\alpha = .769$. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics such as percentages and inferential statistics namely Pearson's correlation and regression analyses using SPSS version 22 while Thematic Analysis was employed to analyse qualitative data for interviews and Focus Group Discussions. Results indicated moderate to high adjustment in the academic aspects investigated except online lectures and examinations where challenges were reported. There was a significant negative correlation between anxiety and stress with academic adjustment; a positive correlation between autonomy and academic adjustment but no significant relationship between interaction with service providers and academic adjustment. A significant negative correlation was found between fear, distraction and academic adjustment. There was a significant positive correlation between values and norms with academic adjustment and a negative correlation between unhealthy feeding habits and academic adjustment. The outcome of the present study could be significant to policy makers, Ministry of Education, university administrators, lecturers and parents to find ways of assisting first year undergraduate students overcome emerging transitional challenges and settle fast for their university studies. The study also serves as a precautionary eye opener to undergraduate students, psychologically prepare students for university/college admissions and a point of reference from which future studies on student transition will be based.

ABSTRACT