PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT LEARNERS IN JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN MAKADARA SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that the thesis is my original work and that it has not been presented for the conferment/award of a degree in any other university. I further declare that all sources of information used have been duly acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mentor Chantal Götz for her unwavering support, inspiration and encouragement, which has been instrumental in my journey.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners in Junior schools in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County, Kenya. Research questions were: What are the types of psychosocial support systems provided to adolescent learners in junior schools? What is the relationship between parental psychosocial support and academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools? How do peer psychosocial support programs influence the academic performance of adolescent learners? To what extent do school-based psychosocial counseling services influence the academic performance of adolescent learners? What strategies can be adopted to enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support services? Psychosocial Development Theory was used. The study adopted a mixed method approach specifically convergent research design with correlational research design for quantitative data and phenomenology design for qualitative data. Twenty-seven junior schools with 8559 learners, 458 teachers, 27 school counselors and 6,400 parents/guardians were targeted. The research utilized purposive sampling for the teacher counselors and parents, while simple random sampling was used for learners. The sample size was 442.Questionnaires and interview guides was used for data collection. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were examined thematically and through content analysis. Parental support exhibited a moderate positive correlation with academic performance ($r = 0.621$, $p < 0.05$), highlighting the importance of emotional guidance, monitoring, and encouragement at home. Peer support was also positively associated with academic outcomes ($r = 0.573$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that supportive friendships, mentoring, and collaborative study behaviors enhance engagement and effective learning. Similarly, school-based counseling services positively influenced academic achievement ($r = 0.598$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that access to professional guidance improves stress management, goal setting, and overall learning skills. The adoption of comprehensive psychosocial strategies within schools was positively correlated with academic success ($r = 0.607$, $p < 0.05$), promoting emotional well-being, resilience, motivation, and active engagement. Despite these positive effects, the study identified notable gaps in the systematic provision of support. The study recommended strengthening school counseling and peer support programs to support adolescent learners' emotional well-being and academic performance.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

APA: American Psychological Association

CBC: Competency-Based Curriculum

EEF: The Education Endowment Foundation

KICD: Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

MHPSS: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

PSS: Psychosocial support

RCT: Randomized controlled trial

SEM: Structural Equation Modeling

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Adolescents experience a variety of changes that include physical, emotional, cognitive, and social transformations. They shift from being dependent to being independent, and define who they are as individuals, while being swayed more and more by peer pressure (Santrock, 2021). Education is a vital component of helping adolescents build a successful future, as it helps them acquire personal and professional skills. However, performance in school is influenced by multiple factors, such as a person's cognitive skills, motivation, school atmosphere, psychosocial factors, and family (Steinberg, 2022).

With regard to the various factors at play, psychosocial support is particularly critical in determining academic success. Adolescents need emotional and social support to overcome academic and non-academic challenges, in addition to intellectual stimulation (Eccles & Roeser, 2021). Psychosocial support is the integration of the social and psychological factors that influence the well-being of an individual. It is the emotional, social, and mental health support from parents, teachers, peers, and the community. Adequate psychosocial support is associated with positive outcomes in adolescents, including self-esteem, coping skills, and academics (Wentzel, 2017). Holistic education models are validated by the positive effects of parental support, mentoring, peer support, and counseling on academic persistence and psychosocial resilience of students.

The role of psychosocial support in influencing academic achievement transcends individual cases to encompass global educational frameworks. It has been proven that

besides cognitive ability, psychological, emotional, and social dimensions equally, and in some instances, crutially interact to support achievement (Greenberg et al., 2023). The impact of psychosocial support on student achievement has been extensively documented in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, which underscores its relevance in improving student outcomes.

In U.S. schools, the integration of parent engagement, mentoring, and school counseling programs has been shown to enhance student performance and engagement (Kidger et al., 2012). The American Psychological Association (APA) acknowledges the correlation between emotional well-being and cognitive performance, learning retention, and motivation. Schools that implement effective mental health and counseling programs show improved learners performance and reduced dropout rates.

The increasingly acknowledged role of psychosocial support in Western education systems has led to the implementation of emotional and psychological support policy integration in school programming (Durlak et al., 2021). In American schools, for instance, greater collaboration of parent engagement with mentoring and school counseling programs has resulted in increased student performance and engagement (Kidger et al., 2012). The American Psychological Association (APA) states that there is a correlation between emotional well-being and the cognitive processes involved in learning, recall, and motivation. Schools that implement effective mental health and support programs demonstrate enhanced learners achievement and decreased attrition.

Assigning social support to schools has also been done at the governmental level in the United Kingdom. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) reports that when emotional and psychological support is incorporated into teacher mentoring and peer

counseling programs, learning outcomes improve by 15-20%. (EEF, 2021). Western education systems have increasingly adopted a whole-school model that combines mental health literacy, emotional intelligence training, and structured peer-mentoring (Weare & Nind, 2021).

Some areas have successfully integrated psychosocial support; however, others have yet to overcome obstacles related to its implementation. In parts of Asia and Latin America, psychosocial support remains elusive for schools. Academic pressure, for example, is extensive in China due to the competitive Gaokao testing system. Research suggests that in high-stakes testing situations, the lack of emotional support is detrimental to the achievement of the learners and raises anxiety (Li, 2019). Similarly, in India, despite high levels of parental involvement in the education system, schools offer little to no emotional support, resulting in disengagement when high levels of academic pressure are present (Kumar, 2020).

The absence of psychosocial support suggests this is not an optional component, but rather the foundation of what is needed for educational achievement. Empirical research that crosses numerous international boundaries indicates that psychosocial support is an integral rather than an ancillary consideration in attaining educational goals. Countries that have incorporated psychosocial support programs in schools have witnessed positive shifts in learners participation, mental resilience, and academic achievement (UNESCO, 2021).

In Africa, the implementation of psychosocial support within educational institutions is gaining momentum, particularly as schools throughout the continent grapple with distinct socio-economic challenges. 'Poverty, political instability, inadequate learning

infrastructure' (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014) are critical factors that heighten psychosocial distress within schools in numerous African countries. Additionally, mentoring initiatives assist in the provision of emotional and psychological support to students (Richter et al., 2020). The National School Safety Framework is geared toward student psychosocial wellbeing and recognizes the detrimental effects of poverty, violence, and trauma on learning. Research conducted in South Africa indicates that learners with supportive psychosocial networks, particularly those residing in underserved communities, tend to perform better academically and demonstrate higher rates of school attendance (Theron, 2022).

In Nigeria, the influence of parents and peers is particularly profound in the academic performance of students in urban centers, especially the megacities of Lagos and Abuja (Adeniran, 2018). The absence of professional school counseling remains a significant gap in responding to the emotional issues confronting students. There is evidence to support the assertion that teacher-student relationships and mentoring initiatives positively impact academic performance in Nigeria, thereby underscoring the urgency for the establishment of effective psychosocial support structures within schools (Obi, 2020).

In East Africa, community level school based psychosocial support programs have been initiated in Uganda and Tanzania to support adolescent learners. In addition to government support, some school-based psychosocial support programs are complemented by faith-based organizations and NGOs providing community support to schools (Mutua & Ochieng, 2021). Even in these programs, schools do not have trained counselors and

support. There is pressure on teachers to take on mentorial roles, and this additional responsibility is likely to hinder their ability to provide psychosocial support effectively.

Kenya as a nation has made significant improvements in the education sector, particularly in reforming its curriculum to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Curriculum developers have integrated psychosocial support and emotional well-being as an area of concern at the learner's level (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2022). This move, according to Gichuhi, Obiero and Kangethe (2022) is significant in that it aims to promote effective learning by addressing the psychosocial needs of the learners. There are still many unaddressed issues even after the reforms, particularly in the area of psychosocial support.

Ministry of Education directives state that each school must have a qualified counselor. However, these directives have not been fully implemented. Junior schools, in particular, do not have the staff and resources to deliver quality psychosocial support. Mutua and Ochieng (2021) demonstrate that more than 60 percent of schools in Nairobi City County do not have consistent professional counseling. Learners in Nairobi's low-income neighborhoods are emotionally distressed due to academically-related stress and are exposed to food insecurity, unsafe housing, and violence. The lack of psychosocial support means that educational inequalities are compounded (Njoroge, 2023).

In addition, urban zones have a scarcity of parents' engagement in their children's education because of economic strain, which makes the absence of parental engagement a key component of psychosocial support Wainaina (2019). In the absence of teacher mentorship, structured peer support is absent, which makes emotional and behavioral barriers that lead to learning gaps worse (Buzică, 2024). Although peer connections can

positively or negatively impact learning, this has not been adequately studied within Kenya's formal education systems (Muteti, 2020). The psychosocial support services provided to junior school's learners in Nairobi City County are not well evaluated (Nyonje and Kidombo, 2024).

Additionally, despite the acknowledgement of the need for psychosocial support and its integration into education, there is a deficiency of empirical work investigating its effects on academic outcomes in Kenya's lower schools (Riechi, 2021). Much of the available literature has been overly generalized, examining the myriad of determinant variables of the academic success, and side-lining the emotional and social support systems that exist and contribute to the success in the academic systems (Muyaka, 2024). This has closed opportunities for the development of both scholarship and policy in the area. It is against this background that this study sought to investigate the relationship between psychosocial support and adolescents' academic performance in junior schools in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Through efficient instruction, sufficient learning materials, and encouraging learning settings, educational system should guarantee that all learners reach the necessary competency levels in fundamental disciplines like English and mathematics. In order to encourage active engagement, positive behaviour, and enhanced academic achievement, schools are also obliged to offer comprehensive support that attends to learners' academic and psychological needs. This scenario hasn't been entirely achieved, though, especially in urban public schools where a sizable percentage of learners still perform below expectations. According to recent reports, over 35% of learners do not meet basic

proficiency levels, and in certain sub-counties, nearly 40% do not fulfil projected competences by the conclusion of each academic year.

This disparity is mostly explained by difficult socioeconomic and psychosocial circumstances that are common in urban informal settlements, such as poverty, unstable families, and exposure to violence, all of which have a detrimental influence on learners' emotional health and academic engagement. Teachers, school administrators, and education officials are among the stakeholders in education who have voiced concerns about continuous underperformance in spite of infrastructure and curriculum improvements. If these issues are not resolved, learners will probably continue to do poorly, become more disengaged, and have less prospects in the future. While prior research has recognised the value of emotional support, its systematic influence on junior school learners' academic performance has received little empirical scrutiny. Therefore, by examining the influence of psychosocial support networks on academic achievement in Makadara Sub-County, this study aimed to close this gap.

1.3 Research Question

The following research question guided the study:

i. What are the types of psychosocial support systems provided to adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county?
ii. What the relationship between parental psychosocial support systems and academic performance adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county?
iii. How do peer support programs influence academic performance adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara?

iv. To what extent do school-based psychosocial counseling services influence the academic performance adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara?

v. What strategies can be adopted to enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support services among adolescent learners in Makadara?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses guided the study:

Ho_1: There is no statistically significant relationship between types of psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners

Ho_2: There is no statistically significant relationship between parental psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners.

Ho_3: There is no statistically significant relationship between peer psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners

Ho_4: There is no statistically significant relationship between school-based counseling services and academic performance of adolescent learners.

Ho_5: There is no statistically significant relationship between adoption of psychosocial support strategies and academic performance of adolescent learners.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's significance lies in the attempt to determine the effectiveness of psychosocial support systems on the and academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County. Academic performance is influenced by the cognitive, emotional, social, and psychological dimensions of learners. In urban centers like Makadara, learners face socioeconomic challenges, parental absence,

peer pressure, and the absence of mental health facilities, which affect the need for psychosocial support.

The study may help educators and school administrators understand how peer-supported psychosocial programs can foster a positive psychological climate in schools that enhances academic engagement and psychosocial support. It may provide insights into the necessity of improving teacher-learner interactions and the need for teacher training in basic psychosocial support.

For the policymakers and educational authorities in the Ministry of Education, the study may provide the groundwork for developing or amending policies concerning the integration of psychosocial support systems in junior schools. This may include policies aimed at increasing the integration of qualified school counselors, improving the psychosocial component of teacher education, and increasing funding for comprehensive policies on the welfare of learners.

It would be helpful for parents and guardians to understand the role that their engagement with their learner's academic and emotional development plays to assist learning. This study highlights the importance of collaboration between parents and guardians and schools when they assist children in managing the associated academic and social challenges during adolescence.

This study may be valuable for researchers and scholars, as it fills an important research gap in describing the impact of psychosocial support parental involvement, teacher mentorship, peer support, and counseling on junior school learners' academic achievement. It may be useful in establishing other research in the field of education and adolescent mental health. This study aimed to foster educational equity through the

psychosocial support systems for the vulnerable learners and the enhancement of overall learner performance in junior schools in Kenya.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study examined the influence of psychosocial support systems on the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County. The focus was on learners aged between 12 to 15 years, a critical developmental stage characterized by significant emotional, social, and cognitive changes. The study further incorporated key educational stakeholders, including teachers, school counselors, and parents or guardians, who play an active role in providing psychosocial support system to learners.

The study specifically concentrated on selected dimensions of psychosocial support systems, namely parental support, peer support programs, and school-based psychosocial counseling services. Parental support was examined in terms of emotional and academic support, while peer support programs focused on interactions and influence among learners. School-based counseling services were considered in relation to their role in addressing learners' emotional and psychological needs. Academic performance of adolescent learners, the dependent variable, was measured using indicators such as examination scores, class participation, homework completion, school attendance and school completion.

In terms of delimitation, the study was confined to public junior schools within Makadara sub-county and excluded learners from private institutions and those in senior secondary school levels. Although academic performance may also be influenced by other factors such as socioeconomic status, physical health, and school infrastructure, these

variables were not the primary focus of the study unless they directly related to psychosocial support systems.

Additionally, due to time and logistical constraints, the study was limited to a sample of selected junior schools within the sub-county. Consequently, while the findings provide valuable insights, their generalization to other counties or different educational contexts should be made with caution, and further studies recommended to validate and extend the findings.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on the Psychosocial Development Theory by Erik Erikson. The Psychosocial Development Theory established by Erik Erikson in 1968 is a fairly in-depth approach to the role of social and psychological determinants of human development. Erikson suggested that every human being goes through eight stages of development and each stage was characterized by a psychosocial crisis that had to be overcome in order to attain a healthy emotional and psychological development (Erikson, 1968). The fifth stage Identity vs. Role Confusion is especially important to juveniles since, at some stage, teenagers attempt to develop clear self-identity and purpose (Erikson, 1968). Those teenagers who manage to get through this phase grow with a solid personal identity and this is what contributes to their emotional stability and their capability to cope with life complexities. The unresolved identity conflicts can, however, result in confusion and lack of clarity, which can cause the difficulties in the form of academic disengagement, low self-esteem, and inappropriate decision-making (Lund Dean and Jolly, 2022).

The emphasis of the theory on the significance of social relationships and guidance is especially important in the consideration of the influence of the psychosocial support on the academic performance of adolescents. Psychosocial support provided by different sources including parental involvement, teacher mentorship, peer support programs, and school counseling services may become very important in assisting adolescents to navigate the challenges of identity formation in the context of the Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County, in the context of the junior schools. Erikson says that with the support of family, friends, and teachers, the adolescents may be in a position to solve the conflict of identity and these situations enabled them to gain emotional balance and the desire to study (Erikson, 1968). As an example, teenagers that have a well-established parental support can gain more confidence in their own strength, which has a positive effect on their academic results (Mannerström, 2019). Equally, teacher mentorship offers intellectual and emotional support that allows students to establish academic objectives and have a sense of direction (Turner and Coyle, 2020). In addition, peer support programs provide a feeling of belonging and lessen the isolation that is essential to the emotional growth and school achievement in adolescence (Turner and Coyle, 2020).

Another aspect of the theory, as proposed by Erikson, is the need to obtain the emotional and psychological issues addressed to provide the student with the support, required in case of stress, anxiety, or family problems. Adolescents may be assisted by counseling equipment to address the academic pressures, which contributed to the improvement of their emotional state and academic results (Nash, McGregor and Prentice, 2021).

1.7.1 Strengths of Psychosocial Development Theory

One of the major strengths of Psychosocial Development Theory by Erik Erikson is its lifespan approach. The Erikson framework is inclusive of the human lifespan, as it examines human development, including infancy and old age, unlike other theories which look at a particular developmental stage (Dale and Sacks, 2005). This makes the theory be able to depict the impacts of early experiences on the subsequent behaviors, attitudes, and relationships in the future. As an example, identity development that takes place in adolescence as stressed in the fifth stage (Identity vs. Role Confusion) of Erikson has significant consequences on subsequent life phases, such as intimacy and generativity (Mitchell and Whitbourne,2021). The social relationships and their contribution to personal development are also highly emphasized by the theory.

Erikson emphasizes the significance of relationships with family, friends, and society at large on emotional and psychological stability of a person. The latter is particularly pertinent in the context of academic performance among adolescents, in which the existence of positive relationships, as in the case of parental engagement or teacher mentorship, may contribute to the level of academic motivation and achievement in a significant way (Mutua and Ochieng, 2021). Moreover, the flexibility of the Erikson theory enables it to be implemented in different cultures and settings, considering that different social and cultural settings meet different individuals differently in their journey to the development difficulties.

This rendered the theory applicable in the various environments, including the urban schools in the Nairobi City County where the experiences and challenges adolescents face might be different as compared to the rest of the world (Mitchell and

Whitbourne,2021). The other strength of the Erikson theory is that it has been widely applied in many areas such as education, psychology, counseling and social work. When applied to education, the theory can offer useful information regarding the role of psychosocial processes, including identity development and social relationships, in learning, motivation, and the overall achievement in academics (Mitchell and Whitbourne,2021). This renders it an effective model in the conceptualization of effects of psychosocial support systems on the academic performance of adolescents in schools.

1.7.2 Weaknesses of Psychosocial Development Theory

Although the Erikson theory has its strengths, it has its weaknesses. The stages are overemphasized, a point that has been criticized. Opponents believe that the theory has been too strict in its approach to development by assuming that human development is linear with distinct phases but does not fully represent the dynamism and complexity of human development (Newman and Newman,2022). However, in real life the process through the steps may not always be linear and the problems encountered in each stage may not be similar or may be different in other situations. This may restrict the usage of the theory to persons that fail to follow the anticipated developmental path.

Later stages lack specificity, which is another weakness. Although Erikson is very clear on the challenges encountered at the early stage of development like in childhood and adolescence, the theory is not detailed on the challenges encountered during adulthood and old age (Welch,1989). This is too generic to use the theory to the realities of the adult development especially in contemporary societies where there are stiff social changes and

increased life expectancy. Moreover, empirical evidence on some of the statements by Erikson is lacking, especially the chronology and universality of the stages. Although the theory has gained considerable acceptance, empirical studies should be conducted more often to confirm certain consequences that Erikson predicted specifically in terms of when and what psychosocial conflicts occur (Jong,2024).

1.7.3 Application of Psychosocial Development Theory to the Study

The Psychosocial Development Theory by Erikson is especially applicable in the context of the effectiveness of psychosocial support of the academic performance of adolescents, because the period of Identity vs. Role Confusion stage is the keystone of adolescence. It is one of the most important developmental stages during which adolescents have to deal with the issues of establishing a consistent sense of identity. Such difficulties may severely influence their emotional and academic status. The failure by adolescents to resolve these identity conflicts in most cases makes them feel confused and directionless and this may cause them to lose interest in school activities and motivation to study (Erikson, 1968).

Adolescence parental involvement, teacher mentorship, peer support programs, and school counseling services are important in the process of guiding adolescents through this stage. Such supports offer emotional scaffolding and guidance that assists adolescents in the identity formation. Confidence can be achieved through parental support which can help the learners to face any academic challenge with a feeling of security. Mentorship by the teachers may at times give guidance in the academic and life decisions, peer support gives a sense of belonging and therefore, alleviates the feelings of isolation, which is experienced in adolescence. In addition, emotional distress is one of the issues that school

counseling services can help to resolve; this may additionally enhance academic engagement and overall academic success (Njoroge,2023).

The Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory was utilized in this study to examine how psychosocial support systems in junior schools within Makadara sub-county facilitated adolescents in overcoming identity-related challenges associated with the Identity versus Role Confusion stage. The study explored how emotional stability was enhanced through various forms of support, thereby contributing to improved academic performance.

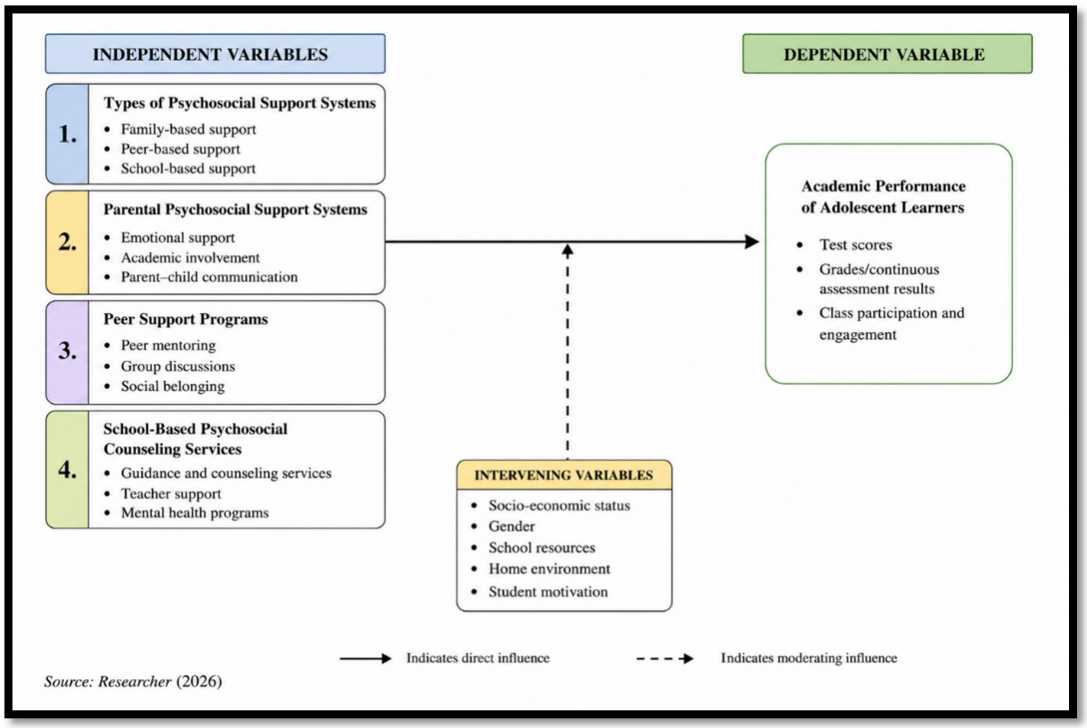
Through this theoretical framework, the research sought to provide a clearer understanding of how psychosocial support systems influenced both the academic performance and general well-being of adolescents in junior schools within the region. The findings of the study may also provide valuable insights that could be used to inform interventions aimed at improving student performance, particularly in similar socio-economic contexts.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Salawu et. al., (2023) explain that a conceptual framework is a situation where research develops the connection between the variables in the study and displays the connection graphically or diagrammatically. A conceptual framework was created in order to show the correlation between independent variables (psychosocial support) and dependent variables (academic performance) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Influence of Psychosocial Support Systems on Academic Performance on Learners



Source: *Researcher (2026)*

The theoretical framework which was used to guide the research hypothesizes that the influence of psychosocial support on the academic performance of adolescent learners was very significant. Psychosocial support is loosely interpreted as parental psychosocial support, peer support programs, and school-based counseling services. All these factors are important in influencing the emotional and psychological health of learners which ultimately affects their performance in studies.

Psychosocial support by parents entails emotional support as well as direction and engagement in the academic and personal life of teenagers. When an environment of stability and nurturing in the parents is created and they are locally involved in the education of their children, then the learners tend to feel more valued and motivated. This sense of emotional security knows to increase the degree of self-confidence, concentration and resiliency factors that very much relate to academic performance.

Instead, peer support programs help the adolescents feel part of the school and they offer a collective experience. Peer mentoring, learner club activities, as well as group work motivate learners to work together, express emotions and share support. Such programs may aid in alleviating feelings of isolation and anxiety, which otherwise may make academic participation more difficult. Learners who have peers to help them are better placed to feel good about learning and be able to persist with the academic struggles.

School counseling services can be viewed as a formal means of meeting psychosocial needs of learners. School counselors help learners to overcome emotional stress, academic goals, and social conflicts through individual counseling, group therapy, and life skills training. These services do not only ensure that learners are healthy psychologically but also provide them with coping skills and decision-making that ensure that they perform well in academics.

The performance in academics in this context is determined based on various metrics: examination marks, performance in classes, homework submissions, school attendance and school completion. These indicators denote cognitive performance as well as behavioral self-absorption in the learning process. The connection between the psychosocial support systems and academic performance is not linear, however. In this research, academic performance of adolescent learners was measured by means of connecting an analysis of documents and teacher-rated assessments in order to evaluate academic performance as well as engagement of the school. The test results were acquired by analyzing documentation of final end-term examinations. The average scores of individual learners were obtained and transformed to percentage scores with a view of making the same comparison in the process of data analysis.

Teacher rating on involvement of the learners in the classroom activities was used to measure their presence in a classroom. The teachers rated learners in terms of how often they were involved in classroom discussions, how many times they answered questions and how many times they were engaged in learning activities through a five-point Likert scale with very low to very high. Teacher ratings were also used to measure homework completion where learners were rated on consistency in completing the assigned homework. The answers were noted on a five-point Likert scale that had never completes homework as one end and always completes homework as the other end.

Documentary school attendance was used to measure school attendance by studying school attendance registers. The number of days in which the learners attended school in a school term was noted and transformed into the percentages of attendance. The completion of the school was evaluated in terms of the retention and status of the learners at the end of the academic year in terms of whether or not the learner remained enrolled in school and was advanced to the next school level. This data was documented as a completion status.

To improve the level of credibility, transparency, and replicability of the study, a document Analysis Schedule was created and applied to derive data regarding the examination scores, school attendance, and school completion. This document analysis instrument has been given in the appendix section of this study.

The framework also involves the introduction of two moderating variables namely study habits and perception of meaningful life. Study habits are the habits and methods that the learners employ to cope with their educational work, such as time management, revision, and discipline. Good academic practices improve the effectiveness of the

psychosocial support since they assist learners to effectively convert emotional stability into constructive behaviors in academics.

Likewise, the perception of a meaningful life; the view a teenager has of the future, his or her purpose, as well as the importance of education, can greatly influence the way the adolescent may react to the psychosocial interventions. Learners with the perception that education offers them a chance to have a better future would be more motivated and committed and this connection between support systems and academic performance gains strength.

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Academic Performance: Academic performance is a measure of the effectiveness of a learner in his or her academic pursuits which is usually determined by grades, test scores, involvement in classes, finishing assigned tasks and achievement in academic subjects. High academic performance is used to show that a learner has met or outperformed the educational expectations of his school or academic institution.

Counseling Services: These are planned psychosocial contact provided by trained school counselor, guidance teachers or other related professionals. Such services assist the learners to cope with emotional difficulties, behavioral issues, academic distress and personal conflicts. Counseling services in this study have been perceived as a school-based intervention which can lead to better learning behavior and academic performance.

Examination Scores: These are quantifiable academic performance of learners as seen through their termly or standardized examination. They are the main measure of academic performance and are applied in measuring the contribution of psychosocial support systems to enhanced academic performance among teenage learners.

Homework Completion: This is degree to which the learners complete and hand in homework assigned by the teachers. It indicates discipline, responsibility, and out-of-classroom learning habits of the learners. With respect to this study, homework completion is considered a behavior that can be reinforced through home environments, parental involvement and peer support.

Life Skills Training: It is a kind of organized educational programs designed to provide essential personal and interpersonal skills to learners including decision-making, problem-solving, communication, conflict-resolution skills and emotional regulation. Life skills training in this study is considered a psychosocial empowerment instrument whereby learners can cope with the pressures in school, as well as enhance their overall academic functioning.

Mentorship Programs: These are formal programs that involve the teachers, older learners, or external mentors assisting the learners in academic, social, and career-related activities. The programs are known to assist learners develop self-esteem, establish academic objectives, and gain resilience. This study presents mentorship programs as one of the most important psychosocial support systems that may be beneficial in determining the academic path and performance of learners.

Parental Involvement: It is the direct and indirect assistance that the parents or guardians provide to the education of their children. This involved assisting with the homework, school meetings, behavioral supervision, emotional support and creating a learning conducive home atmosphere. Parental involvement in this research was considered a significant psychosocial support factor that can enhance the motivation and academic performance among learners.

Parental Psychosocial Support: This is the emotional, social and practical support given by the parents to their children, in a bid to foster their well-being, academic performance and personal growth. This involves emotional support, being active in the education of the child, giving instruction, and following the academic performance.

Participation in Class: This is the actual participation of learners in classroom learning activities. This involves talking, answering the questions of teachers, taking part in group activities and being attentive. The classroom attendance was taken into account as a significant behavioral measure of academic participation that can be affected by psychosocial support through peer-to-peer encouragement or counseling.

Peer Support Groups: These are official or informal groups in which learners provide emotional, academic or social support to each other. These can be study groups, peer counseling clubs or friendship networks. This study analyzed the concept of peer support groups as a valuable element of psychosocial assistance that could help the learners to gain confidence, alleviate stress, and achieve better academic performance.

Peer Support Programs: These are programs in schools that are organized to help learners emotionally, academically, and socially support their fellow students. Such programs can include study groups, peer mentoring, or peer-led programs that can assist in creating a sense of belonging, lowering a sense of isolation and enhancing academic performance of the learners.

Psychosocial Support: This was defined as the spectrum of emotional, social, and practical support to individuals that allows them to overcome difficulties and improve their psychological state. This may be family, teacher, peer, and professional counselor support

in the context of adolescents to support academic performance through addressing mental health, social, and emotional needs.

School Completion: This refers to the skill of the learners to stay in school and complete the entire cycle of the junior school without dropping out. In this research, school completion is regarded as a long-term educational outcome that is determined by continuous psychosocial support which would assist learners to conquer social, emotional or academic barriers.

School Counseling Services: These include those services that are offered by professional counselors in schools that involve the emotional, social, and academic needs of the learners involved. Mental health services, academic assistance, career counseling, conflict resolution and crisis intervention are among these services and are designed to enhance emotional and academic performance of the learners.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on past related literature from other scholars on the effectiveness of psychosocial support on adolescents' academic performance in junior schools. The chapter covers; critical review of theories which are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory. The chapter ends with empirical review of the literature, identification of the research gap, and the concluding summary.

2.2. Critical Review of Related Theories

The theories reviewed are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory. These theories were chosen for this study because they were relevant to this study.

2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

The Hierarchy of Needs Theory developed by Abraham Maslow (1943) is a postulate that human motivation is based on the achievement of a hierarchy of needs, which exist in five increasing levels: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow stated that until lower-level needs are satisfied, the individuals would not be able to pursue higher level needs (Maslow, 1943). The theory has been extensively used in psychology, education as well as organizational behavior to understand human performance and motivation.

The notable strength of the theory stated by one of its main assets is that it is a holistic definition of motivation as it recognizes that human behavior is driven by numerous needs that are not directly connected to survival. The theory has also been very applicable in the area of education where it has given an insight of how the failure to meet the physiological and psychological needs can impair the performance of the learners. An example of such cases is learners who experience food insecurity, are unable to afford a stable place to live, or are emotionally troubled, which can lead them not to concentrate on their education since their mental resources are focused on their most urgent needs to survive (Esteves and Lopes, 2020). Moreover, the need of belongingness and esteem discussed by Maslow can be compared with the findings of the studies that emphasize the significance of systemic psychosocial support, including parental involvement, teacher

mentoring, peer support, and school counseling, in promoting learner success (Santrock, 2018).

In spite of its popularity, the theory developed by Maslow has been criticized in a number of ways. A significant criticism is that human needs are not always in a predetermined and hierarchical order (as proposed by Maslow). Studies indicate that people could be driven by multiple needs at the same time or they could emphasize the needs which are higher than others even when the lower needs are not met (Wahba and Bridwell, 1976). Indicatively, even the poor learner might make efforts to excel in studies despite facing food insecurity or emotional trauma, which challenges the inflexible sequential approach by Maslow. The other criticism is that the Maslows theory is not empirically supported because the hierarchy of needs has not been supported in all populations and cultural settings (Tay and Diener, 2011). The theory is viewed as being western oriented, in that it presupposes individualistic orientation to motivation, yet collectivist cultures might be concerned with social and communal interests, rather than being individual agents of self-actualization (Neher, 1991).

Irrespective of these shortcomings, the theory enshrined by Maslow is very applicable in the educational field, especially in explaining the impact of psychosocial support to the academic performance of adolescents. By focusing on the emotional, social, and psychological health of learners, teacher mentorship, peer support, parental involvement and counseling services interventions assemble the environment in which learners can succeed in their academic studies. In the context of this study, Maslow's theory complements Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, reinforcing the

argument that learners require both cognitive and psychosocial support to achieve academic success in junior schools in Makadara sub-county.

2.2.2 Bandura's Social Learning Theory

The Social Learning Theory presented by Albert Bandura (1977) focuses on observational learning, imitation, and modeling as the determinants of human behavior. Bandura stated that people learn through the behavior of other people, especially those whom they regard as role models, including parents, teachers and friends (Bandura, 1977). The theory proposes the theory of reciprocal determinism that the behavior is a result of the interplay between personal, environmental, and cognitive factors (Bandura, 1986). The theory has been specifically applicable in explaining how the psychosocial support systems including parental support, teacher mentorship, peer support programs and school counseling services influence the academic performance of adolescents.

Among the main strengths of the theory proposed by Bandura, it is important to note that social and environmental factors have an impact on learning. In contrast to other behaviorist approaches that only pay attention to the reinforcement and punishment, Social Learning Theory also gives credit to the fact that learners learn not only through direct experiences but also through observation of others (Ormrod, 2016). This plays a very important role in learning institutions where learners imitate the behavior of their teachers, parents and other learners. Indicatively, a student who sees an academic peer perform well and is praised might be compelled to learn to behave in a similar way. Similarly, teacher-student positive relationships might lead to the growth of learners academic confidence and resilience (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2021).

Also, Bandura came up with self-efficacy, which is the belief that some individuals have in achieving success in certain tasks (Bandura, 1997). The high self-efficacy is associated with higher academic motivation, persistence and performance, whereas poor performance and a lack of academic engagement can be brought about by the low self-efficacy (Zimmerman, 2000). The psychosocial support mechanisms like teacher mentorship and school counseling are very instrumental in promoting self-efficacy, as learners have been encouraged, guided, and emotionally supported. Parental engagement also leads to self-efficacy as positive academic behaviors are strengthened at home.

Social Learning Theory has been subject to criticism although it has contributed quite a lot. A significant criticism is that it fails to take into consideration intrinsic motivation. Although the theory focuses on external factors, it is not clear how some learners are motivated to excel in academics despite the absence of external support (Miller and Morris, 2016). Moreover, there is no proper consideration of cognitive development as compared to the Piaget theory as this theory presents a systematic explanation of how the thinking process changes with age (Schunk, 2020). The other drawback is that the experiments that Bandura carried out mainly happened in controlled situations and it is hard to extrapolate his results to a complex educational environment in the real world (Rosenthal and Zimmerman, 1978).

In spite of such limitations, the Social Learning Theory proposed by Bandura is very applicable to this study. It forms a solid theoretical basis of clarity in applying the role of parental involvement, teacher mentorship, peer support programs, and school counseling services to determine its effect on the academic achievement of adolescents in junior schools in Makadara sub-county. These psychosocial support systems should enable

learners to become motivated, resilient, and successful academically through the enhancement of positive role models, strengthening of self-efficacy, and provision of supportive learning environments.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

This part dwelled on a literature review concerning the relationship between psychosocial support systems and the academic performance of adolescents in junior schools. It discusses forms of psychosocial support to be offered to adolescent learners, relationship existing between parental psychosocial support and academic performance of adolescent learners, how peer support programs have an impact on academic performance of adolescent learners, school-based psychosocial counseling services and strategies that can be implemented to make the psychosocial support systems services more effective.

2.3.1 Types of Psychosocial Assistance Given to Adolescent Learners

Psychosocial support (PSS) of adolescent learners implies a broad spectrum of services targeted to enhance mental, emotional, and social well-being in adolescents, thereby affecting their study achievements and development in general. Mental health interventions, life skills training, mentorship, and peer support programs, mental health counseling, family or community involvement are all examples of such support globally (UNICEF, 2021; WHO, 2021).

In Germany, Schwab and Seifert (2020) designed a study to investigate the effectiveness of mental health programs in schools on the academic motivation and engagement of learners in junior schools. The research design was a quantitative longitudinal study and they used standardized self-report questionnaires that were utilized to collect data by administering the questionnaires to the learners who were aged 12-15.

Learners in 15 urban areas in Bavaria, which are in 15 public secondary schools, were the target population. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied to data analysis to establish the connection between psychosocial support intervention (stress management workshops and teacher-student rapport programs) and academic engagement. The results indicated that regular psychosocial support enhanced student motivation, school attendance and peer relationships. Academic performance was however not directly gauged in terms of grades or achievement tests. The present study was used to inform the areas of interest of the current study whether the same psychosocial strategies can directly affect academic performance among adolescents in junior schools in Kenya.

Although the study of Schwab and Seifert (2020) provides helpful information about psychosocial support at school, it is largely premised on the research involving urban public schools in Bavaria, Germany where education systems are well-developed and mental health is organized. This is a great contrast of the state of affairs at Makadara sub-county, Kenya, where schools are usually disadvantaged and prone to numerous setbacks due to overcrowding, lack of trained counselors, and social-economic instability. Consequently, the results might not be as accurate as the facts and usefulness of psychosocial support within the under-resourced settings, which is why the context-based study in Kenyan junior schools would be necessary.

Kataoka, Stein, and Jaycox (2018) did research in the United States evaluating the effects of school-based trauma intervention on the academic results of adolescents who experienced violence in Los Angeles schools. A randomized controlled trial (RCT) design was used in the study and the students used were 11-14 years old. The main instruments were pre and post interventions academic test scores, pre and post behavioral observation

checklists and pre and post trauma symptom questionnaires. ANOVA and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze data. The researchers discovered that there were statistically significant improvements in test scores, classroom behavior, and class participation of learners who were given the group-based trauma counseling and emotional regulation training. Nevertheless, the research was carried out in a high-risk and, possibly, urban environment that does not necessarily mirror the overall population in formal learning institutions. The paper was helpful in understanding that structured psychosocial assistance in a school environment has the potential to influence academic performance positively, which can be used to assess its effectiveness in an urban environment such as Makadara sub-county.

Although the research by Kataoka, Stein, and Jaycox (2018) involved a rigorous randomized controlled trial methodology used to examine the effectiveness of school-based interventions concerning the prevention of traumas, it mainly addressed the secondary results of the interventions in emotional control and behavioral change. Even though the academic test scores were factored, the research failed to fully investigate other academic performance measures like home work completion, retention in the long term or teacher measured performance. This leaves a gap in the methodological approach to the comprehension of the overall academic implications of psychosocial support that the study presented in Makadara sub-county is meant to fill.

Okello (2020) did a study to examine how school-based counseling programs affect the emotional status of adolescents in Ugandan secondary schools. The research design followed was that of qualitative case study design and semi-structured interviews and focus groups as the primary data collection methods. The researchers found that the school

counselors offered important psychosocial care by using an individual counseling approach, group counseling, and crisis intervention. The research however identified lack of personnel, stigma linked to counseling seeking, and absence of privacy to carry out the counseling sessions as the challenges. The paper has not determined the effects of such counseling programs on academic performance, particularly in lower secondary. This research determined whether the school-based counseling programs in the Kenyan junior schools show closer relationship in terms of academic improvement outcomes.

Though Okello (2020) brought useful information about how school-based counseling helps students achieve their emotional and psychological well-being, the research did not focus on the academic outcomes of such interventions, especially on adolescents in junior school grades. This poses a conceptual space between emotional well-being and academic achievement because these two variables are usually linked. The current research attempted to address this gap by examining the existence of psychosocial support within schools, as well as how it directly affected the academic performance of learners.

Mwangi and Wanjiru (2021) evaluated the impact of peer mentoring on improving the psychosocial life of adolescents in the case of junior schools in Muranga county, Kenya. The research employed both mixed-methodology (questionnaires and interviews). Form Three learners and guidance counselors were the target population. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were employed to analyze quantitative data and thematic analysis performed to analyze qualitative data. The results showed that peer mentoring contributed to a decrease in isolated feelings, enhanced feelings of belongingness to school, and enhanced student behavior. Nonetheless, the research only involved older

learners (16-18 years) and was not aimed at the translation of the peer mentoring into academic performance gains. The research was carried out to understand whether similar mechanisms of peer support have been noted to influence academic performance among younger adolescents in an urban environment in Nairobi.

Despite the fact that Mwangi and Wanjiru (2021) discovered that psychosocial well-being among form three students could be improved significantly with the help of peer mentoring, they examined this phenomenon only in the case of older adolescents aged 16–18. This creates a gap in the understanding of how effective peer support is among the younger adolescents in the junior schools that may have various developmental, emotional, and academic problems. The current study attempted to fill this gap by exploring how peer mentoring affects the academic performance of learners between 12-14 years old in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi.

Mugisha (2022) carried out an investigation to determine the influence of education of life skills on resilience and school engagement among students in Rwanda. The design of the study was a quasi-experimental design involving a pre-test and post-test after which standardized questionnaires were used in the evaluation of emotional resiliency and academic engagement. The paired sample t-tests and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The research came to a conclusion that life skills training had a great impact on the stress coping skills of the learners and, the attendance at school. Nevertheless, the study failed to use real academic performance rates, including test scores or grades, and was not confined to the urban school setting. This research aimed at establishing whether life skills training in the junior schools in Nairobi is also associated with quantifiable enhancing academic outcomes.

Study conducted by Mugisha (2022) had paid little to the urban-specific issues (crowded classrooms, social-economic inequalities, and insufficient student support system that are typical of the urban setting). As a result, the results can potentially be biased and fail to represent the efficacy of life skills education in urban settings, such as Nairobi. This research was therefore aimed at examining the efficacy of the same interventions in enhancing academic performance in urban based junior schools in Kenya.

Abdulahi and Yusuf (2020) conducted a study on the role of parental participation in psychosocial support of adolescent Somali refugees in Dadaab camps, Kenya. The survey design was descriptive where structured questionnaires and key informant interviews were used in the collection of data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. The results indicated that emotional and material assistance of parents was useful in reducing the effects of trauma and promoting school continuity among displaced students. But the research was carried out on a humanitarian basis and the results cannot be expected to be applicable to the formal public schools in urban areas. This study sought to determine the effects of parental support on the academic performance of the adolescents in junior schools such as Makadara sub-county.

Even though the study utilized descriptive survey and collected rich qualitative data via interviews, it majorly utilized descriptive statistics and failed to apply inferential statistics to analyze the interrelations among variables. This restricts the analytical level on the effects of parental support on the academic achievements. However, unlike the previous report in Makadara sub-county, the present investigation used descriptive and inferential statistics, which comprised of correlation and regression analysis, to identify the magnitude and the nature of this relationship in an urban school environment.

Chikondi (2021) conducted a study in Malawi to determine the effectiveness of community-based interventions in terms of psychosocial support programs among adolescents in schools. The research design used was a qualitative ethnographic design, whereby participant observations and in-depth interviews were used. The results showed that community volunteers mentored and supported morale and boosted school retention rates. Nevertheless, the research was not carried out statistically in terms of academic performances and was not placed into the school framework. The study sought to find out whether the benefits of structured and school based psychosocial programs in Kenya are more direct in terms of academic performance.

Chikondi (2021) employed a qualitative ethnographic design, which provided contextual information on the effect of the community-based psychosocial support on the well-being and retention of students. Nevertheless, the research did not involve quantitative research and statistical analysis as means of objective evaluation of academic results. This methodological shortcoming of the study limits the possibility to generalize or measure the effectiveness of the psychosocial support, relating to academic performance. This was the aim of the present research, where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined to identify the relationship between psychosocial support and academic performance in the Kenyan junior schools.

2.3.2 Parental Psychosocial Support and Academic Performance of Learners

Psychosocial support of parents is a significant factor that determines academic paths of adolescents. This assistance is in terms of emotional availability, encouragement, understanding, guidance and nurturing home environment. Fan and Williams (2020) state that parental support has a strong link to motivation, self-efficacy, and academic

achievements of the learners. Teenagers who feel that their parents support them are better positioned to be more engaged in school activities and show more persistence in academic activities.

Parental psychosocial support provides secure emotional grounding to the adolescents to enable them to cope with stress and stay focused on their learning objectives. Cheung and Pomerantz (2022) conducted a study in China on the role of parent-oriented motivation. The study utilised a convergent parallel mixed method design. A total number of 387 respondents were used that consisted of 380 students and 7 guidance and counseling teachers sampled using the simple random, proportionate, and purposive sampling methods. The data were obtained using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The research results indicated that parental involvement was related to an increase of the parent-oriented motivation in learners who opt to fulfill the expectations of the parents and receive their approval. It is established that this kind of motivation improves the self-regulated learning behaviors by the learners such as effective study strategies and goal setting, which subsequently result in better academic performance. It is important to note that parent-oriented motivation was associated with both the controlled and autonomous motivation, but it was the only source that explained the positive effect of parental involvement on academic achievement.

Even though Cheung and Pomerantz (2022) proved that parental engagement positively influences the motivation and academic results of students in China, the chosen environment was culturally specific as parental expectations and student behaviour are conditioned by the Confucian principles focusing on obedience and student achievement. These are only cultural considerations, which might not go well with the socio-economic

realities and family set ups of an urban Kenyan environment such as Makadara sub-county. As such, there was a need to investigate whether other types of parent-oriented motivation can work in enhancing the academic performance in the Kenyan context.

Deb, Strodi and Sun (2020) carried out a research study, which investigated the nature of academic stress, parental pressure, anxiety, and mental health among Indian high school students. A total of 190 grade 11 and 12 students of Kolkata in India were used in the research with a mean age of 16.72 years. The instruments used in data collection were a structured questionnaire and General Health Questionnaire. It was established that there are positive associations between academic stress and parental pressure, as well as psychiatric problems. Also, psychiatric issues were found to be positively related to examination-related anxiety. In addition, the study revealed that students stated that they were stressed because of academic pressure in about 63.5 percent with no significant differences among different gender, age, grade, or any other personal issue. The results of the research highlight the significant role of academic and parental pressures on mental health of the Indian learners in high schools, and provokes the importance of interventions aimed at the regulation of these stressors.

Deb et al., (2020) examined older adolescents in grades 11 and 12, with a mean age of 16.7 years. Although their findings provided valuable insights, the study focused on older learners and was therefore not fully applicable to younger adolescents in junior school, who are also susceptible to academic pressures and parental-related stress. The current study addressed this gap by focusing on younger adolescents in junior schools, specifically learners aged 12 to 14 years. By examining the role of parental psychosocial support at this earlier stage of development, the study provided context-specific evidence

on how such support influences academic performance among younger learners. In doing so, it contributed to a better understanding of the importance of early parental involvement and psychosocial support in shaping academic outcomes during the foundational stages of adolescence.

In Sub Saharan African Context, Anguzu and Abbo (2025) conducted a study on the relationship between depression symptoms severity and behavioral impairment in school going adolescents in Uganda. The cross-sectional study included 1,669 teenagers in secondary schools in Eastern and Central Uganda with a mean age group of 15.3 years and 58.5% of the participants were females. The study identified a significant difference in behavioral impairment in adolescents with mild symptoms of depression in comparison to those who had no or slight symptoms of depression and potential confounders were adjusted. These results show that even the symptoms of mild depression have a huge influence on the academic success of adolescents and their social lives. The study emphasizes the need to detect and intervene with depressive symptoms at a young age in order to reduce their negative impacts on the learning processes and general wellbeing of learners.

The design employed by Anguzu and Abbo (2025) was a cross-sectional design, which does not allow evaluating long-term outcomes or causality of depression and academic or behavioral outcomes. Further, the research was more concerned on the intensity of depressive symptoms and behavioral lapses but not how the effects could be countered by organized psychosocial assistance systems in schools. This current study aimed to deepen on this by investigating the effect of parental, peer, and school-based support systems on emotional well-being and academic performance in the long-run.

In Rwanda, Nzabonimpa and Orodho (2020) conducted research on the role of parental involvement in education and its effect on academic performance of secondary school students. Both qualitative and quantitative approach were used in the study. The qualitative method was used to identify variables which were further categorised into factors through the application of exploratory factor analysis and primary factor extraction through quantitative method. According to the study by Theodomir and Claire (2022), the psychosocial effect of parental involvement especially in the form of emotional encouragement, regular communication and positive home environments is beneficial in adolescents which subsequently increases the academic performance of the adolescents. The findings revealed that parenting practices such as emotional, behavioral and motivational guidance are strongly linked with improved academic performance in secondary school children in Rwanda.

Although both Nzabonimpa and Orodho (2020) and Theodomir and Claire (2022) emphasize the beneficial role of parental involvement in the academic achievements of students in Rwandan secondary schools, they addressed the issue of older adolescents in general secondary school. This introduces a sample gap because their observations may not necessarily be applicable to younger adolescents in junior school especially those aged between 12-14 who are at a very critical transitional phase academically and developmentally. The present research sought to fill this gap by narrowing its focus to the learners in the Junior School in Makadara sub-county in Kenya to test the effect of parental psychosocial support on the academic performance of the early adolescents in an urban.

The problem of depression in students is highly impacting upon a large number of adolescents in Kenya. Muthoni (2020) conducted a study on Mental health and education

in Kenya: Address mental health problem through schools. The descriptive study was used to choose a sample of 306 out of 994 individuals. Stratified and basic random sampling techniques were used to select the study participants. The study revealed that most Kenyan teenagers are subjected to psychological distress such as anxiety, behavioral issues and depression which directly impairs concentration, motivation and classroom attendance which are major components of academic performance. The research implied that the parental psychosocial support in the form of emotional reassurance, open communication, and empathy may act as a protective factor to these mental health stressors. Whenever adolescents feel emotionally supported at home, they are less exposed to school stress, both academic and social.

Muthoni (2020) used descriptive design approach to examine psychological distress among adolescents in Kenya, indicating that they primarily used self-reported data and descriptive statistics. The research, however, did not have an inferential analysis or causal relationships. The current study filled this gap in the methodology by adopted correlational research design wherein both quantitative and qualitative data was used to investigate the role of parental psychosocial support on academic performance.

2.3.3 Peer Support Programs and Adolescents' Academic Performance

The peer support programs play a significant role in improving the academic performance of adolescents through the establishment of a participatory learning system. Such programs like peer tutoring, study groups offer emotional support to learners, enhance motivation, and support positive academic habits. Peer interaction allows students to feel confident, exchange knowledge, and communication skills could be developed,

which could result in their better academic performance and subsequent social well-being (Rock & Garavan, 2021).

A study conducted by Brouwer and Engels (2022) investigated the importance of peer support programs in determining the academic performance of adolescents in the Netherlands. The study concluded that peer support programs had a great impact on academic performance of adolescents because they increased motivation and encouraged the creation of a collaborative learning setting. The study focused on the fact that students who engaged in peer mentoring and tutoring activities were more prone to refer to increased rates of academic engagement and academic performance. Nevertheless, the study also pointed to the fact that effectiveness of peer support programs was determined by the quality of mentor-mentee relationship, as well as by the program structure, whereby not all learners were effectively helped because of poor training of peer mentors.

Although Brouwer and Engels (2022) made some useful contributions to the discussion about the importance of peer support in academic performance, their research took place in a high-income nation where educational frameworks are properly funded. This contextually missing when used in low-resource setting such as urban public schools in Kenya where structural, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions can potentially affect peer support program design and uptake. The present research aimed to investigate the role of such interventions in the context of specific educational and psychosocial processes of Kenyan adolescents.

In Japan, Kondo and Kato (2022) did a study on the effect of the peer support program on the students of technical high schools. The sample size of the research was 76 students (37 in the intervention and 39 in the control group) and their interpersonal

relationships, self-esteem, mental health, adaptation to the school environment were evaluated in three occasions. The results revealed that intervention group students as peer supporters had marked improvements in all the areas that were measured. Nevertheless, there were no essential positive results in the satisfaction of study and peer support against bullying. The study recommended that peer mentors should receive thorough training in order to ensure the maximum success of peer support programs in schools. This guaranteed that they are in a better position to deal with delicate matters, including bullying or academic challenges and offer their colleagues more worthwhile services.

Although Kondo and Kato (2022) proved the advantages of peer support programs on the interpersonal and psychological performance of students, the study has a rather small sample size consisting of 76 students which restricts the applicability of the results to the broader population. This sample size difference begs the question of the extended validity of the findings in various learning environments and grades of students attending schools and universities. The current study attempted to overcome this shortcoming by adopting a bigger and more diversified sample that was more likely to reflect the diverse experience and effects of peer support programs on adolescents in urban schools in Kenya.

In Ghana, Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto (2024) conducted study on Stress, social support, health and academic achievement among Ghanaian adolescents. The study revealed that peer support programs have a beneficial influence on academic achievement of adolescents. Research on Ghanaian teenagers established that psychosocial aspects such as social support are important in fostering health and academic achievements. In the study, it was noted that the adolescents who had strong social support systems had less stress and improved health outcomes, and this positively affected their academic

performances. Nevertheless, the study also found that there were no well-structured peer support training programs in the rural Ghana, which curtailed equal access to successful peer mentorship programs and curtailed their ability to enhance the academic performance among the learners with different backgrounds.

According to the study conducted by Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto (2024) in Ghana, peer support has a positive impact on academic success and life satisfaction of adolescents, but there was a gap in the methodology of the study as it lacked organized peer support training programs, particularly in villages. This drawback indicates that there was no standardization of the interventions thus it can be hard to determine the effectiveness of the interventions in various regions. This gap was aimed to be filled in the present study through the application and testing of a structured, school-based peer support model that has well-defined training protocols, so that they are delivered uniformly, and its effects on academic and psychosocial outcomes of learners are better evaluated.

In Kenya, a number of studies had been conducted on how peer support programs affect the academic performance of adolescents and their psychosocial wellness. Example, Wangila (2023) studied the applicability of peer mentorship interventions in curbing instances of disruptive behaviours among parents in informal settlements in Nairobi. The study established that peer mentorship played an important role in minimizing disruptive behaviours hence creating a favourable learning environment. On the same note, Kiprop (2021) study evaluated the types of peer counseling that deliver psychosocial support in boarding secondary schools in Kericho County. The results showed that peer counseling had a positive effect on the mental wellness of the students, which shows the relevance of peer support in the academic environment. The research suggested that learning institutions

should adopt systematic peer support activities with well-articulated academic goals. The effects of these programs should then be measured using rigorous academic performance measures to determine the effects of these programs thus adding to an enhanced understanding of the effect of these programs on the improvement of educational outcomes.

These studies in Kenya reveals a contextual gap in the implementation and evaluation of peer support programs. Although studies by Wangila (2023) and Kiprop (2021) confirm the psychosocial benefits of peer mentorship and counseling, they primarily emphasize behavioral and emotional outcomes, with less focus on actual academic performance indicators. In addition, these studies are also restricted to individual counties and schools (e.g., informal settlements and boarding schools), and there is a dearth in evidence on larger public day secondary schools. The gap this study focused on by analyzing structured peer support programs in different school setting by using standardized academic outcome measures to determine the direct influence of peer support programs on the academic performance and well-being of the learners.

2.3.4 School Counseling Services and Adolescents' Academic Performance

School counseling services facilitate the general growth and welfare of the adolescents. These services can help learners deal with various emotional, social, and academic issues especially at the age of adolescence which is the year of change. Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage, which is characterized by major cognitive changes, emotional changes, and social changes. In that way, students can encounter a range of problems that interfere with their academic level, such as mental health problems, family, peer relations, and stress (Smith and Brown, 2020).

In Portugal, Koltcheva (2022) carried out study on the social and emotional skills of early and preschool age children. The study aims at the acquisition of social and emotional skills among children under early and preschool age in Portugal. It was concluded that preschool-age children that were exposed to structured social-emotional learning programs had a great improvement in their capacity to cooperate with other children. Children were found to have better sharing, taking turns and conflict resolution abilities independently, which resulted in improved social interactions in the classroom. These were the gains in social skills that were associated with increased academic engagement and learning preparedness. This study hypothesized that through the facilitation of emotional regulation, peer relations, and social skills, schools can provide a platform on which better academic achievements and well-being in children are achieved.

In the study by Koltcheva (2022), there was a gap in the methodology because the researchers mostly applied observational and developmental tests to children of early ages and preschoolers in structured settings. Although as the results show, the social-emotional learning has a positive impact on the peer interactions and academic maturation of young children, the study methodology was not applicable to the adolescent in junior school. Consequently, there was a need for research employing stronger school-based experimental or quasi-experimental designs to examine the long-term educational effects of peer support programs among adolescents, particularly within diverse cultural and educational contexts such as Kenya.

In Nigeria, Osuoha (2024) evaluated the effect of guidance and counselling on academic performance and discipline in junior schools' students: A study of Federal Capital Territory in Abuja. The report established that counseling services had a positive

impact on study habits, time management, motivation, stress coping behaviors, self-confidence, and concentration on academic goals. Also, the services helped in enhancing student discipline thus minimizing violence, bullying, absence, and suspension. The study suggested that counseling services need to be incorporated in schools as part and parcel of the curriculum where students can constantly interact with counselors. Time management lessons, lessons on studying, coping with stress, and self-confidence can be implemented into the school curriculum and can give learners the necessary means of being successful in their classes and in life in general.

The contextual gap was that, while Osuoha (2024) focused on formal guidance and counseling in the junior school of Nigeria, there was a gap of research conducted in Kenya on how peer-led psychosocial support systems in the junior schools directly affect academic performance, and discipline.

Gachenia and Mwenje (2020) conducted a study in Kenya on the effectiveness of school counseling programs on academic achievement of secondary school students in Kiambu county, Kenya. The study applied a cross-sectional survey research design in 10 institutions and involved the principals, assistant principals and heads of departments and student leaders. The sample size involved were 90 respondents comprising of 5 HODs, 5 student leaders and 270 students. Purposive and random sampling methods was used. A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis triangulation was used in the study. The research findings indicated that holistic counseling services brought about improvement in study habits, time management, motivation, stress management, self-confidence and concentration on academic goals. The learners who were counseled said

that they had better academic performance and were more positive about their lives in schools.

While Gachenia and Mwenje (2020) targeted a relatively small and local sample of 90 respondents in selected secondary schools in the Kiambu county, there was need to conduct studies with larger and more diverse samples of study participants in various Kenyan counties. This would help increase the generalizability of results on the efficacy of school counseling programs in augmenting the academic results in the country.

Ndurumo (2020) conducted research in Nyandarua county on the impact of guidance and counseling service on the performance of students in secondary schools. The research found out that students positively viewed counseling services and as such, this perception affected their readiness to use the counseling services. This interaction resulted in better study and performance. But having a shortage of teacher-counselors, time, overworking, and having inadequate funds and facilities were also found to be hindrances to delivering good services. This highlights the impact of counseling on student achievement, which is positive.

A study by Ndurumo (2020) was based on the case of Nyandarua county with specific benefits and issues of counseling services. Nevertheless, more extensive, comparative research was required to cover all the counties in Kenya to find out whether or not there were similar results and obstacles in differing socio-economic and educational contexts, especially in more metropolitan or underserved areas.

2.3.5 Strategies to Enhance the Effectiveness of Psychosocial Support Services

Psychosocial support services are very crucial in assisting the emotional, social, and psychological needs of the adolescent learners, thus enhancing their overall well-being

and academic achievements. Nevertheless, the success of these services is highly reliant on the strategies used to provide them in an educational and a community context (Jones and Presler-Marshall, 2021).

In a qualitative study, Schlesier and Fischer (2024) investigated the views of pupils of secondary schools in Germany regarding the assistance with solving the problem of attendance in schools. The study employed semi-structured interviews of students between the ages of 12-17 who had had attendance problems. The data were thematically analyzed in order to determine the important factors which determine attendance in schools. Results indicated that positive peer relationships and teacher relationships along with a sense of belonging in the school setting were instrumental in promoting regular attendance. On the other hand, bullying and lack of social support were contributors to absenteeism. The study emphasis on the need to create positive school climates that help students achieve psychosocial well-being and attendance. This study offers some knowledge that could be used in the perception of how learners engagement could influence in school environments like Makadara sub-county through psychosocial support system at school.

Although Schlesier and Fischer (2024) provide very useful information through the lens of German context, the findings might not be applicable to Makadara sub-county, Kenya, since the socio-cultural dynamics, educational system, and resources are not similar. This gap necessitated local studies that could be used to investigate the effect of school-based psychosocial support on learners engagement and attendance in urban contexts in Kenya.

In USA, Luthar and Resnick (2020) assessed psychological adaptation and social supports of adolescents in the initial stages of the remote learning process caused by the

COVID-19 pandemic. The study used national multi-wave daily-diary study which involved the use of high school students in the age range of 14-18 years and took a span of a few weeks. Participants took daily questionnaires that assessed psychological well-being and perceived social support. Multilevel modeling was employed to analyze data to determine the changes with time.

The findings showed that, excellent social support provided by family and peers linked with positive psychological accommodation in the remote learning process. The positive impact of social support was not sustained over time, indicating the need for continuous and consistent interventions. The study underscored the importance of ongoing psychosocial support in maintaining adolescents' psychological well-being and academic performance, an aspect that warranted consideration in similar learning contexts such as Nairobi City County.

Although Luthar and Resnick (2020) adopted a powerful daily-diary and multilevel modeling, this is not a commonly used approach in other longitudinal studies because they are typically done in Nairobi City County. This created a gap in the application of time and context-sensitive methodologies to determine the changing effect of peer and social support on adolescents' mental health and academic performance in Kenyan schools.

In Ghana, Oti-Boadi (2023) carried out a study in Ghana to investigate psychosocial variables related to depression symptoms among adolescent learners in junior and senior high schools. Cross sectional survey was used as research design and the study involved 300 learners (150 males and 150 females) using standardized questionnaires in the measurement of depressive symptoms, self-esteem and parental social support. Results showed that female adolescents reported more symptoms of depression as compared to

males, while greater parental social support was associated with lower levels of depression. The study further revealed that there is relevance of family-based interventions in treating adolescent mental health problems. These observations are relevant in formulating psychosocial support interventions in schooling institutions just like in Makadara sub-county.

Oti-Boadi employed a cross-sectional survey design, which limited the ability to track changes in psychosocial factors and depressive symptoms over time. This limitation highlighted the need for longitudinal studies in similar contexts, such as Makadara sub-county, to better understand the evolving nature of adolescents' mental health and the long-term effects of psychosocial support systems.

In Tanzania, Leo-Himmelstine and Presler-Marshall (2021) conducted a mixed-method baseline study examine the mental health and psychosocial well-being of adolescents, aged 11-19, in Morogoro and Mwanza cities. The study utilized a quantitative survey, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies of families in order to identify the main causes of mental ill-health and protective factors. Findings showed that family instability, poverty and violence exposure were major stressors and social support networks were found to have a positive linkage with psychosocial well-being. The study highlighted that a holistic community-based intervention is necessary to address the mental health of adolescents. The findings were useful to guide such endeavors in the urban Kenyan settings.

Although Leon-Himmelstine and Presler-Marshall (2021) utilized a heterogeneous sample of Tanzanian or urban areas, the research was predominantly urban so that the authors did not consider the psychosocial issues that adolescents might encounter in peri-

urban or informal settlements. In more localized, marginalized adolescent sub-groups in the urban Kenyan setting such as Makadara sub-county, further studies are required to make interventions in accordance with the needs of the targeted group.

In Kenya, Kangwana et al., (2024) conducted a study to assess the feasibility of integrating mental health services into a youth-led, community-based intervention targeting out-of-school adolescents in Kariobangi and Rhonda informal settlements. As part of the initiative, the Bridging the Gaps curriculum was developed, and youth mentors were trained using a modified version of the World Health Organization's Problem Management Plus psychological intervention model. This training was embedded within a broader curriculum that incorporated sexual and reproductive health education, life skills, and financial literacy. The intervention comprised 72 weekly group-based sessions, complemented by an additional five individualized sessions for adolescents exhibiting signs of psychological distress.

The results showed that the integration enhanced confidence levels of adolescents to speak up about their problems, equip them with the necessary first-aid skills to meet anxiety or mild depression, give them the opportunity to receive free one-on-one psychological counseling sessions, and expand their social network. Mentors had the chance of following the main principles of delivering the intervention in the field of psychology, offering preventive and treatment-oriented psychosocial services. The parents indicated better adolescent responsiveness to parental recommendations thereby resulting in increased parent-adolescent relationships. The study concluded that community-based intervention may be enhanced by mental health services to achieve positive outcomes in the case of adolescents, parents, and mentors.

Although Kangwana, Mutahi, and Kumar (2024) were effective at assessing a community-based intervention among out-of-school adolescents in informal settlements, the researchers did not target in-school adolescents who could be exposed to other psychosocial stressors in school. This presented a contextual and population divide, and research on how psychosocial support services could be incorporated and provided effectively in the school setting such as Makadara sub-county is required.

Jefwa and Ndetei (2020) conducted a study on the implementation of a school-based mental health program among adolescent learners in Nairobi City County in Kenya. The study examined the application of a mental health intervention program in a school set up to minimize psychological distress in adolescent learnerss in Nairobi City County. The program entailed training school personnel on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to equip them better to offer mental health and psychosocial support to learners who have emotional or psychological challenges. The results of the research revealed that the support and dedication of the school management was the crucial determinant of the success of the program, which contributed to the maintenance and inclusion of the program into the school culture. Moreover, MHPSS interventions in schools ameliorated academic performance and life quality of students.

Even though Jefwa and Ndetei (2020) proved that mental health programs that are implemented in schools are effective in the Nairobi City County, their research focused mostly on the outcomes of the implementation and the support that is offered to school management. Nevertheless, the study failed to examine the views of learners and their personal experiences regarding the psychosocial support services in depth. This gives a methodological and focus gap that requires more qualitative research based on the voice of

in-school adolescents especially in places such as Makadara sub-county so as to gain a better insight on how such services affect the academic and emotional well-being of adolescents.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gap(s)

Psychosocial support and academic performance among adolescents have been widely researched in different learning institutions, with particular attention paid to such service providers as parental psychosocial support, peer support programs and school counseling. Acquiring peer support, which encompasses both tutoring and mentoring, fosters greater cooperation, increases motivation, and leads to a significant positive impact on academic achievements, which have been observed to occur in the Netherlands (Brouwer and Engels, 2022), Japan (Kondo and Kato, 2022), and Ghana (Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto, 2024). Peer mentorship was identified to minimize disruptive behaviors and improve mental well-being in Kenya (Wangila, 2023; Kiprop, 2021). The psychological and emotional issues and problems that are solved with the help of school counseling services are critical in enhancing the study habits, time management, and general focus of learners, which are proven in the studies conducted in Nigeria (Osuoha, 2024) and Kenya (Gachenia and Mwenje, 2020; Ndurumo, 2020).

Although vast literature has been done on psychosocial support, there was a gap in knowledge on applying psychosocial support in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi City County, where issues like socio-economic disparities, cultural differences, and urbanization influence adolescents. Thus, the aim of the study was to examine the relationship between psychosocial support systems and the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in this sub-county.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter entails the research methodology that was used in this study which consisted of research design, study area, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, validity of research instrument, reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

According to Lindhult and Axelsson (2021), a research design is a methodical plan that directs data collection, measurement, and analysis in a study, guaranteeing conformity with the research objectives and theoretical framework. In order to combine quantitative and qualitative methods, this study used a mixed methods approach especially convergent parallel design. The quantitative component used a correlational research design to investigate the relationship between adolescent learners' academic performance and psychosocial support networks. Without changing the variables, correlational design allows the researcher to ascertain the direction and strength of links between them (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Structured questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data, which were then statistically examined to determine correlations between variables.

By examining the lived experiences and perspectives of learners, teachers, and caregivers with relation to psychosocial support systems, the qualitative component used a

phenomenological design to supplement the quantitative findings. This method proved suitable for learning more about how participants perceive and understand psychosocial support. Focus groups and interviews were used to gather data, enabling a thorough examination of participants' opinions. A more in-depth knowledge of the influence of psychosocial support networks on academic performance was made possible by the combination of the two methods.

3.3 Locale of the Study

The location of the study is the certain region or territory in which the researcher implements his research on a certain topic (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019). The study was carried out in junior schools in Makadara sub-county. This region is an urban region of Nairobi City County in the eastern region and has a large population density with a variety of socio-economic features. The area is surrounded by other sub-counties, which affect the social-economic and educational dynamics of the area. On the west Makadara borders with Starehe sub-county, allowing access to the central business district of Nairobi, whereas on the north, it borders Kamukunji sub-county, which gives additional access to the diverse urban and rural environments. To the south, it is adjacent to the Lang'ata sub-county, with connections to a variety of industrial, residential, and educational areas. Makadara sub-county according to the latest Nairobi City County Education Report (2026) houses 27 junior schools. In total, these schools serve a diverse population of 8559 Junior school learners.

The choice of the study location is justified by its unique urban setting, high population density, and diverse socio-economic composition, which present a rich context for examining the effectiveness of psychosocial support systems among adolescent

learners. As a region with formal and informal settlements, learners are exposed to different psychosocial problems, such as family instability, poverty, peer influence, and exposure to urban stressors; all of which are likely to affect their educational results. In addition, the fact that the sub-county has several junior schools renders it an acceptable and convenient site to collect the data. The location thus offers an ideal environment to investigate how different psychosocial support structures function in supporting learners' academic performance in an urban Kenyan context.

3.4 Target Population

The target population refers to the group of individuals, entities, or items that share common characteristics relevant to the study and from which conclusions are drawn (Giri, 2024). This group is the foundation for generalizing the study's results (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). The study target population was 15,444 participants comprising of 8559 learners, 458 teachers, 27 teacher councilors and 6,400 parents/guardian from 27 junior schools in Makadara sub-county (Nairobi County Education Office, 2025). The number of parents or guardians was comparatively lower due to the presence of households with more than one enrolled learner (Nairobi County Education Office, 2025).

The study involved adolescent learners enrolled in junior schools as they constituted the primary focus of the research. Teachers were also included in the study because of their daily interaction with learners and their critical role in providing psychosocial support within the classroom environment. Parents were targeted on the basis of the concept that parents are one of the most important stakeholders in the provision of psychosocial assistance at home, which have a direct impact on the academic performance and emotional wellbeing of learners. School counselors were also included because they

provide guidance and counseling services to learners, as they directly address the psychosocial needs of the learners. This study however narrowed down on a sub-set of this population, making sure that the sample was manageable and at the same time representative of the broader educational context in the area.

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Sampling is choosing of a representative subset from a larger population so that data can be collected and analyzed (Verma & Verma, 2020). Sample is a small part of the population that represents the characteristics of the whole group (Levy & Goldfarb, 2021). Sample size, as defined by Verma and Verma (2020) is a portion of the research population participating in a study. It is also described as an adequate part of a research population that ensure the results reflect the targeted community. They also state that the sample size is expected to be sufficient to replicate the major features of the population of interest.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedures

This study employed a stratified random sampling technique to obtain a representative sample of learners from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and both genders. The learners population was first divided into relevant strata, after which simple random sampling was used to select participants from each category. This approach ensured fair representation of the target population and enabled the study to capture variations in psychosocial support and academic performance across different public-school settings.

In addition, purposive sampling was used to select teachers, school counselors, and parents or guardians. This approach targeted individuals with first-hand experience in the provision of psychosocial support to learners. Teachers, teacher-counselors, and parents

who were actively involved in mentoring, guiding, and counseling learners were selected based on their relevant expertise and their understanding of the relationship between psychosocial support systems and learners' academic performance.

3.5.2 Sample Size

The determination of sample size depends on factors like the level of desired precision, level of confidence, variability of the population as well as on the nature of the research design (Cohen, 1988; Yamane, 1967). The formula used to reach the appropriate sample size in this study was that of Yamane. In which n is sample size, N is population size, and e is the degree of error expected. The error of sampling of 0.05 was used on the target population. The formula was applied as follows:

$$\text{From} \quad n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)}$$

The learner sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{8559}{1 + 8559(0.05^2)}$$

n=382

=382 learners

Purposive sampling was employed to select teachers, teacher counselors, and parents/guardians, as this method allows the identification of participants with relevant knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the phenomenon under investigation (Palinkas et al., 2015). Creswell (2014) recommends a qualitative sample size of between 15 and 30 participants, depending on the scope and complexity of the study. Following this guideline, the study selected a total of 60 participants, comprising 30 teachers, 15 counselors and 15 parents/guardians, which was considered sufficient for generating in-depth qualitative data.

To ensure an efficient and representative selection of schools, stratified sampling was used to choose 15 public junior schools from a total of 27 in Makadara sub-county. The schools were first categorized into strata based on location, enrollment size, gender balance and availability of psychosocial support services. Proportionate random sampling was then applied to select schools from each stratum according to their population size until the required sample was attained. This approach was suitable given the heterogeneity of schools in the sub-county. Therefore, the study used a total sample size of 442 participants, comprising 382 learners, 30 teachers, 15 teacher counselors, and 15 parents/guardians, ensuring adequate representation for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study.

Table 1

Sample Technique and Sample Size Matrix

Target Population	**Population Size**	**Sampling Techniques**	**Sampl e size**	**Percentage (%) Sample size**
Learners	8559	Stratified random	382	4.5
Teachers	458	Purposive	30	6.8
Teacher Councilors	27	Purposive	15	55.6
Parent/guardian	6,400	Purposive	15	3.4
Total	**15,444**		**442**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (*2026)

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is a structured process of collecting information by the researcher among the study participant to address the research questions or to test a hypothesis or to assess the results (Taherdoost, 2021). The validity and reliability of the results rely mostly on the accuracy and relevance of the tools used in the process of data collection (Gatuyu & Kinyua, 2020). Data collection tools are definite tools that are particularly applied to gather

the necessary data in an organized and uniform way (Sharma, 2022). This research utilized both standardized tools and instruments that researchers constructed in order to determine psychosocial support and academic performance among adolescent school learners in Makadara sub-county in junior schools.

The study used the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet et al. (1988), in order to measure psychosocial support. It is a commonly applied 12 item self-report scale which aims at assessing perceived social support of three sources family, friends and significant others.

All items were assessed based on the 5-point Likert scale, with the options of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The MSPSS is appreciated due to simplicity, high psychometric characteristics and its use in a wide variety of cultures and adolescent groups. To suit this study, the scale was modified by adjusting the language and examples of answers to the school situation of psychosocial support that is applicable to the context of learners of the junior schools. It was used in this study to capture adolescents' subjective experiences of the emotional and psychological support they receive, which is central to addressing the research objectives.

In assessing academic performance, the study used standardized tests which are a holistic assessment of the performance of learners in the major subject areas. As a rule, a combination of MSPSS in the realm of psychosocial support and standardized or school-based measures of academic performance guaranteed that the data obtained was complete and applicable, and the study area provided the possibility to conduct a solid analysis of the relation between psychosocial support systems and adolescents' academic performance.

3.6.1 Questionnaires for Learners

Toyon (2021) explains that questionnaires are data collection tools that are used to collect information which are based on questions, that are related to research questions or hypothesis and are designed and ordered in a manner, as to utilize the data needed to answer the research questions or hypothesis. According to Lavrakas (2019), questionnaires help in the prevention of questioning biases on the side of the respondents that are difficult to reach or engage. This has been done in the structure of the questions in this work because it has been structured according to the research questions to facilitate easy interpretation and analysis. This type of questions helps to give a structured format of questions and reduce variations in answers as well as, the obtained data becomes more reliable.

The learners questionnaire consisted of six parts all aimed at acquiring certain data that corresponded to the study goals. Section A focused on demographic details of the respondents. It gathered information including the age, sex of the learner, level of grade, and the type of living arrangement they were living in. This part was essential because it gave the opportunity to categorize the participants and analyze the patterns and differences between numerous demographic categories.

Section B was the second section that evaluated the nature of the psychosocial support that was present at the school. The objective of this section was to give a general idea of the support systems that are available to learners. This kind of information was useful in setting the ground to conduct the additional assessment of the effects of these support systems on academic performance.

Section C which was the third section of the questionnaire dealt with parental psychosocial support. It was deferred to the nature and level of support that parents or guardians offer that relates to the emotional well-being and academic performance of the learners.

The fourth part, Section D, discussed peer support programs. It was an attempt to explore how peer relationships and structured peer-led programs affected the motivation, engagement and academic performance of learners.

The fifth section, which was section E, focused on psychosocial counseling services at schools. It evaluated the accessibility and the efficacy of formal counseling structures availed in school environment and how they are perceived to affect the academic performance of learners. Section F, the sixth section, was an amalgamation of participants' opinion on the strategies that can be embraced in order to improve the effectiveness of the psychosocial support services in the junior schools. To measure the perceptions, experiences, and attitude of learners on different aspects of psychosocial support, the questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale in Section B up to Section F.

3.6.2 Interview Guide for Teachers, Teacher Councilors and Parents

Three interview guides were used to collect data from teachers, school counselors and parents. An interview is a conversation for gathering information. A research interview involves an interviewer, who coordinates the process of the conversation and asks questions. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or over the telephone (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2020). This study was conducted using semi-structured interviews on school counselors, teachers and parents to gather qualitative insights. According to Ruslin et al.,(2022), the semi-structured interview is more powerful than other types of interviews for

qualitative research because it allows for researchers to acquire in-depth information and evidence from interviewees while considering the focus of the study. It also allows flexibility and adaptability for researchers to hold their track. The semi-structured interview was conducted with five participants (15 teacher councilors, 15 teachers and 15 parent) from the sampled schools selected for the study. The interview guide ensured that all relevant topics are covered while also allowing for flexibility in the conversation to capture participants' unique insights and experiences.

The interview guide was divided into two parts: Section A contained question which gathered demographic information including teaching experience, and subjects taught and assisted in putting answers into perspective. Section B includes open-ended thematic questions that examined five major areas types of psychosocial support in schools, parental support, peer support program, effectiveness and access of school-based counseling services and the use of strategies to enhance psychosocial support. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze these responses to determine patterns and derive more insight into their results to supplement the quantitative results.

3.6.3 Document Analysis Schedule

In this research, the document analysis schedule played the role of providing a systematic way of gathering secondary data on academic performance of adolescent learners in the junior schools in Makadara sub-county. This was done by the use of available school records like end of term examination scores, attendance sheets and the promotion or retention sheets to get trustworthy and objective indicators of the academic performers of the learners.

The timeline gave the researcher a systematic method through which the research was able to document major academic performance indicators that comprised mean exam scores, class attendance, attendance rates, and school graduation rates. To maintain the required level of confidentiality, every learner got his/her own code while facilitating proper tracking and data analysis across a number of schools.

The use of document analysis enabled the study to triangulate information in different sources, which makes the research more valid and reliable. It also gave the study a uniform method of data collection that entailed uniformity of the 15 sampled junior schools. The document analysis schedule became a vital part of the methodological design of the study, which allowed assessing the relationship between psychosocial support systems and academic performance in full since it was possible to capture both quantitative measures (e.g., examination scores, attendance percentages) and progress indicators (e.g., promotion or completion status).

3.7 Validity, Reliability and Pre-Test of Data Collection Instruments

3.7.1 Validity Tests of Research Instruments

Validity refers to the extent at which research instruments align and achieve what they are intended to measure (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). The current study used content validity to evaluate how well the found data corresponds with the research concept (Connell et al., 2018). To increase validity, the questionnaires and the interview guide were reviewed by supervisors, peers, and experts in the field. To minimize bias, reviewers identified and suggested to remove vague or ambiguous statements. The experts also provided the requisite objectivity and relevance to the study instruments.

3.7.2 Reliability Tests of Research Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of research findings across different contexts, time periods, or populations (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). In this research, the reliability of interview guide and the questionnaires was evaluated through the Test-Retest method, which involves the same instruments being administered to the same group of respondents on two separate instances. Respondents' answer consistency was evaluated on the two separate instances of answer submission.

Pre-tests were carried out on a group of 10 respondents with the same characteristics as those of the primary study respondents, but who were excluded from the primary study. This approach was used to ascertain that the evaluation of the reliability of the instruments was not going to affect the collection of the primary data.

To measure the internal consistency of the instruments, that is, to assess the extent to which the individual items in the instruments measure the same construct, reliability was measured by using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. Alpha can take any value between 0 and 1. A result that is equal to or above 0.7 is taken to mean that the instrument has a reasonable (acceptable) degree of reliability (Clark, 2018). Gupta (2017) states that for an instrument and study of a certain design, a reliability coefficient of between 0.6 and 0.9 is taken to mean that the reliability of the instrument is satisfactory.

Because the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) is being utilized in this particular study, it can be cited that Zimet et al. (1988) documented the MSPSS having a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.88, suggesting that it had high internal consistency across multiple studies. This builds further support to the reason why the

MSPSS was used in this study. The two rounds of the test-retest data were processed and analyzed using SPSS Version 26.

The questionnaire was considered reliable for data collection if it achieves a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.70 or above at a 0.05 level of significance. Any inconsistencies or weak correlations identified during this process informed necessary revisions to enhance the final instrument's reliability and suitability for the main study.

3.7.3 Pre-Test of Data Collection Instruments

The pre-test of the questionnaire was done to check clarity, relevance and effectiveness before the actual study was done. The pre-test of study instruments is essential, as it is a chance to discover the weak points of the research design and data collection tools, allowing for preliminary data corrections to the study methodology (Schindler and Cooper, 2019). Whitehead et al. (2019) consider that a pilot study must include a range of between 1% to 10% of the total population. Kothari (2019) also recommended that the pre-testing should be done on the target population of at least 1%.

To achieve the validity, reliability, and comprehension of the data collection tools, this study carried out pilot test before the actual data collection. As in any research procedure, the pre-test was conducted in Kamukunji sub-county that has similar urban and socio-economic features with Makadara sub-county but is not located in the study area. This helped to reduce the chances of biasing the respondents and be able to contaminate the main study sample.

The Pre-testing was carried out on a sample of 44 people; this was about 10% of the total sample in the study. This involved 39 learners, 2 teachers, 2 school counselors and

1 parent who was chosen in the junior schools in Kamukunji. The participants had one-week laps following the pilot testing in an attempt to make the testing efficient and prompt.

The data collected during pre-testing was used to evaluate the internal consistency, clarity, and appropriateness of the items in the psychosocial support and academic performance instruments. To improve item clarity and align the findings with the objectives, the study revised the final questionnaire, and refined the items. Furthermore, the interview guide for key informants was modified based on feedback from the pre-test, along with suggestions from the research supervisor and expert reviewers, to improve the clarity and the relevance, and to enhance the effectiveness in capturing valuable qualitative data.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The necessary approvals were obtained prior to the commencement of data collection. A clearance letter was first secured from The Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Subsequently, a research permit was obtained from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). In addition, an authorization letter was then acquired from the Makadara sub-county education office to facilitate access to the selected schools for data collection.

After that, the researcher contacted school head teacher through phone calls to set an appointment. The researcher then introduced the study and then coordinate with the proper time to have the questionnaires distributed and interviews done.

Data was collected in a phased approach of the study. In the first phase, the survey was structured in such a way as to gather quantitative data using questionnaires that were designed and administered to the general sample population. In the second phase,

qualitative data was collected in interviews with key informant as teachers and school councilors from in junior schools in Makadara sub-county. The researcher manually recorded the responses of the participants during the interviews. After the data was collected, it was analyzed using the SPSS software.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedures

The goal of data analysis is to organize and process the collected data to gain insights that answer the goals of the study (Moreira et al., 2019). This study used a correlational design, which fits the purpose of understanding the association between psychosocial support systems and academic performance. The collected quantitative data, which came in the form of questionnaires, were processed using SPSS, Version 26. Using descriptive statistics, which include analysis of frequencies and computation of percentages, the data were summarized. Using a correlational design, one is expected to analyze the relationships among the variables through the use of some relationships in order to use some variables. Precisely, it involves calculating measures of association such as Pearson's correlation coefficients to determine the strength and direction of relationships, and regression analysis to explore how one or more independent variables predict a dependent variable. These methodologies apply to the tests of research hypotheses in a correlational study. The quantitative findings were given a contextual description through the identification and analysis of themes, and pattern analysis, using the qualitative data from interviews, which is referred to as content analysis.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research must be conducted in an ethical manner, and this must be done to assist in the protection of subjects, as well as for the maintenance of ethical research (Mugenda,

2013). Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained an approval letter from The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). Formal authorization was also sought from the County Director of Education and the Makadara Sub-county Education Office, where the purpose and procedures of the study were clearly outlined. In addition, a research permit was obtained from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Before the commencement of data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Consent forms were issued to teachers, parents, and school counselors. For learner participants, parental or guardian consent was obtained alongside the learners' assent to ensure voluntary participation. All participants were provided with detailed information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study to promote transparency and informed decision-making.

To safeguard participants' privacy, respondents were not required to indicate their names on the questionnaires, thereby ensuring anonymity. Furthermore, all data collected were treated with strict confidentiality and were used solely for academic purposes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Base on the findings obtained via questionnaires and the interview guides, this chapter provide the analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the outcomes of the research. This presentation was organized in a stepwise fashion relative to the research questions of the study. This chapter first provide the presentation of the research instruments return rate prior to the analytical presentation of the findings. Following this, the chapter provide the demographic analysis of the respondents.

4.2 Instruments Return Rate

The data collected to assist in the analysis of response rates details the number of each category of respondents, which include the teachers, school counselors, parents/guardians, and learners who actively participated in the data collection phase of the study by completing and submitting questionnaires and/or who took part in the interviews. Table 2 presents the analysis of the response rate from the participants of the study.

Table 2

Response Rate

n = 425

Instruments	Targeted respondents	Actual responses	Percentage (%)
Questionnaire for Learners	382	376	98.4%
Interview Guide for Teachers	30	26	86.7%
Interview Guide for Teacher Councilors	15	12	80.0%
Interview Guide for Parent/guardian	15	11	73.3%
TOTAL	**442**	**425**	**95.7%**

Source: *Field data (2026).*

The study targeted a total of 442 respondents**,** comprising 382 learners, 30 teachers, 15 teacher counselors, and 15 parents/guardians. However, the actual number of respondents who participated in the study was 425**.** The response rates of the study's research instruments utilized to ascertain the study's participants level of activity are displayed in Table 2. For survey-based data collection, the learners' questionnaire recorded a return rate of 98.4% (376 out of 382), indicating almost complete participation from the learner respondents. In the same way, the interview guides for teachers reported a return rate of 86.7% (26 out of 30), while the return rate for the teacher counselors interview guides was 80.0% (12 out of 15). There was a marginally lesser return rate of 73.3% (11 out of 15) for the interview guides for the parents/guardians, which is still significant in terms of the extent of response to this phase of the study.

The return rates are considered highly satisfactory. In educational and social science research, a response rate of 70% or more is generally acceptable and serves as a sound basis for analysis and interpretation of the data (Kelley et al, 2019). The high return rates for this study reduce the possibility of nonresponse bias, thus elevating the overall validity and reliability of the findings. Furthermore, the use of both quantitative

(questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) methodologies achieved triangulation and further consolidation of the findings. The involvement of the entire respondent population, particularly the learners, added to the richness of the study and the findings.

The respondents' involvement significantly contributes to the validity of the conclusions made on the psychosocial support systems and how they affect the academic performance of junior school learners in Makadara sub-county. Therefore, the study's findings may be useful for policymakers and educational stakeholders as they develop psychosocial support systems focused on the academic performance of junior learners in this context.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

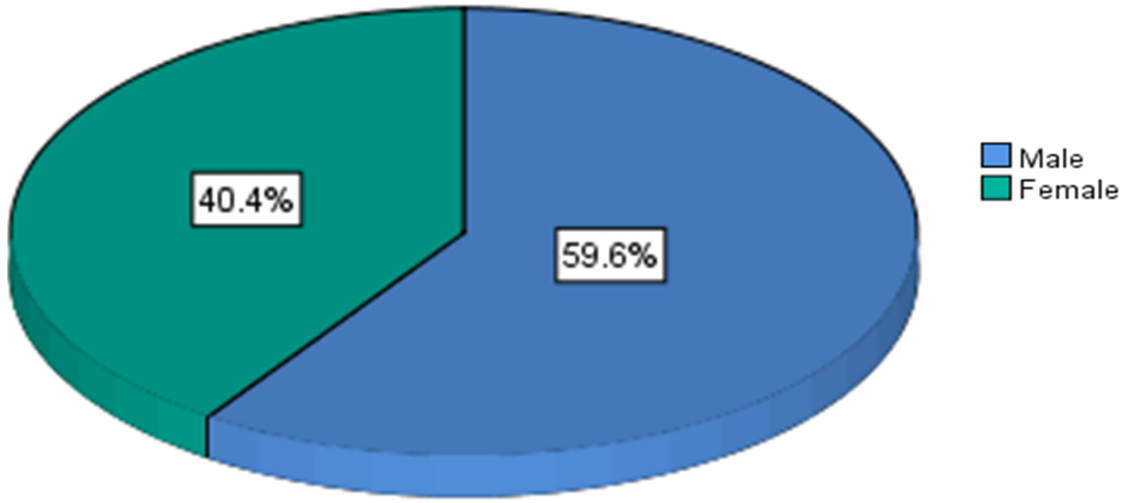
The study gathered data on the demographic characteristics of the participants which comprise of the learners, teachers, school counselors and parent/guardian in order to contextualize the study findings. The demographic characteristics considered in this study included gender, teaching experience, subject taught, age, grade and parent. The provided data has been analyzed and is presented in charts, graphs and table.

4.3.1 Gender

The respondents who participated in this study were asked to indicate their gender and the finding was presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Gender Distribution of the Learner Respondents



Source: *Field Data (2026)*

The study sought to determine the gender distribution of learner respondents, and the findings are presented in Figure 2. Out of the total 376 learners (n = 376) who participated in the study, the responses revealed the proportion of male and female learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county.

The gender distribution provides important insights into the composition of the study population. A balanced distribution of male and female respondents would indicate equitable participation and improve the representativeness of the data. Conversely, a skewed distribution whether in favor of male or female learners may reflect existing demographic realities within junior schools or highlight potential inequalities in enrollment and retention of learners based on gender.

Interpreting this finding further, the gender balance (or imbalance) has implications for understanding the influence of psychosocial support systems. For instance, parental support, peer interactions, and access to school-based counseling services may be experienced differently by male and female learners, potentially influencing their academic

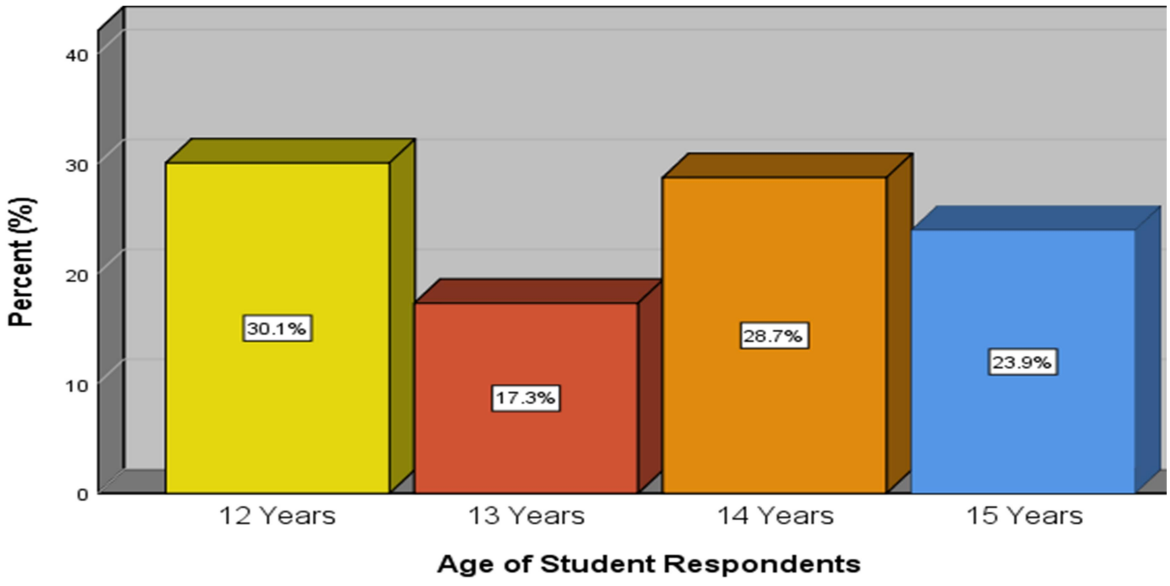
performance in distinct ways. Research has shown that girls are often more open to psychosocial support, especially counseling and peer group programs, while boys may rely more heavily on peer networks and parental expectations. Therefore, the gender distribution of respondents sets the foundation for analyzing how psychosocial support systems affect learners academically and socially within the study area.

4.3.2 Age of Learners Respondent

The study examined the age distribution of the learners respondents, as shown in Figure 4.2. Out of the 376 learners (n = 376) who participated in the study, the ages ranged from 12 to 15 years**,** which corresponds with the expected age bracket of learners in junior schools under the Competency-Based Curriculum framework. Findings in this section are in

Figure 3

Age bracket of Respondent Learner



Source: *Field Data (2026)*

The results show that the largest proportion of respondents were 12 years old (113 learners; 30.1%), followed closely by those aged 14 years (108 learners; 28.7%). Learners aged 15 years accounted for 90 respondents (23.9%), while the smallest group was 13 years old (65 learners; 17.3%).

The data indicates that most learners enrolled in junior school in Makadara sub-county fall within the younger age bracket (12–14 years), making up 76.1% of the sample. This reflects timely progression from upper primary to junior education level as envisioned by the CBC transition structure. However, the presence of 15-year-old learners (23.9%) highlights that some students are slightly older than the expected age cohort. This may be attributed to factors such as delayed school entry, transfers, or interruptions in schooling.

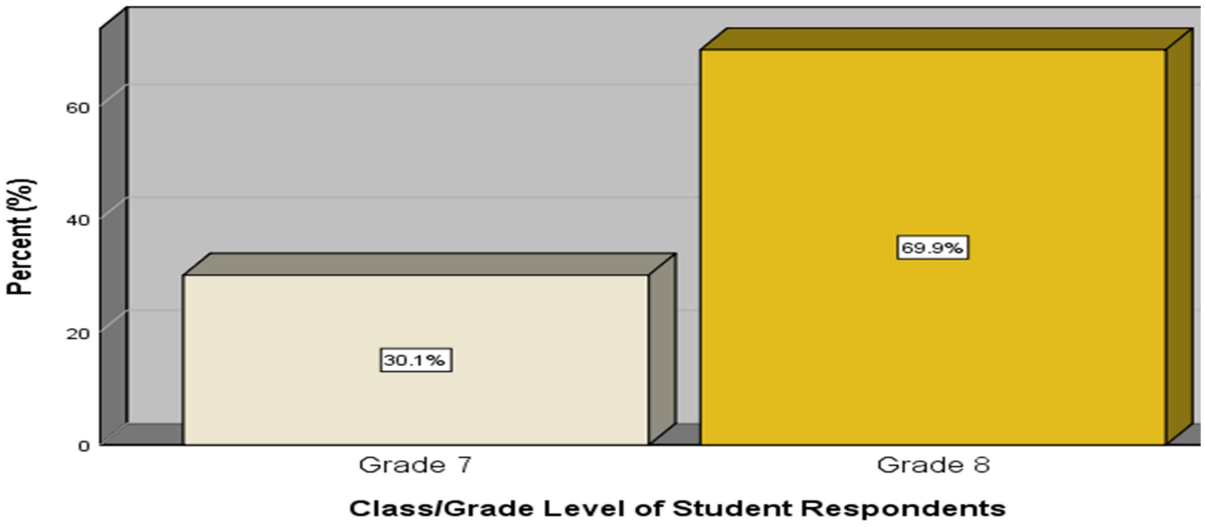
This variation in age distribution has implications for the study. Younger learners (12–13 years) may require more psychosocial support in terms of adjustment to adolescence and school demands, while older learners (14–15 years) might experience pressures linked to maturity, peer influence, or academic performance expectations. Therefore, age is a critical variable in analyzing how psychosocial support systems whether from parents, peers, or school counselors affect the academic performance of learners at different developmental stages.

4.3.3 Class/ Grade Level of Learners Respondents

The study further sought to establish the distribution of learner respondents by class/grade level, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Class/ Grade Level Distribution of Learners Respondents



Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Out of the 376 learners (n = 376) who participated, majority, 263 learners (69.9%), were in Grade 8, while 113 learners (30.1%) were in Grade 7. This finding indicates that the study sample was dominated by learners in Grade 8. The higher proportion of Grade 8 learners suggests that they may have had more exposure to the academic and psychosocial demands of junior school compared to their Grade 7 counterparts. Consequently, their perspectives on psychosocial support systems and their influence on academic performance may be more informed by longer experience in the school setting.

The lower representation of Grade 7 learners (30.1%) reflects their relatively recent transition from primary school. Being newer in the junior school's environment, these learners may still be adjusting to new academic structures, social interactions, and psychosocial support frameworks. Their experiences might therefore differ from those of Grade 8 learners, particularly in relation to coping strategies, reliance on parental or peer support, and use of school-based counseling services. These variations make grade level a key factor in understanding how psychosocial support influences academic performance in Makadara sub-county.

4.3.4 Learner Living Arrangements

The study sought to establish the living arrangements of learner respondents by asking who they live with most of the time. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Learner Response on Parent

Parent Type	Frequency	Percent
Both parents	167	44.4
Single parent	135	35.9
Guardian/Relative	74	19.7
Total	**376**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Out of the 376 learners (n = 376) who participated, 167 (44.4%) reported living with both parents, 135 (35.9%) indicated they live with a single parent, while 74 (19.7%) reported living with a guardian or relative. These findings show that while nearly half of the respondents live with both parents, a significant proportion (over one-third) live with a single parent, and about one-fifth live with guardians or extended family members. This distribution highlights the diversity of family structures among adolescent learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county.

The living arrangements have important implications for the psychosocial support available to learners. Adolescents living with both parents are likely to benefit from stronger emotional, financial, and academic support, which can positively influence their performance. On the other hand, learners living with a single parent may face challenges such as reduced economic resources or limited parental involvement due to work or other responsibilities. Similarly, those under guardianship or relatives may experience varying

levels of psychosocial support depending on the caregiver's commitment, resources, and relationship with the child.

4.3.5 Presents of Learners Psychosocial Support

The study sought to determine whether learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county receive psychosocial support.

Table 4

Learners Response on Psychosocial Support

	Frequency	**Percent**
Yes	250	66.5
No	126	33.5
Total	**376**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

The results presented in Table 4 show that out of the 376 respondents, majority, 250 learners (66.5%), reported that they receive some form of psychosocial support, while 126 learners (33.5%) indicated that they do not. This finding was significant because it demonstrates that while two-thirds of the learners acknowledge access to psychosocial support, a considerable proportion over one-third remain without such support. The availability of psychosocial support systems is crucial for adolescents, as it helps them cope with emotional, social, and academic challenges that arise during this developmental stage.

The fact that 33.5% of learners lack psychosocial support raises concern, as these learners may be more vulnerable to stress, peer pressure, low self-esteem, or academic difficulties without adequate guidance. This gap suggested the need for targeted interventions, such as expanding school-based counseling services, strengthening peer

mentorship programs, and increasing parental involvement, to ensure that all learners benefit from supportive systems.

4.3.6 Gender of Parent/Guardian

The study also sought to establish the gender distribution of parents/guardians who participated in the survey.

Table 5

Parent/Guardian Response on Gender

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	4	36.4
Female	7	63.6
Total	**11**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

As presented in Table 5, out of the 11 respondents (n = 11), the majority were female (7; 63.6%), while male parents/guardians accounted for 4 (36.4%). This finding suggests that mothers and female guardians were more available and willing to participate in the study compared to fathers. It may also reflect a broader social reality where mothers and female caregivers are often more directly involved in the day-to-day welfare, emotional support, and academic monitoring of adolescent learners. Fathers, on the other hand, may be less represented due to work commitments or cultural norms that delegate caregiving responsibilities to mothers.

The predominance of female respondents is particularly relevant when examining psychosocial support, as maternal involvement is often associated with nurturing roles such as emotional encouragement, monitoring of schoolwork, and provision of guidance. However, the lower participation of male parents highlights a potential gap in paternal

involvement, which can also play a critical role in shaping learners' confidence, discipline, and academic motivation.

4.3.7 Relationship to the Child

The study examined the relationship of parents/guardians to the children under their care.

Table 6

Parent/Guardian Response on Relationship to the Child

Parent Type	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Father	4	36.4
Mother	5	45.5
Guardian/Relative	2	18.1
Total	**11**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

As shown in Table 6, out of the 11 respondents (n = 11), the majority were mothers (5; 45.5%), followed by fathers (4; 36.4%), while guardians/relatives accounted for 2 respondents (18.1%). These findings suggested that mothers were slightly more represented than fathers, consistent with the earlier observation that female caregivers are often more directly engaged in educational matters. The participation of fathers, while slightly lower, still indicates a notable level of paternal involvement. The presence of guardians or relatives' highlights that not all children in junior schools within Makadara sub-county are under the care of their biological parents. This may be due to circumstances such as parental separation, orphan hood, or socio-economic challenges that shift caregiving responsibilities to extended family members.

From a psychosocial support perspective, the distribution is important. Mothers are traditionally associated with offering emotional nurturing and close supervision of

schoolwork, while fathers are often linked to providing financial stability and reinforcement of discipline. Learners under guardianship may receive varying levels of support depending on the guardian's availability, resources, and personal commitment. Such differences in caregiver roles and responsibilities can significantly influence the type and extent of psychosocial support that learners receive, which in turn may affect their academic performance.

4.3.8 Number of Adolescent Learners in Junior School

The study sought to establish the number of adolescent learners in junior school under the care of each parent/guardian.

Table 7

Parent/Guardian Response on Number of Learners

No. of Children	Frequency	Percent
1 Learners	6	54.5
2 Learners	4	36.4
3 Learners	1	9.1
Total	**11**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

As presented in Table 7, out of the 11 respondents (n = 11), the majority, 6 parents/guardians (54.5%), reported having one learners in junior school. Another 4 respondents (36.4%) indicated that they had two learners enrolled, while only 1 respondent (9.1%) reported having three learners in junior education level.

This distribution shows that most parents/guardians were supporting a single adolescent in junior school, which may make it easier to dedicate time, attention, and resources toward the learner's psychosocial and academic needs. Parents or guardians with two or more learners in this education level, however, may experience increased financial

and emotional responsibilities. This could potentially affect the level of individualized psychosocial support each child receives, especially in households with limited resources.

The finding that nearly half of the respondents have more than one child (45.5%) in junior school is significant. It suggests that for many families, educational demands are compounded, requiring them to balance resources, time, and psychosocial support across multiple learners. For the single respondent with three children in junior school, the challenges could be particularly pronounced, as providing equitable attention and support to each learner could be difficult.

Table 8

Distribution of Teacher Participants by Gender

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	14	53.8
Female	12	46.2
Total	**26**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

As shown in Table 8, out of the 26 teacher respondents (n = 26), the majority were male (14; 53.8%), while female teachers accounted for 12 (46.2%). This indicates a fairly balanced gender distribution, though male teachers were slightly more represented. The near-equal participation strengthens the credibility of the study findings, as perspectives from both genders are adequately captured. From a psychosocial support lens, the balance is important since male and female teachers may influence learners differently; female teachers often being perceived as more approachable for emotional support, while male teachers may play a stronger role in discipline and mentorship.

Table 9

Teacher Respondents on Teaching Experience

Experience Range	Frequency	Percent
1–5 years	7	26.9
6–10 years	9	34.6
11–15 years	6	23.1
16 years & above	4	15.4
Total	**26**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

The distribution of teaching experience (Table 9) shows that the largest group of teachers had 6–10 years of experience (9; 34.6%), followed by 1–5 years (7; 26.9%), 11–15 years (6; 23.1%), and 16 years and above (4; 15.4%). This indicates that most teachers were moderately experienced, with at least a quarter having taught for less than 5 years. The relatively high representation of teachers with 6–10 years of experience suggests a workforce that is still relatively young and dynamic but also seasoned enough to handle the academic and psychosocial needs of adolescents. The presence of highly experienced teachers (15.4%) adds depth, as they bring institutional knowledge and mentorship for both learners and less experienced colleagues.

In terms of psychosocial support, teachers with fewer years of experience may be more innovative and relatable to adolescent learners but may lack extensive counseling skills, while highly experienced teachers may provide stability, authority, and long-term guidance. The mix enhances the overall support system available in junior schools.

Table 10

Teacher Respondents on Subjects Taught

Subject Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Mathematics	5	19.2
English	4	15.4
Kiswahili	3	11.5
Science (Biology/Physics/Chemistry)	5	19.2
Social Studies (History/Geography/CRE)	4	15.4

Technical & Creative (ICT, Business, Art, Music, PE)	5	19.3
Total	**26**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

The findings in Table 10 reveal a diverse subject distribution. The highest proportions of teachers were in Mathematics (5; 19.2%), Sciences (5; 19.2%), and Technical & Creative subjects (5; 19.3%). Teachers of English (4; 15.4%) and Social Studies (4; 15.4%) followed, while Kiswahili teachers (3; 11.5%) were the least represented.

This balanced spread demonstrates that the study captured voices across the full range of curriculum areas. The strong representation in Mathematics, Sciences, and Technical/Creative subjects aligns with competency-based education emphasis on practical skills and STEM development. From a psychosocial support perspective, teachers of different subjects play unique roles: language teachers often engage closely with learners' communication and emotional expression, science and math teachers may emphasize problem-solving and logical thinking, while technical and creative subject teachers often foster talent, self-expression, and confidence.

4.4 Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Analysis of findings

This section presents the interpretation, discussion, and outcomes related to the objectives and theories pertinent to the study. It aims to develop an understanding of the psychosocial support systems and their impact on the academic performance of junior school learners in the Makadara sub-county. The results were analyzed through descriptive statistics and augmented with qualitative data.

4.4.1 Types of Psychosocial Support Provided to Adolescent Learners

The focus of the study was to identify the different types of psychosocial support available to adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county and the possible correlation of such support to academic performance. The emotional well-being of the learners, psychosocial support, and resilience, as well as the ability to tackle academic and personal challenges, are interrelated. Thus, the study sought to determine the presence of school counseling, supportive teachers, peer support, mentorship, and parental involvement. A total of 376 learners participated in the study, and their responses were measured using a Likert scale consisting of five levels. The outcomes are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11

Learners' Responses on the Types of Psychosocial Support (n=376)

Types of Psychosocial Support	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
I receive regular guidance and counseling services in school.	91 (24.2%)	150 (39.9%)	65 (17.3%)	40 (10.6%)	30 (8.0%)	3.62	1.23
There are teachers I can talk to when I have personal	101 (26.9%)	160 (42.6%)	55 (14.6%)	35 (9.3%)	25 (6.6%)	3.74	1.18

problems.							
School invites professionals (e.g., psychologists, social workers).	66 (17.5%)	110 (29.3%)	80 (21.3%)	70 (18.6%)	50 (13.3%)	3.19	1.27
Peer support groups or clubs are available in my school.	81 (21.5%)	140 (37.2%)	70 (18.6%)	45 (12.0%)	40 (10.6%)	3.48	1.26
I receive support from teachers when I feel stressed or anxious.	96 (25.5%)	170 (45.2%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	20 (5.3%)	3.78	1.10
There are awareness sessions on mental health in our school.	71 (18.9%)	110 (29.3%)	75 (19.9%)	65 (17.3%)	55 (14.6%)	3.21	1.30
My school offers mentorship programs for learners.	96 (25.5%)	135 (35.9%)	65 (17.3%)	45 (12.0%)	35 (9.3%)	3.56	1.23
I feel emotionally safe and supported within the school environment.	121 (32.2%)	155 (41.2%)	55 (14.6%)	25 (6.6%)	20 (5.3%)	3.89	1.09
The school includes parents or guardians in offering support to learners.	86 (22.9%)	120 (31.9%)	80 (21.3%)	50 (13.3%)	40 (10.6%)	3.43	1.24
I am encouraged to talk about my feelings when I am having a hard time.	111 (29.5%)	150 (39.9%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	25 (6.6%)	3.78	1.16

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Findings presented in Table 11 indicate that a significant proportion of learners benefit from various psychosocial support systems in their schools, although the levels of availability and consistency differ across areas of support. Majority, 150 (39.9%) of learner participants agreed and 91 (24.2%) strongly agreed that they receive regular guidance and counseling services (M = 3.62, SD = 1.23). Despite this, a minority 40 (10.6%) of participants disagreed, with 30 (8.0%) strongly disagreeing and 65 (17.3%) opting for neutrality. This implies that although counseling services are available, there are still differences in their consistency and accessibility among schools. These results are consistent with Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, which highlights the need of social support in assisting teenagers in overcoming identity-related obstacles. Counseling services offer emotional assistance that promotes academic engagement and

identity construction. However, some learners may not be able to fully benefit due to inconsistent access. However, inconsistencies in access may hinder some learners from fully benefiting. This is supported by UNICEF (2021), which emphasizes that structured psychosocial support programs enhance adolescents' well-being and learning outcomes when consistently implemented.

In like manner, most learners affirmed being able to communicate with teachers about private matters, with 160 (42.6%) respondents agreeing, as 101 (26.9%) respondents articulated a strong agreement (M = 3.74, SD = 1.18). Only 9.3% respondents articulated a disagreement and 6.6% articulated a strong disagreement. According to Social Learning Theory, these kinds of interactions enable learners to see and absorb coping mechanisms that teachers' model, which has a favorable influence on behavior and academic achievement. Through their everyday interactions, teachers serve as role models and reinforce adaptive behaviors. These findings are consistent with Schwab and Seifert (2020), who found that teacher support enhances student engagement and emotional resilience. Therefore, strengthening teacher capacity in mentorship and emotional support is essential for sustaining positive psychosocial outcomes among learners.

When analyzing feedback concerning the involvement of school psychologists, the social workers, and external professionals, the responses were divided: 110 (29.3%) of the respondents agreed, 66 (17.5%) of the participants strongly agreed, and a large number 70 (18.6%) responded disagreed, 50 (13.3%) strongly disagreed, and 80 (21.3%) were neutral (M = 3.19, SD = 1.27). Psychosocial Development Theory states that in order for teenagers to successfully negotiate developmental problems, they need a variety of support systems, and the depth of intervention may be limited in the absence of professional experience.

While peers and teachers can offer basic support, complicated psychological difficulties frequently call more specialist attention. This finding aligns with Okello (2020), who noted that inadequate counseling personnel in schools limits the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions. Addressing this gap is critical for ensuring comprehensive support systems that cater to learners' varied emotional and psychological needs.

On peer support groups, 140 (37.2%) agreed and 81 (21.5%) strongly agreed, while 45 (12.0%) disagreed and 40 (10.6%) strongly disagreed, with 70 (18.6%) neutral (M = 3.48, SD = 1.26). These findings revealed that peer groups are present within the sample schools, but their existence was not uniform across all schools which constitutes a meaningful gap considering the importance of peers in the psychosocial development of adolescents. According to Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that people pick up habits by watching and copying their peers, social relationships are essential to teenage growth. Collaboration, emotional expression, and intellectual engagement are all encouraged in supportive peer environments. However, peer support networks' full usefulness is constrained by their uneven availability. This finding is supported by Mwangi and Wanjiru (2021), who found that peer mentoring enhances psychosocial well-being and school engagement. Therefore, schools need to institutionalize peer support initiatives to ensure all learners benefit from collaborative learning and emotional support networks.

As for teacher support in relation to stress and anxiety, 170 (45.2%) participants expressed agreement and 96 (25.5%) participants expressed strong agreement (M = 3.78, SD = 1.10). 8.0% expressed disagreement and another 5.3% expressed strong disagreement. This illustrates how valuable the role of a teacher is, in fostering an

emotionally supportive space in the classroom. This is consistent with Maslow's Hierarchy of requirements, which holds that before learners can succeed academically, their psychological and safety requirements must be met. Learners are better able to concentrate and achieve academically when teachers provide safe and encouraging environments. These findings are consistent with Kataoka et al. (2018), who demonstrated that school-based psychosocial interventions improve both emotional well-being and academic outcomes. Thus, strengthening teacher capacity in emotional support and classroom management is essential for enhancing both learner well-being and academic performance.

Out of the total participants, 110 (29.3%) expressed agreement and 71 (18.9%) expressed strong agreement for mental health awareness sessions. Sixty-five, 65 (17.3%) participants expressed disagreement for mental health awareness sessions and 55 (14.6%) expressed strong disagreement (M = 3.21, SD = 1.30). There was also a reflection of mental health promotion programs inconsistency. According to Erik Erikson's theory, awareness programs are essential for assisting teenagers in comprehending and resolving identity-related issues. Learners' capacity to build coping mechanisms and resilience is hampered by inconsistent exposure. This finding is supported by World Health Organization (2021), which highlights the importance of continuous mental health promotion in supporting adolescent development and academic success. Therefore, schools should institutionalize regular mental health awareness initiatives to ensure continuous support for learners' psychosocial development.

In a similar vein, there was moderate accessibility to mentorship programs, with 135 (35.9%) respondents agreeing, and 96 (25.5%) strongly agreeing (M = 3.56, SD = 1.23). On the other hand, 45 (12.0%) disagreed and 35 (9.3%) respondents strongly

disagreed. As learners take on the attitudes and behaviors of mentors, mentoring offers advice and role modeling, which is essential to Social Learning Theory. These programs improve academic concentration, emotional stability, and decision-making. This finding is consistent with Mugisha (2022), who found that life skills and mentorship-related interventions improve student engagement and resilience. However, variability in access suggests the need for more structured and inclusive mentorship programs to ensure all learners benefit equally from these support systems.

The majority of learner participants indicated that they feel emotionally safe in the school setting, with 155 (41.2%) respondents agreeing and 121 (32.2%) strongly agreeing (M = 3.89, SD = 1.09). Only a small number (11.9%) disagree or strongly disagree. Higher-level learning and success require emotional safety, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Learners are more likely to participate fully in academic activities when they feel safe. This is supported by Chikondi (2021), who found that supportive psychosocial environments improve learner retention and participation. Thus, maintaining and strengthening emotionally safe environments is critical for sustaining positive academic outcomes.

Most respondents had a neutral to positive position on the level of involvement parents have in support programs, with (M = 3.43, SD = 1.24) 120 (31.9%) participants agreeing, 86 (22.9%) participants strongly agreeing, and 40 (10.6%) participants strongly disagreeing, while 50 (13.3%) participants disagreed. The moderate level of parental participation (M = 3.43, SD = 1.24) indicates that although some parents actively assist their children, others are still less involved. According to Psychosocial Development Theory, teenagers' identities and emotional stability are greatly influenced by their

families. This support system may be weakened by low parental participation. This finding aligns with Abdulahi and Yusuf (2020), who found that parental psychosocial support significantly enhances learners' well-being and school participation. Therefore, enhancing school-parent collaboration is essential for strengthening psychosocial support systems and improving learner outcomes.

Document analysis showed that although counseling programs and mentorship initiatives were mentioned in school documents, their execution was frequently erratic and lacked organized oversight. The quantitative results, which indicated a moderate availability of these services, are both supported and contradicted by this discovery. According to Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, teenagers' capacity to successfully resolve identity conflicts may be hampered by inconsistent assistance. Learners may experience emotional instability and academic disengagement in the absence of ongoing support. This result is in line with (Eccles & Roeser, 2021), who stress that in order to promote teenage development, schools must offer stable developmental environments. As a result, although programs exist in theory, their efficacy in fostering academic and psychological results is limited by their uneven execution.

Additional document analysis revealed that family engagement programs and mental health awareness campaigns were poorly documented and used unevenly within schools. The quantitative results, which indicated moderate amounts of such support, are at odds with this. Unmet psychological and belonging needs can have a detrimental influence on learners' motivation and academic focus, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The wellbeing of learners may be jeopardized by inadequate record-keeping, which indicates a lack of institutional commitment. This finding is corroborated by (Njoroge,

2023), who emphasizes that urban learners have psychosocial difficulties that call for organized and reliable support networks. To guarantee that psychological interventions successfully meet the requirements of learners, policy implementation and documentation must be strengthened.

Observation data showed that some schools lacked sufficient facilities and well-organized processes, while others had obvious psychosocial support mechanisms like counseling rooms, peer group activities, and mentorship programs. This draws attention to implementation discrepancies while providing some support for the quantitative findings. According to Social Learning Theory, learners can see and emulate positive behaviors when they are in supportive contexts. However, there are few opportunities for social learning in schools without such systems. This result is consistent with (Adeniran, 2018), who highlights how environmental influences influence learners' social and academic behaviors. Therefore, improving learner outcomes requires making psychological support systems more structurally and physically accessible.

Teachers are crucial in providing psychosocial support, frequently serving as mentors and unofficial counsellors, according to findings from teacher interviews. Teachers stated that they frequently recognise learners who are having emotional or behavioural difficulties and, if professional counsellors are available, offer them support. In order to improve learners' resilience, emotional control, and decision-making skills, they also stressed the incorporation of life skills education into classroom instruction. One of the teachers (MSCJST 8) asserted that “this validates the quantitative results showing high levels of teacher participation in psychological assistance.” Teachers also pointed out that (MSCJST 4, 6, 9, & 11), “despite our lack of specialised training, we frequently fill this

gap because there are few professional counselling options available, demonstrating both structural difficulties and commitment to providing adequate psychosocial assistance."

During the interviews with the teachers, one of them observed:

> We provide guidance and mentorship to learners, especially those who appear withdrawn or distressed, and we refer them to the counsellor when necessary. Teaching life skills helps learners manage emotions, make decisions, and cope with challenges. There is need to emphasise the dependence on teachers as the main source of support in schools and complement the significance of teacher assistance in psychological development (MSCJST 12 Personal Communication, March 26, 2026).

Psychosocial support is mostly provided through structured programs including individual and group therapy sessions, according to interviews with school counselors. Counselors reported dealing with problems like academic stress, peer pressure, family difficulties, and self-esteem. They also emphasized how awareness campaigns may lessen stigma and motivate students to seek assistance. Effective psychological support was found to depend on cooperation between educators and parents. However, counselors pointed out issues that make it difficult to provide services consistently, such as high student-to-counselor ratios and scarce resources. By offering more in-depth understanding of the operational difficulties impacting psychosocial support services, these findings supplement the quantitative data.

One of the counsellors noted:

> Learners frequently come to discuss personal challenges, and we create a safe space for them to express themselves and develop coping strategies. Mental health awareness programs help reduce stigma and encourage learners to seek support when

needed. We have to emphasise the value of counselling services while also highlighting the need for increased resources and capability (MSCC 5, Personal Communication, March 27, 2026).

Although they expressed differing degrees of involvement, parents and guardians recognized the need of psychosocial assistance. While some acknowledged limited involvement because of employment and financial constraints, many reported offering emotional support through communication and encouragement. Additionally, several parents believed that schools should be the primary providers of psychosocial support. These results are consistent with quantitative data that indicate moderate parental involvement. Parents also mentioned that in certain situations, working with school counselors had helped with emotional and behavioral problems. Nonetheless, the general lack of consistency in parental involvement points to the necessity of raising awareness and using organized involvement tactics to improve home-school relationships.

"We try to talk to our children about school and listen when they are stressed so they can share their problems," said one parent. "Working with school counsellors has helped us manage some of the behavioural challenges our children face," said a different parent. These answers stress the importance of parental support while emphasising the need for improved family-school cooperation. The most important insight was that psychosocial support for teenagers in Makadara sub-county is comprehensive in that it integrates teacher mentorship, professional counseling, and parent support. There were still gaps in understanding, consistency, and collaboration among the stakeholders. Improved partnerships among schools, parents, and the community are essential for the emotional and overall development of junior learners.

The results show that, although their efficacy varies depending on the situation, psychosocial support networks are important in influencing teenage learners' mental health and academic engagement. According to quantitative data, learners reported having moderate to high access to peer programs, counseling services, and teacher assistance, indicating that schools offer fundamental psychological frameworks. However, structural gaps are highlighted by disparities in family participation, mental health awareness, and professional counseling. Qualitatively, parents, teachers, and counselors supported these findings by highlighting their active but frequently limited roles because of a lack of coordination and resources. Overall, the findings indicate that although psychological support systems exist and are helpful, their potential impact is diminished by their unequal implementation, highlighting the need for better organized, cooperative, and regularly provided support mechanisms within schools.

4.4.2 Parental Psychosocial Support and Academic Performance of Learners

The study examined the role of parental psychosocial support in influencing the academic performance of adolescent learners. The study sought to investigate whether learners received emotional and academic support from their parents and whether such support resulted in better school performance. Responses were collected from 376 learners using a five-point Likert scale where Strongly agree (1), agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5)**.** The results are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12

Students' Responses on Parental Psychosocial Support (n=376)

Parental Psychosocial Support	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
My parents/guardians encourage me to do my best in	136 (36.2%)	150 (39.9%)	50 (13.3%)	25 (6.6%)	15 (4.0%)	3.97	1.05

school.							
I feel supported when I face emotional challenges.	116 (30.9%)	150 (39.9%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	20 (5.3%)	3.83	1.11
My parents provide a safe home environment.	138 (36.7%)	140 (37.2%)	52 (13.8%)	28 (7.4%)	18 (4.8%)	3.94	1.07
I can talk freely with my parents about problems I face in life.	111 (29.5%)	140 (37.2%)	65 (17.3%)	35 (9.3%)	25 (6.6%)	3.74	1.16
My parents/guardians check on my academic progress regularly.	114 (30.3%)	130 (34.6%)	70 (18.6%)	40 (10.6%)	22 (5.9%)	3.73	1.15
When I am struggling emotionally, my parents offer help.	110 (29.3%)	128 (34.0%)	68 (18.1%)	42 (11.2%)	28 (7.4%)	3.67	1.20
My parents attend meetings and involved in my education.	116 (30.9%)	120 (31.9%)	65 (17.3%)	45 (12.0%)	30 (8.0%)	3.66	1.22
I feel motivated to study when my parents encourage me.	146 (38.8%)	145 (38.6%)	50 (13.3%)	20 (5.3%)	15 (4.0%)	4.03	1.00
My parents give me advice and guidance that helps me do well in school.	138 (36.7%)	140 (37.2%)	55 (14.6%)	25 (6.6%)	18 (4.8%)	3.94	1.06
I perform better in school when I feel emotionally supported at home.	156 (41.5%)	140 (37.2%)	50 (13.3%)	18 (4.8%)	12 (3.2%)	4.09	0.97

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Table 12 presents findings on the relationship between parental support and learners' academic outcomes. The results show that a majority of respondents, 150 (39.9%) agreeing and 136 (36.2%) strongly agreeing, indicated that their parents or guardians encourage them to do their best in school (M = 3.97, SD = 1.05). The results reveal that most learners believe that they are emotionally supported and backed by their parents, suggesting that parental emotional availability plays an important role in enhancing learner's confidence and academic engagement. The main theoretical foundation for this study's interpretation is Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory. According to Erikson, teenagers are in the identity versus role uncertainty stage, where social connections and emotional support are crucial in forming competence and self-concept.

This is consistent with the findings of Deb, Strodl, and Sun (2020), who discovered that parental emotional availability improves academic achievement by bolstering psychological stability.

Regarding the home environment, a total of 140 (37.2%) participants strongly agreed, and 138 (36.7%) participants agreed that their parents provide a peaceful and safe home setting, with M = 3.94, SD = 1.07. This implies that most learners grow up in stable environments conducive to learning, aligning with Nzabonimpa and Orodho (2020) who stated that a secure home environment enhances academic concentration and academic performance. Additionally, 140 (37.2%) agreed and 111 (29.5%) participants strongly agreed that the ability to communicate concerns related to school and other life issues with their parents (M = 3.74, SD = 1.16). Erikson's viewpoint is further supported by research on emotional support, which shows that learners who experience parental support grow more self-assured and engaged in their studies. reactivity that fosters emotional stability and trust. This is in line with Muthoni's (2020) assertion that parents' psychosocial assistance enhances students' mental health and academic performance.

Parental monitoring of academic progress was also viewed as a key determinant of learner outcomes, with 134 (36.1%) of the participants agreed and 100 (27.0%) strongly agreed with the statement (M = 3.73 and SD = 1.15). This signifies the accomplishment of the active parental engagement in the school discipline of the learners. Similarly, 128 (34.0%) of the respondents agreed and 110 (29.3%) strongly agreed that their parents notice and offer help during emotional struggles (M = 3.67, SD = 1.20). Adolescents are more likely to gain self-assurance and intrinsic motivation when they feel heard and understood. Erikson's theory that structured supervision promotes competence and identity

development is further supported by parental monitoring of scholastic success. Regular supervision helps adolescents internalise responsibility and discipline. Parental participation enhances academic motivation and accomplishment through enhanced accountability, according to Cheung and Pomerantz (2022).

Regarding school involvement, 120 (31.9%) of the participants agreed and 116 (30.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement indicating that parents attend school meetings and in educational activities (M = 3.66, SD = 1.22). However, a considerable proportion of respondents were neutral or disagreed suggesting that not all parents participate in school affairs. The results support the claim made by Nzabonimpa and Orodho (2020) that a safe home environment improves focus and academic achievement. Thus, the study shows that both psychosocial well-being and academic success depend heavily on environmental stability.

Additionally, 145 (38.6%) of participants agreed and 146 (38.8%) strongly agreed that they feel more encouraged when their parents/guardians motivate them to study (M = 4.03, SD = 1.00), highlighting the central role of parental motivation in sustaining academic drive. This finding corroborates Muthoni (2020), who stressed that encouragement from parent's nurtures learners' intrinsic interest in education. Moreover, 140 (37.2%) of the participants agreed and 138 (36.7%) strongly agreed that their parents, through advising and guiding, help them to study and excel in school (M = 3.94, SD = 1.06). According to Erikson, this lack of involvement could impede the formation of a solid identity and feeling of purpose. In a similar vein, Anguzu and Abbo (2025) observed that teenage behavioural and emotional difficulties are linked to low parental participation.

This implies that both academic performance and psychosocial adjustment may suffer from a lack of parental support.

Majority of respondents, 140 (37.2%) agreed and 156 (41.5%) strongly agreed that learners perform better in school when they feel emotionally supported at home (M = 4.09, SD = 0.97), indicating that they perform better when emotionally supported at home. Many of the learners' basic and psychological requirements are being satisfied when emotional support, safety, and a sense of belonging are present in their home situations. This validates the findings of Muthoni (2020) and Nzabonimpa and Orodho (2020), who emphasised the significance of supportive surroundings in fostering academic motivation and performance.

As seen by signed progress reports and recorded parent-teacher interactions, academic reports, attendance records, and guidance and counselling logs showed that students who did well academically frequently had regular parental follow-up. The relationship between parental supervision and academic discipline found in the quantitative data was further supported by school records, which revealed that these students had higher attendance and fewer disciplinary incidents. Anguzu and Abbo's (2025) findings were corroborated by the papers, which also showed gaps where some students did not receive parental follow-up, which correlated with poorer academic performance and sporadic behavioural issues.

Learners who showed signs of emotional support were more engaged in class, more assured when answering questions, and more reliable when finishing homework. Additionally, teachers were seen interacting with the parents of these students more regularly. On the other hand, learners who were thought to have less parental support showed signs of withdrawal, inattention, and lack of motivation. These findings reflect

Erik Erikson's emphasis on the role of social support in developing adolescents' confidence and competence, while also supporting Albert Bandura's theory that supportive settings reinforce positive behaviours.

It emerged from the interviews with teachers, school counselors and parents that parental psychological support has a significant and positive influence on the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior school learners in Makadara sub county. Teachers continuously observed that learners who receive emotional encouragement, guidance and support from parents tends to demonstrate better academic engagement, confidence and classroom participation. As one teacher put it, “Learners become more motivated and disciplined when parents show concern and follow up on their schoolwork. This had a positive impact on their grades.” Another teacher stated that when parents and teachers communicate, the learner’s accountability increases and there was a positive boost in their emotional and academic growth.

School counselors noted that learners who have emotional support from their parents tend to have a stronger emotional and psychological resilience. This means that they have a greater ability to handle difficult academic tasks. As one counselor stated, “learners experiencing poverty and academic-related anxiety need help and aren’t afraid to ask for it. They feel supported.” Another counselor added, “Parental emotional support enhances learners’ academics focus, self-esteem and goal orientation.” On the other hand, learners, whose parents are less or not at all involved, tend to exhibit reduced motivation, poor attendance, and respond less to academic tasks.

Parents who participated in study also recognized the connection between their support and their learner’s educational outcomes. They mentioned that positive support,

concerned listening, and progress checking creates an emotional space that motivates learners. One parent comment, “when my child knows that I am interested in what he/she is learning, they try harder because they do not want to disappoint me.” Another parent mentioned that being communicative and encouraging adds to the parent-child bond, which, in turn, increases focus and effort on school work.

Parents expressed different levels of willingness to get involved in the child study. Some parents said they didn't have the time, money, or education to offer consistent support. Teachers and school counselors voiced frustration that these parents think they are only responsible for learners' academic successes. One school counselor said, " learners from homes where parents are uninvolved often lack motivation and direction, regardless of the support provided within the school."

These study results are consistent with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs which stressed that without support and a consistent environment, learners can't achieve higher levels of success such as academic success (Maslow, 1943; McLeod, 2020). The findings were also supported by Bandura’s Social Learning Theory. Bandura theorizes that parents act as role models and affect students' coping and motivation through simple observation and reinforcement of their behaviors (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 2020). When learners experience and observe their parents' resilience, discipline, and encouragement, they are more likely to adopt the behaviors. This modeling leads learners to achieve better academic results.

4.4.3 Peer Psychosocial Support on the Academic Performance of Learners

This section explored the influence of peer psychosocial support on the academic performance of adolescent learners. Data was collected from 376 learners**,** who responded on a five-point Likert scale where Strongly agree (1), agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5)**.** The results are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13

Students' Response on Peer Psychosocial Support (n=376)

Peer Psychosocial Support	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
I feel encouraged to study when I receive support from my classmates.	120 (31.9%)	150 (39.9%)	60 (16.0%)	28 (7.4%)	18 (4.8%)	3.87	1.07
Peer study groups help me understand schoolwork better.	136 (36.2%)	140 (37.2%)	55 (14.6%)	30 (8.0%)	15 (4.0%)	3.93	1.05
I can talk to my peers when I am feeling stressed or anxious.	124 (33.0%)	135 (35.9%)	65 (17.3%)	32 (8.5%)	20 (5.3%)	3.83	1.11
Peer mentors or learners leaders give me helpful advice about school and life.	113 (30.1%)	130 (34.6%)	70 (18.6%)	38 (10.1%)	25 (6.6%)	3.72	1.16
Peer counseling services are available in my school.	113 (30.1%)	120 (31.9%)	75 (19.9%)	40 (10.6%)	28 (7.4%)	3.67	1.19
I feel more confident in school when I have friends who support and encourage me.	136 (36.2%)	145 (38.6%)	55 (14.6%)	25 (6.6%)	15 (4.0%)	3.96	1.03
Learners in my school help each other to solve academic and personal problems.	129 (34.3%)	135 (35.9%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	22 (5.9%)	3.85	1.09
I learn positive behaviors through interaction with supportive classmates.	132 (35.1%)	140 (37.2%)	58 (15.4%)	28 (7.4%)	18 (4.8%)	3.90	1.06
When I am having difficulties, I can count on my peers for emotional support.	127 (33.8%)	135 (35.9%)	62 (16.5%)	32 (8.5%)	20 (5.3%)	3.85	1.10
Peer support has helped improve my academic performance.	141 (37.6%)	140 (37.2%)	55 (14.6%)	25 (6.6%)	15 (4.0%)	3.97	1.02

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Table 13 reveals that multiple forms of psychosocial support are offered within junior schools in Makadara sub-county. The results indicate that most respondents, 150 (39.9%) agreeing and 120 (31.9%) strongly agreeing (M = 3.87, SD = 1.07), felt encouraged to study when they received support from classmates. In the same way, 140 (37.2%) of respondents agreed, and 136 (36.2%) strongly agreed that peer study groups enhance their understanding of schoolwork (M = 3.93, SD = 1.05). The main foundation for understanding these results is Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory. Peer interactions are crucial to identity formation and emotional stability throughout the identity versus role confusion period, according to Erikson. This confirms Erikson's theory that social contacts aid in the development of competence and confidence, as well as Brouwer and Engels' (2022) findings that peer support increases academic motivation.

In terms of emotional support, 135 (35.9%) of the respondents agreed and 124 (33.0%) strongly agreed that they could talk to their peers when stressed or anxious providing emotional support giving them the ability to cope with stress and anxiety (M = 3.83, SD = 1.11). This is in line with Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto (2024) who noted that positive evaluation of the ability of stress and emotional coping associated with adolescent friendships. In the same line, 130 (34.6%) of respondents agreed and 113 (30.1%) strongly agreed that peer mentors and learner leaders offer support on school and life (M = 3.72, SD = 1.16). According to Erikson's paradigm, through cooperative problem-solving and support, these exchanges assist students in developing a sense of competence and industry. This bolsters the claim made by Kondo and Kato (2022) that peer collaboration enhances academic subject mastery. Peer interaction helps teenagers overcome developmental obstacles while simultaneously improving academic results.

In terms of peer counseling services, 120 (31.9%) of participants agreed and 113 (30.1%) strongly agreed on the availability and accessibility of school peer counseling services (M = 3.67, SD = 1.19), indicating that a good number of learners may have some knowledge of the services, but several others may have no knowledge of the services. In addition, 145 (38.6%) of participants agreed and 136 (36.2%) strongly agreed supportive friendships enhances their confidence in school, explaining the importance of support in friendships in raising the confidence of the learners These findings are in line with Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto's (2024) observation that peer interactions function as protective factors for both academic success and emotional well-being. Peer emotional support is therefore crucial for fostering both academic achievement and psychosocial adjustment.

More than one-third of the respondents, 135 (35.9%) agreed and 129 (34.3%) strongly agreed that fellow learners aid one another in overcoming challenges, both academically and personally (Mean=3.85, SD=1.09). Likewise, 140 (37.2%) and 132 (35.1%) strongly agreed that they learn positive behaviors through interaction with supportive classmates (Mean=3.90, SD=1.06). According to Erikson's theory, peer group role models help shape identities by giving guidance and rewarding positive behaviour. This is consistent with Wangila's (2023) observation that peer mentoring fosters both academic success and personal development. These results show that learners' confidence and sense of purpose are greatly increased by structured peer connections. Furthermore, 135(35.9%) of the respondents agreed and 127(33.8%) strongly agreed that they could rely on peers for emotional support during difficulties (M=3.85, SD=1.10), reaffirming Aryeetey and Osei-Akoto’s (2024) findings that peer networks act as protective emotional buffers for adolescents.

A large proportion of participants, 141 (37.6%) of the learners' respondents strongly agreed, and 140 (37.2%) agreed that peer support enhanced their academic performance (Mean=3.97, SD=1.02). According to Erikson, some students may find it difficult to build their identities and achieve emotional stability if they have limited access to or knowledge of these programs. This validates the findings of Kiprop (2021), who discovered that a lack of understanding frequently results in the underutilisation of peer counselling services. Therefore, increasing awareness and accessibility could improve students' academic and psychological results.

Learners who actively participated in peer counselling and mentorship programs had fewer behavioural problems and higher academic consistency, according to records from guidance and counselling departments. These results support Erik Erikson's theory that constructive peer relationships promote identity formation and psychosocial development. Documents did, however, also show limited use of some peer services, which supports Kiprop (2021) and implies that not all students gain equally from the psychosocial support networks that are provided.

The quantitative results were further corroborated by observation utilising the structured observation guide, which showed that students participating in peer group discussions and mentorship activities exhibited more confidence, active engagement, and collaborative learning behaviors. Students were seen freely exchanging ideas and assisting one another with assignments, demonstrating the significant impact of peers on academic engagement. Albert Bandura's emphasis on learning via interaction and observation is consistent with this. However, some instances of distraction and off-task conduct among peer groups were also seen, which partially contradicts the results by demonstrating how

peer interactions may adversely affect academic focus in the absence of appropriate guidance.

The junior school teachers, school counselors, and learners interviewed in junior schools in Makadara sub-county, noted that most schools had established peer support programs, which have positive impacts on the psychosocial development and academic performance of adolescent learners. Teachers noted that peer support programs, peer mentorship, peer counseling, and group learning, have increased collaboration, confidence, and academic participation. One teacher noted that support from peers enhances discipline and focus on academics. Another teacher noted that peer support reduces disputes in the classroom and improves cooperation.

School counselors noted that peer support programs provide appropriate and relatable support for adolescents. One counselor said, “learners tend to open up more easily to their peers than to adults, especially about academic or personal struggles. Through peer counseling clubs, they share experiences and motivate each other to stay committed to their studies.” Counselors noted that peers support programs encourage positive relationship and emotional strength, and helps learners cope with academic related stress and peer pressure. Because of this, learners become more self-aware and confident.

Learners indicated that support from friends helps them stay motivated and responsible in their schoolwork. During interviews, several learners noted that studying with friends or receiving guidance from learner mentors improved their understanding of difficult subjects and enhanced their academic performance. One learners remarked, “When we study in groups, we help each other with assignments and talk about lessons we didn’t get in class” (Field data, 2025). Some participants also highlighted that peer support

reduced anxiety and fostered a sense of success during tests, creating a culture of learning, mutual support, and academic collaboration.

However, a few participants observed that peer interactions, if not properly directed, could result in distractions, absenteeism, and other negative behaviors. Accordingly, teachers and counselor participants emphasized the need for structured peer programs with clearly defined goals aligned with the school's academic objectives. One counselor noted, "When peer groups are properly managed, they become powerful tools for positive change; but without oversight, they can easily drift away from their intended purpose" (Field data, 2025).

The findings illustrate that, while having emotional calmness, self-confidence, and a collaborative spirit, adolescent learners, peer support programs, and other related psychosocial programs positively influence the learners' academic achievements. However, sustained success dependents on continuous guidance from teachers and counselors to ensure that peer influence remains constructive and academically focused. Therefore, strengthening peer support structures stands out as an essential strategy for improving both psychosocial and academic benefit to the junior schools in the Makadara sub-county.

4.4.4 School-Based Psychosocial Counseling Services on Academic Performance

This section focuses on understanding the role of school psychosocial counseling services on the academic performance of junior school adolescent learners in Makadara sub-county. School counseling services seek to provide both personal and academic solutions to challenges that impact learners' performance and wellbeing. This study investigates learners' perceptions regarding the presence of trained counselors, their

willingness to seek assistance, the importance of the counseling sessions, and the impact of counseling and guidance programs on academic attainment. Data was collected from 376 students**,** who responded using a five-point Likert scale where Strongly agree (1), agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5)**.** The results are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14

Students' Responses on School-Based Psychosocial Counseling Services (n=376)

School-Based Psychosocial Counseling Services	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
My school has a trained counselor available for learners.	119 (31.6%)	140 (37.2%)	65 (17.3%)	32 (8.5%)	20 (5.3%)	3.82	1.09
I feel comfortable talking to the school counselor about my problems.	110 (29.3%)	128 (34.0%)	70 (18.6%)	40 (10.6%)	28 (7.4%)	3.68	1.18
Counseling sessions at school help me to manage stress and emotions better.	119 (31.6%)	135 (35.9%)	65 (17.3%)	35 (9.3%)	22 (5.9%)	3.78	1.11
I perform better in school when I receive counseling support.	130 (34.6%)	138 (36.7%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	18 (4.8%)	3.88	1.06
Counseling services help me develop better study habits.	118 (31.4%)	130 (34.6%)	65 (17.3%)	38 (10.1%)	25 (6.6%)	3.74	1.15
The counselor helps me set academic and personal goals.	119 (31.6%)	125 (33.2%)	62 (16.5%)	40 (10.6%)	30 (8.0%)	3.70	1.18
I feel less anxious before exams after speaking with the school counselor.	118 (31.4%)	130 (34.6%)	65 (17.3%)	35 (9.3%)	28 (7.4%)	3.73	1.16
The guidance and counseling program address both academic and personal issues.	125 (33.2%)	135 (35.9%)	62 (16.5%)	32 (8.5%)	22 (5.9%)	3.82	1.09
Teachers refer students to counseling when they show signs of emotional distress.	123 (32.7%)	138 (36.7%)	65 (17.3%)	30 (8.0%)	20 (5.3%)	3.83	1.08
School counseling services have positively contributed to my academic improvement.	135 (35.9%)	140 (37.2%)	55 (14.6%)	28 (7.4%)	18 (4.8%)	3.91	1.04

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Table 14 presents findings on the availability and impact of school-based psychosocial counseling services. A majority of the survey participants clearly acknowledged the presence of trained counselors in their schools, 37.2% agreeing (140) and 31.6% (119) strongly agreeing (M = 3.82, SD = 1.09) regarding this claim, implying that a majority of schools surveyed provide counseling services. This finding corroborates Koltcheva (2022) who argued that the presence of school counselors is critical for the emotional wellbeing and adjustment of the learners. However, majority of the respondents did not agree that they were at ease with the school counselors regarding their personal issues. In this instance, 110 (29.3%) strongly agreed and 128 (34.0%) agreed to the claim (M = 3.68, SD = 1.18) which shows that though the counseling services are available, a number of learners still have psychosocial barriers such as stigma, mistrust, and others that result in inadequate utilization of counseling services. This was also captured by Osuoha (2024) where he attributed the insufficient utilization of counseling services by learners due to cultural perceptions.

In terms of effectiveness of the counseling sessions, 135 (35.9%) respondents evidenced some level of effectiveness, and 119 (31.6%) respondents reported that the counseling sessions help in the management of stress and emotional problems (M = 3.78, SD = 1.11). This finding underscores the importance of counseling in emotional management, which is consistent with Gachenia and Mwenje (2020) who posited that counseling interventions improve coping strategies among adolescents. Also, 138 (36.7%) respondents evidenced some level of effectiveness, and 130 (34.6%) respondents reported that counseling support improves academic performance (M = 3.88, SD = 1.06). This

supports Ndurumo (2020) in which the guidance services were found to cause a positive increase in academic resilience and performance.

Building study habits and personal goal setting were other impactful areas attributed to counseling services. While 118 (31.4%) and 130 (34.6%) respondents respectively, for total of 34.6% (n=130), agreed and strongly agreed that counseling helps develop study habits, mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) were at 3.74 and 1.15. (n=118) respondents agreed and (n=130) strongly agreed that counselors help set goals and the mean and SD were 3.70 and 1.18, respectively. These results give evidence that counseling, in addition to emotional support, offers other forms of academic support. This finding is in line with Osuoha (2024), who associated goal-oriented counseling with improved focus and self-management in learners. (n=118) respondents and (n= 130) stated respectively that this was the case and (n=130) stated that counseling was the reason they were less anxious prior to exams and mean and standard deviation were 3.73 and 1.16. This is in support of Ndurumo (2020), who stated that counseling services in schools help reduce test anxiety.

The results also indicate that a majority of learners view school counseling as having a wide range of areas that it covers. 135 (35.9%) participants agreed and 125 (33.2%) participants strongly agreed that the guidance and counseling program looks at both the academic and personal spheres (M = 3.82, SD = 1.09). This supports Gachenia and Mwenje (2020) viewing that comprehensive counseling programs positively impact both academic and psychosocial realms. Additionally, 138 (36.7%) participants agreed and 123 (32.7%) participants strongly agreed that teachers' direct learners who are emotionally upset to the counselor (M = 3.83, SD = 1.08), which shows a high degree of partnership

between teachers and counselors. Like Gachenia and Mwenje, Koltcheva (2022) noted that referral mechanisms are fundamental to the attainment of timely assistance and guidance for vulnerable learners.

Most respondents, 140 (37.2%) of whom agreed and 135 (35.9%) of whom strongly agreed, noted that school counseling services have positively impacted their academic improvement (M = 3.91, SD = 1.04). This strong agreement proves that school counseling positively impacts learners' holistic development and their performance in school. This is also in agreement with Osuoha (2024) who noted that school based psychosocial programmes have improved learners' academic performance as a result of enhanced emotional stability, motivation, and self-efficacy.

The research interview conducted with junior school teachers, school counselors, and parents in Makadara sub-county, shows that psychosocial counseling services offered in schools are helpful in improving the positive psychosocial functioning of adolescents and their academic outcomes. All teachers, in particular, remarked that school counseling services are a critical psychosocial resource that assists in the emotional, behavioural, and social difficulties of learners, which in turn, adversely impacts learning. A teacher said, "learners who have received counseling show improvement in focus, discipline, and have better social interactions with teachers and peers." Another teacher said that counseling has helped learners learn constructive coping strategies in the context of family disputes and peer pressure, which, in turn, has helped them to improve academically.

The school counselors commented that their job covers more than handling crisis situations, but included preventive and developmental guidance. They focused on the fact that counseling provides learners with the opportunity to gain self- knowledge and self-

confidence, as well as problem-solving and goal-setting skills, which foster positive academic achievement. As one counselor put it, “many learners come with issues like anxiety, low self-esteem, or family problems; once these are addressed, their class performance and participation improve noticeably.” Counselors also noted that through the social adjustment and emotional balance fostered by teamwork in group counseling, a positive school climate is created. Additionally, working with teachers helps to identify learners in need of more focused psychosocial support so that assistance can be provided before their academic performance suffers.

Generally, participating parents valued the positive impact that school-based counseling had on their children’s attitude and academic behaviour. One parent said; “after my child started seeing the school counselor, I noticed a big change; he became calmer, more focused, and his grades improved.” Another parent mentioned that counseling offers adolescents a safe space to address problems they may not want to discuss at home. This allows them to offload emotional burdens and become re-engaged in learning. These, and other similar comments, show the impact of counseling services as facilitating a link between emotional and academic in school success.

Balanced against the positive comments, both teachers and counselors highlighted a number of barriers to the successful implementation of counseling services in the schools. In certain schools, counselors report being overworked, having few resources, and insufficient space to conduct private counseling sessions. One counselor said, “Many schools have only one trained counselor for hundreds of learners, making it very difficult to provide regular follow-up.” Even parents and learners, to some extent, show a reluctance to seek help, because of the stigma and negative perceptions related to counseling.

Teachers therefore highlighted the importance of providing regular counseling and school-based activities to encourage the use of counseling services.

The results show that school-based psychosocial counseling services provide a positive influence on the academic success of adolescent learners in Makadara sub-county. Through emotional assistance, behavioral guidance, and the fostering of social skills, counseling helps equip learners with the psychosocial resilience necessary for academic success. However, the effectiveness of psychosocial counseling services is influenced by factors such as the presence (or absence) of trained counselors, availability of resources, the effectiveness of the counseling framework, and the level of awareness and advocacy within the school community. Addressing these factors would help improve the positive impacts of psychosocial counseling services on the comprehensive growth and sustained academic success of junior school learners.

4.4.5 Strategies for Effective Psychosocial Support Services of Learners

This section sought to identify strategies that can be adopted to strengthen psychosocial support services and, in turn, enhance the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county. Data was collected from 376 learners**,** who rated their responses on a five-point Likert scale where Strongly agree (1), agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5)**.** The results are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15

Response on Strategies that Can be Adopted (n=376)

Strategies that can be Adopted	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Schools should hire more trained psychosocial counselors.	158 (42.0%)	150 (39.9%)	40 (10.6%)	18 (4.8%)	10 (2.7%)	4.14	0.97
Peer mentorship programs should be introduced and strengthened.	154 (41.0%)	145 (38.6%)	45 (12.0%)	20 (5.3%)	12 (3.2%)	4.09	0.99
Parents should be more involved in psychosocial support programs.	149 (39.6%)	140 (37.2%)	50 (13.3%)	22 (5.9%)	15 (4.0%)	4.02	1.05
Teachers should be trained in basic psychosocial support and counseling skills.	160 (42.6%)	148 (39.4%)	40 (10.6%)	18 (4.8%)	10 (2.7%)	4.19	0.95
Schools should organize regular mental health awareness programs.	157 (41.8%)	142 (37.8%)	45 (12.0%)	20 (5.3%)	12 (3.2%)	4.10	0.98
Safe spaces should be created in school for learners to express themselves freely.	146 (38.8%)	140 (37.2%)	50 (13.3%)	25 (6.6%)	15 (4.0%)	4.00	1.07
Counseling services should be made more accessible to all learners.	153 (40.7%)	148 (39.4%)	45 (12.0%)	20 (5.3%)	10 (2.7%)	4.12	0.96
School administrators should support and prioritize psychosocial support services.	154 (41.0%)	140 (37.2%)	48 (12.8%)	22 (5.9%)	12 (3.2%)	4.07	1.00
Schools should collaborate with external mental health professionals and NGOs.	147 (39.1%)	135 (35.9%)	55 (14.6%)	25 (6.6%)	14 (3.7%)	4.00	1.06
Regular evaluation of psychosocial support services should be conducted to improve them.	154 (41.0%)	140 (37.2%)	50 (13.3%)	20 (5.3%)	12 (3.2%)	4.09	0.99

Source: *Field Data (2026)*

Table 15 shows the results of the recommended initiatives aimed at improving the service delivery of psychosocial support services in schools. 158 (42.0%) of the respondents as well as 150 (39.9%) of the respondents expressed their agreement to school employing more trained psychosocial counselors. This suggestion from the respondents mirrors the findings of Schlesier and Fischer (2024), who stated that in order to enhance psychosocial wellbeing of learners and create a positive school climate, there was need to have trained psychosocial practitioners in schools.

The results showed no contradiction, with 145 (38.6%) showing agreement while 154 (41.0%) showed strong agreement (M = 4.09, SD = 0.99) concerning the introduction and enhancement of peer mentorship programs. This demonstrates the acknowledgment of the importance of peer-based programs in the promotion of social support and the strengthening of resilience. This result coincides with Oti-Boadi (2023) who noted that, for adolescents, peer mentorship that is structured exerts positive influence on motivational, coping, and cognitive engagement. Parental participation was equally affirmed with 140 (37.2%) in agreement and 149 (39.6%) in strong agreement (M = 4.02, SD = 1.05) on the fact that, psychosocial support programs should be inclusive of parents. This emphasizes the importance of family involvement, in particular, Luthar and Resnick (2020) noted that parent involvement is an important buffer against the negative emotional and behavioral expression in learners.

Teacher empowerment is one of the most supported strategies. While 148 (39.4%) participants showed agreement and 160 (42.6%) expressed strong agreement (M = 4.19, SD = 0.95) that training teachers in psychosocial support and basic counseling is essential, the findings illustrate the importance of such training since teachers serve as primary

psychosocial support caregivers. This is in line with Leon-Himmelstine and Presler-Marshall (2021), who argued that training teachers facilitates the identification and appropriate handling of psychosocial challenges among learners. Similarly, 142 (37.8%) participants agreed and 157 (41.8%) participants strongly agreed (M = 4.10, SD = 0.98) that schools should conduct mental health awareness training. This acknowledges the potential of awareness initiatives in stigma reduction and the promotion of help-seeking behaviors. This is similar to findings by Kangwana, Mutahi, and Kumar (2024), where mental health awareness among learners improved their willingness to seek counseling.

There was a notable response pertaining to safe spaces in school to be emotionally secure and share their opinions 130 (37.2%) participants agreed while 146 (38.8%) participants strongly agreed (M=4.00, SD=1.07). This is in line with Jefwa and Ndetei 2020, who noted that safe spaces in school build emotionally secure environments, trust, a sense of belonging, and emotional agility in the learners. On the same note, 148 (39.4%) and 153 (40. 7%) participants agreed and strongly agreed that counseling services need to be more accessible to all; this continues to advocate for the need of justice in service provision. Schlesier and Fischer (2024) also noted that providing visible and accessible services is a pillar of psychosocial support in schools.

Moreover, promising partnerships and collaborative leadership were recognized as key psychosocial support advocates. Notably, 140 (37.2%) and 154 (41.0%) respondents agreed (M = 4.07, SD = 1.00) and strongly agreed, respectively, that school leaders should make psychosocial support a priority. This highlights the importance of the support of an educational institution in the longevity of a counseling program, as in Leon-Himmelstine and Presler-Marshall (2021) who connected school leadership support to psychosocial

services success. In addition, 135 (35.9%) and 147 (39.1%) respondents agreed (M = 4.00, SD = 1.06) and strongly agreed, respectively, that partnerships with external mental health professionals and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are necessary. This emphasizes the need for cross-sectoral partnerships, a position echoed by Kangwana, Mutahi, and Kumar (2024) who demonstrate that external collaboration improves expertise and expands available resources.

The need for ongoing development of psychosocial programs remains a priority. Most respondents, 140 (37.2%) and 154 (41.0%) agreed (M = 4.09, SD = 0.99) psychosocial services should be assessed regularly for effectiveness and accountability. This finding reinforces Luthar and Resnick's (2020) claim that monitoring and evaluation contribute to the longevity of psychosocial support programs.

While conducting interviews with junior schools' teachers, school counselors, and parents in Makadara sub-county, a number of actionable ideas emerged on how to improve the pathways of psychosocial support services for adolescent learners. All respondents were of the same view that, while the initiatives being implemented are working, there are still gaps in coordination, awareness and the optimum utilization of available resources for the desired scaling of the initiatives.

Teachers expressed that psychosocial support services require strengthened capacity building among educators. They recommended that teachers receive regular training in counseling, child psychology, and adolescent behavior management to better support professional counselors. One teacher stated, "Because not all schools have a trained counselor, teachers, if trained, can provide support at the counseling level" (Field data, 2025). Another teacher emphasized that with adequate training in counseling and

psychology, teachers would be better positioned to identify and refer learners experiencing emotional difficulties (Field data, 2025).

School counselors suggested that implementing more structured psychosocial programs and formal referral systems would enhance service quality. Counselors noted that current interventions are largely reactive rather than proactive, addressing crises after they occur rather than preventing them. As one counselor explained, “A comprehensive school counseling framework should include regular guidance sessions, mentorship programs, and early intervention strategies for at-risk learners” (Field data, 2025). They further highlighted the importance of collaboration among counselors, teachers, and parents to monitor and guide learners effectively.

Parents also emphasized the need for increased awareness and involvement, noting that psychosocial support objectives are often misunderstood, which limits participation. One parent observed, “Many parents think counseling is only for learners with serious problems, yet it can help all children manage their emotions and perform better” (Field data, 2025). To improve understanding, parents recommended that schools organize workshops, awareness sessions, and dialogue meetings with teachers to discuss psychosocial support programs.

All respondent groups highlighted the necessity of adequate institutional support and resourcing. Many schools lack private counseling offices, sufficient materials, or enough staff to meet the needs of large learners’ populations. One counselor noted, “With better facilities, more time, and reduced stigma, learners would feel comfortable seeking help, and we could provide more consistent follow-up” (Field data, 2025). Stakeholders recommended that the Ministry of Education and school management boards allocate

specific funding for psychosocial programs and prioritize the recruitment of qualified counselors in all junior schools.

The findings demonstrate that offering psychosocial support more successfully requires addressing various interrelated issues, including the school's support of parents, the strengthening of institutional support, the organization of counseling, and teacher training. When implemented in this way, these strategies can establish a supportive framework for the emotional, behavioral, and academic improvement of adolescents in the school. If these support strategies are combined, the psychosocial support offered in Makadara sub-county schools may be more focused and embedded.

4.5 Test Hypothesis

This subsection outlines the inferential analysis carried out to test the hypotheses of each research question. Correlation analysis using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was performed to find the magnitude and direction of the relationship(s) that exist between the psychosocial support variables parental support, peer support, school-based counseling, and the adoption of psychosocial strategies, and the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county. The null hypotheses were determined to be tenable at $p > 0.05$, making the null hypotheses the default position in this analysis. The null hypothesis was:

Ho_1: There is no statistically significant relationship between types of psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners

Ho_2: There is no statistically significant relationship between parental psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners.

Ho_3: There is no statistically significant relationship between peer psychosocial support systems and academic performance of adolescent learners

Ho_4: There is no statistically significant relationship between school-based counseling services and academic performance of adolescent learners.

Ho_5: There is no statistically significant relationship between adoption of psychosocial support strategies and academic performance of adolescent learners.

Table 16

Pearson Correlations Between Psychosocial Support Variables and Academic Performance

Hypothesis	Variable(s)	Mean (M)	Std. Dev. (SD)	r	p-value	Decision
H_1	Parental Psychosocial Support	3.87–4.09	0.97–1.20	0.621	0.05	Reject H0
H_2	Peer Psychosocial Support	3.72–3.97	1.02–1.16	0.573	0.05	Reject H0
H_3	School-Based Counseling Services	3.68–3.91	1.04–1.18	0.598	0.05	Reject H0
H_4	Adoption of Psychosocial Support Strategies	4.00–4.19	0.95–0.99	0.607	0.05	Reject H0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings indicate that psychosocial support plays a significant role in enhancing the academic performance of adolescent learners in schools within Makadara sub-county. Parental support demonstrated a moderate positive relationship with academic performance ($r = 0.621$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that learners who receive emotional guidance, monitoring, and encouragement from their parents tend to perform better academically. Such support contributes to higher exam scores, active classroom participation, and consistent completion of assignments. This aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which underscores the importance of parental modeling and

reinforcement, and corroborates prior research emphasizing home-based emotional, motivational, and resilience support.

Peer support was also moderately positively correlated with academic outcomes ($r = 0.573$, $p > 0.05$), indicating that adolescents benefit from strong and supportive peer relationships, mentoring, and collaborative study groups. Positive interactions among peers encourage teamwork, motivation, and the development of effective study habits, reflecting findings from previous studies on the academic and psychosocial advantages of peer engagement.

Similarly, school-based counseling services showed a moderate positive association with academic performance ($r = 0.598$, $p > 0.05$), highlighting that access to professional guidance enhances learners' stress management, goal-setting, study skills, and emotional regulation, thereby contributing to improved learning outcomes. The adoption of broader psychosocial strategies within schools including counseling, peer mentorship, mental health awareness initiatives, and safe expression zones was positively associated with academic success ($r = 0.607$, $p > 0.05$). Schools implementing comprehensive psychosocial support systems were found to foster greater motivation, engagement, and overall academic achievement. These results collectively suggest that while the provision of psychosocial support is generally beneficial, there are gaps in systematic implementation, such as limited access to trained counselors and structured mental health services, indicating the need for enhanced stakeholder involvement and resource allocation to strengthen these support mechanisms.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the study on psychosocial support and the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior school in Makadara sub-county. This chapter reviews study objectives and provides an integrative account capturing the findings from the teachers, school counselors, parents, and learners. It articulates both substantive and technical recommendations for the integration of psychosocial support in school systems to improve the well-being and academic success of learners. The chapter also identifies possible further research opportunities to address the shortcomings in the current study.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study findings revealed that junior schools in Makadara sub-county provide varied psychosocial support services, such as counseling (group and individual), mentorship, life skills development, and peer support. These services are designed to respond to the psychosocial concerns (emotions, social and behavior issues, etc.) of adolescents. Teachers are the first psychosocial support contacts in school. They are the

first to recognize learners who are emotionally distressed, demonstrate negative behaviors, or are disengaged academically. They offer informal counseling and mentorship to foster leaners' feelings of belonging and motivation. This is complemented by school counselors, who provide counseling support through individual and group sessions aimed at building coping skills, self-esteem, and time management, and resolving conflicts. This fosters emotional resilience and adaptable skills to cope with the challenges of adolescents. Also, parents and guardians contribute to the support through emotional encouragement, guidance, and the provision of a supportive home. In contrast, the study revealed that the magnitude of parental support and involvement is different from one household to another. Some parents are fully involved in their children's schooling, working closely with teachers to track their adolescent's academic progress, while others are disengaged for work-related reasons, low awareness, or due to socio-economic problems.

The study established a significant positive relationship between parental psychosocial support and learner performance. Learners whose parents communicate with teachers, check their schoolwork, and emotionally reassure them tend to display more self-discipline, motivation, and academic achievement. Such parental support improves responsibility, study habits, time management, and purpose in learners. Teachers and counselors notice that learners from emotionally supportive homes are often more active in class, demonstrate confidence and solve problems better. On the other hand, low parental support due to constraints like time, awareness, psychosocial deficit, or socio-economic problems corresponds to low motivation, absenteeism, and poor performance. This emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in providing psychosocial support,

fostering a psychosocial environment that supports both emotional well-being and academic achievement.

The study established that peer psychosocial support plays a significant role in enhancing the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county. Quantitative findings showed that a majority of learners felt encouraged to study, gained confidence, and were motivated when supported by classmates. Peer study groups, mentorship programs, and informal support networks contributed to collaborative learning, problem-solving, and emotional reassurance. A large proportion of learners reported that supportive friendships helped them manage stress, overcome academic challenges, and improve school engagement, while those lacking peer support often experienced low morale and reduced academic focus.

The study revealed that school-based psychosocial counseling services significantly enhance the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county. Most learners reported that access to counseling support helped them manage stress, develop effective study habits, set personal and academic goals, and maintain focus in their learning. Counseling was seen to contribute to improved academic outcomes, reduced anxiety, and better emotional regulation, although some learners experienced limited engagement or discomfort in utilizing the services.

The study found that several strategies can be adopted to strengthen psychosocial support services and enhance academic performance among adolescent learners in junior schools within Makadara sub-county. Expanding the number of trained psychosocial counselors was identified as a key strategy, with the majority of learners supporting increased counseling capacity to address growing emotional and psychological needs.

Strengthening peer mentorship programs and creating safe spaces for free expression were also recognized as important interventions for promoting resilience, motivation, and collaborative learning.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion the presence and effectiveness of psychosocial support systems at school and home profoundly impact the academic performance of learners in junior school in Makadara sub-county. Learner access to counseling, mentorship, peer support, and teacher support boosts emotional engagement in learning. These supports enhance mental health, self-control, social relationships, academic focus, and discipline.

The study also establishes that parental psychosocial support is instrumental in influencing learners' academic performance. Parent participation in school, clear communication with teachers, and emotional support at home bolster the learner's self-assurance, ownership, and endurance toward academic tasks. Yet, like the situation in the rest of the country, active parental participation is sporadic and lags behind because of insufficient education, prolonged working hours, and poverty, mostly in the economically disadvantaged. These factors create gaps in emotional support from home and parental involvement in school activities.

Furthermore, the research confirms that the psychosocial support provided by peers positively impacts learners' motivation, social adjustment, and academic collaboration. Peer counseling and mentorship programs improve collaboration and create safe environments for adolescents where they can share experiences and develop adaptive coping skills. However, the positive outcomes of these programs rely on sufficient

planning, and on the active involvement of teachers and counselors, in order to safeguard against harmful peer influence.

The research also found that school counseling services are crucial for the development of learners' emotional resilience, behavioral adjustment, and learning concentration. Learners who attend counseling sessions frequently tend to exhibit improved discipline and academic focus. However, the importance of school counseling services is underscored by the research, which reveals that a scarcity of counseling staff, insufficient resources, and the stigma attached to counseling services impede their potential.

The research concludes that the strengthening of psychosocial support is best approached in a holistic and cooperative manner, involving teachers, counselors, parents, and community stakeholders. Within Makadara sub-county, expansion of counseling services, parental training on emotional support, peer mentorship, and the continuous training of teachers on psychosocial support may be vital to improving learner well-being and academic outcomes in junior schools. This study proposes the following recommendations to improve psychosocial support and academic performance of adolescent learners in Junior Schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen psychosocial support system and enhance academic performance among adolescent learners in junior schools: The study suggests that comprehensive psychological support systems be strengthened and institutionalised by school administrations, especially Boards of Management (BOM) and head teachers in junior schools within the Makadara

sub-county. Peer support programs, mentorship frameworks, and formal guidance and counselling programs should be established in schools to achieve this. Counselling and psychosocial activities should have a designated time slot in the schedule, and schools should make sure that qualified staff members are present. In order to improve engagement and performance, a comprehensive support environment that attends to learners' emotional, social, and intellectual needs must be established. To guarantee efficacy and sustainability, implementation should be ongoing and regularly assessed.

Schools and Parents Associations (PAs) should regularly host parent engagement events in school and community settings to enhance parental psychosocial support. These workshops, seminars, and forums should be held every term or every two terms with the goal of giving parents the tools they need to support their children emotionally, communicate, and keep an eye on their academic progress. To accommodate working parents, flexible scheduling; such as weekends or evenings; should be implemented. This is significant because parental participation has a direct impact on students' academic performance, motivation, and discipline. Parents can actively contribute to their children's academic performance by cultivating effective home-school partnerships.

The report also suggests that counsellors and school officials set up organised, closely monitored peer support programs in junior schools. Throughout the academic year, these initiatives should include peer mentorship, counselling clubs, and cooperative learning groups. Basic counselling techniques including empathy, active listening, and conflict resolution should be taught to chosen peer leaders. This is important because learners' behaviour, motivation, and academic engagement are greatly influenced by their

peers. In order to minimise negative influences like distractions and indiscipline, peer interactions must be properly supervised by teachers and counsellors.

At the policy level, the Ministry of Education should create and implement a thorough framework for psychosocial support policies for junior schools across Makadara and beyond in cooperation with County and Sub-County Education Offices. This should be accomplished by establishing functional counseling units with the necessary infrastructure, defining clear standards for incorporating psychosocial assistance into the curriculum, and allocating sufficient funds for program execution. In the short to medium term, the policy should be implemented with ongoing monitoring and assessment procedures. This is required to improve the overall efficacy of psychological interventions in schools, guarantee equity in access to support services, and standardize service delivery.

Finally, the study suggests that schools enhance and broaden school-based counselling services in collaboration with community stakeholders such local leaders, community-based organisations, and mental health specialists. Outreach initiatives, awareness campaigns, and collaborations with outside specialists to offer specialised assistance and referral services are some ways to put this into practice. These programs are to be carried out on a regular basis to raise knowledge of the resources that are available and to lessen the stigma attached to asking for assistance. To improve their ability to recognise and handle psychological issues, teachers' and counsellors' ongoing professional development should also be given top priority. This strategy is crucial for fostering students' resilience, emotional health, and long-term academic success.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas were suggested for further research:

i. Future research could examine the long-term effects of psychosocial support system on the academic performance and emotional well-being of adolescent learners, tracking changes over several years.

ii. Research could compare the effectiveness of psychosocial support programs in different sub-counties or counties to identify contextual factors influencing academic performance and well-being.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

My name is Rose Nyangweso, a Master student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa conducting research on: **‘‘The relationship between Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya.”**

I request you to participate in this study and be assured that your privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained. Your name will not appear on any materials, and only I, the researcher, will have access to your information.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to change your mind and withdraw at any point before or during the study. Please note that there will be no financial compensation for your participation.

If you are willing to take part in this research, please sign the form below. Thank you for considering this opportunity!

APPENDIX II: ASSENT FORM FOR MINORS

My name is Rose Nyangweso, a Master's student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa. I am conducting a research study titled **"The relationship between *Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub- County, Nairobi, Kenya."***

I request you kindly to participate in this study and be assured that your privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained. Your name will not appear on any materials, and only I, the researcher, will have access to your information.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to change your mind and withdraw at any point before or during the study. Please note that there will be no financial compensation for your participation.

Before you can participate, your parent or guardian must also give their permission. If you have understood this explanation and you are willing to take part in the study, please sign, and write the date in the space provided below.

Your participation is appreciated, and I thank you for considering being part of this study.

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

My name is Rose Nyangweso, a Master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. I am conducting a research study titled: "*The relationship between Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub- County, Nairobi, Kenya."* You are kindly invited to participate by responding to the questions in the attached questionnaire.

This questionnaire explores the types of psychosocial support available in schools, including emotional guidance, mentorship, and help for learners facing personal or social challenges. It also considers parental support, such as encouragement and involvement in the child's education. It further examines peer support programs like peer counseling and mentorship that promote emotional well-being and belonging. School-based counseling services are also assessed, focusing on how trained counselors help learners cope with stress, anxiety, or trauma. Finally, the questionnaire looks at strategies to strengthen these

support systems through the involvement of teachers, parents, and school leaders in creating a supportive academic environment.

Section A: Demographic Information

Please give your answer by putting a [√] in the appropriate box or write your answer in the space provided

1. Kindly indicate your gender?

   Male [ ]

   Female [ ]

2. How old are you?

   ___ Years

3. What is your class/grade level?

   Grade 7 [ ] Grade 8 [ ]

4. Who do you live with most of the time?

   Both parents [ ]

   Single parent [ ]

   Guardian/Relative [ ]

   Other (specify): _____

5. Do you receive any form of psychosocial support in your school?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

Section B: Types of Psychosocial Support

6. Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement in rating the types of psychosocial support provided to adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. (Tick √ where appropriate in the spaces provided).

STATEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
I receive regular guidance and counseling services in school.					
There are teachers I can talk to when I have personal problems.					
The school invites professionals (e.g., psychologists, social workers).					

Peer support groups or clubs are available in my school.
I receive support from teachers when I feel stressed or anxious.
There are awareness sessions on mental health in our school.
My school offers mentorship programs for learners.
I feel emotionally safe and supported within the school environment.
The school includes parents or guardians in offering support to leaners.
I am encouraged to talk about my feelings when I am having a hard time.

Section C : Parental Psychosocial Support

7. Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement in rating the relationship between parental psychosocial support and the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. (Tick √ where appropriate in the spaces provided).

STATEMENT	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
My parents/guardians encourage me to do my best in school.					
I feel supported by my parents/guardians when I face emotional challenges.					
My parents/guardians provide a peaceful and safe home environment.					
I can talk freely with my parents/guardians about problems I face in school or life.					
My parents/guardians check on my academic progress regularly.					
When I am struggling emotionally, my parents/guardians notice and offer help.					
My parents/guardians attend school meetings and are involved in my education.					
I feel more motivated to study when my parents/guardians encourage me.					
My parents/guardians give me advice and guidance that helps me do well in school.					
I perform better in school when I feel emotionally supported at home.					

Section D : Peer Support Programs

8. Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement in rating how peer support programs influence the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. (Tick √ where appropriate in the spaces provided).

STATEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
I feel encouraged to study when I receive support from my classmates.					
Peer study groups help me understand schoolwork better.					
I can talk to my peers when I am feeling stressed or anxious.					
Peer mentors give me helpful advice about school and life.					
Peer counseling services are available in my school.					
I feel more confident in school when I have friends who support and encourage me.					
Learners in my school help each other to solve academic and personal problems.					
I learn positive behaviors through interaction with supportive classmates.					
When I am having difficulties, I can count on my peers for emotional support.					
Peer support has helped improve my academic performance.					

Section E: School-Based Psychosocial Counseling Services

9. Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement in rating the extent school-based psychosocial counseling services influence the academic performance of adolescent learners in junior schools in Makadara sub-county on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. (Tick √ where appropriate in the spaces provided).

STATEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
My school has a trained counselor available for learners.					
I feel comfortable talking to the school counselor about my problems.					
Counseling sessions at school help me to manage stress and emotions better.					
I perform better in school when I receive counseling support.					
Counseling services help me develop better study habits.					
The counselor helps me set academic and personal goals.					
I feel less anxious before exams after speaking with the school counselor.					
The guidance and counseling program address both academic and personal issues.					
Teachers refer learners to counseling when they show signs of					

emotional distress.
School counseling services have positively contributed to my academic improvement.

Section F: Strategies that can be Adopted

10. Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement in rating the strategies that can be adopted to enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support services in junior schools in Makadara sub-county on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. (Tick √ where appropriate in the spaces provided).

STATEMENT	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Schools should hire more trained psychosocial counselors.					
Peer mentorship programs should be introduced and strengthened.					
Parents should be more involved in psychosocial support programs.					
Teachers should be trained in basic psychosocial support and counseling skills.					
Schools should organize regular mental health awareness programs.					
Safe spaces should be created in school for learners to express themselves freely.					
Counseling services should be made more accessible to all learners.					
School administrators should support and prioritize psychosocial support services.					
Schools should collaborate with external mental health professionals and NGOs.					
Regular evaluation of psychosocial support services should be conducted to improve them.					

THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

My name is Rose Nyangweso, a Master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa conducting research on: *"The relationship between Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya."* You are kindly requested to participate by responding to the following questions.

Interview guide explores the types of psychosocial support available in schools, including emotional guidance, mentorship, and help for learners facing personal or social challenges. It also considers parental support, such as encouragement and involvement in the child's education. It further examines peer support programs like peer counseling and mentorship that promote emotional well-being and belonging. School-based counseling services are also assessed, focusing on how trained counselors help learners cope with stress, anxiety, or trauma. Finally, the questionnaire looks at strategies to strengthen these support systems through the involvement of teachers, parents, and school leaders in creating a supportive academic environment.

The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your teaching experience (in years): _____
2. What subject(s) do you currently teach in junior school?
   _____

Section B: Thematic Interview Questions

Types of Psychosocial Support

i. What types of psychosocial support services are provided to adolescent learners in your school?
ii. Are these services structured, occasional, or reactive (e.g., after crises)?

Parental Psychosocial Support

i. In your experience, how do parents support their learner's psychological and emotional wellbeing?
ii. How does this parental support (or lack of it) impact learners' academic performance?

Peer Support Programs

i. Are there peer mentorship or peer counseling programs in your school?
ii. How do these peer programs influence the emotional wellbeing and academic achievement of learners?

School-Based Counseling Services

i. Does your school offer professional counseling services to learners?
ii. How accessible and effective are these services in addressing learners' psychosocial needs?
iii. What impact have you observed on learners' academic performance following counseling?

Strategies to Enhance Psychosocial Support

i. What measures do you think should be put in place to improve psychosocial support services in junior schools?
ii. What role should teachers, parents, and the school administration play in strengthening these services?

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHER COUNCILORS

My name is Rose Nyangweso, a Master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa conducting research on: *"The relationship between Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya."* You are kindly requested to participate by responding to the following questions.

Interview guide explores the types of psychosocial support available in schools, including emotional guidance, mentorship, and help for learners facing personal or social challenges. It also considers parental support, such as encouragement and involvement in the child's education. It further examines peer support programs like peer counseling and mentorship that promote emotional well-being and belonging. School-based counseling services are also assessed, focusing on how trained counselors help learners cope with stress, anxiety, or trauma. Finally, the questionnaire looks at strategies to strengthen these support systems

through the involvement of teachers, parents, and school leaders in creating a supportive academic environment.

The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your teaching experience (in years): _____
2. What subject(s) do you currently teach in junior school?

   _____

Section B: Thematic Interview Questions

Types of Psychosocial Support

1. What types of psychosocial support services are provided to adolescent learners in your school?
2. Are these services structured, occasional, or reactive (e.g., after crises)?

Parental Psychosocial Support

1. In your experience, how do parents support their learner's psychological and emotional wellbeing?
2. How does this parental support (or lack of it) impact learners' academic performance?

Peer Support Programs

1. Are there peer mentorship or peer counseling programs in your school?
2. How do these peer programs influence the emotional wellbeing and academic achievement of learners?

School-Based Counseling Services

1. Does your school offer professional counseling services to learners?
2. How accessible and effective are these services in addressing learners' psychosocial needs?

3. What impact have you observed on learners' academic performance following counseling?

Strategies to Enhance Psychosocial Support

1. What measures do you think should be put in place to improve psychosocial support services in junior schools?
2. What role should teachers, parents, and the school administration play in strengthening these services?

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIAN

Title of Study: *Th Relationship between Psychosocial Support Systems and Academic Performance of Adolescent Learners in Junior Schools in Makadara Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya*

You are kindly requested to participate in this study by responding to the following questions. This interview guide explores the types of psychosocial support available to learners, such as emotional guidance, mentorship, and help with social or personal challenges. It also considers the role of parental involvement, peer support programs like peer counseling and mentorship, and school-based counseling services. In addition, the guide seeks your views on strategies to enhance these systems through collaboration between parents, teachers, and school leaders. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your relationship to the learners:
   ☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ Guardian
2. How many adolescent learners do you currently have in junior school?
   _____

Section B: Thematic Interview Questions

1. Types of Psychosocial Support

a) What types of psychosocial support have you observed being provided to learners at your school?

b) Are these services regularly available, or are they provided only during or after crises?

2. Parental Psychosocial Support

a) In your experience, how do you as a parent/guardian support your learner's emotional and psychological wellbeing?

b) How do you think such parental support (or lack thereof) affects your learner's academic performance?

3. Peer Support Programs

a) Are you aware of any peer mentorship or peer counseling programs at the school?

b) How do you think such peer programs influence your learner's wellbeing and academic achievement?

4. School-Based Counseling Services

a) Does the school offer professional counseling services to learners?

b) From your perspective, how accessible and effective are these services in supporting your child's psychosocial needs?

c) Have you noticed any change in your learner's academic performance after receiving school-based counseling?

5. Strategies to Enhance Psychosocial Support

a) In your opinion, what measures should be put in place to improve psychosocial support in junior schools?

b) What role do you believe parents, teachers, and school leaders should play in strengthening psychosocial support systems?

Thank you for your participation and valuable insights.

APPENDIX VII: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE

This document analysis schedule was used to collect secondary data from school records relating to the academic performance of adolescent learners in 15 junior schools within Makadara sub-county.

Sources of Data:

- End-of-term examination records
- School attendance registers
- Promotion and retention records

School Code	Learner's Code	Mean Examination Score (%)	Total Days Attended (Term)	Attendance Percentage (%)	School Completion Status (Completed / Not Completed)
S1					
S1					
S2					
S2					
S3					

S3
S4
S4
S5
S5
S6
S6
S7
S7
S8
S8
S9
S9
S10
S10
S11
S11
S12
S12
S13
S13
S14
S14
S15

APPENDIX VIII: APPROVAL LETTER FROM CUEA

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

Faculty of Education

Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

Our Ref: CUEA/DVC-ACAD/FOE/PGSE/NACOSTI/42/AUGUST 2025

12th August 2025

THE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (NACOSTI)
NAIROBI, KENYA

RE: Rose Nyangweso - REG NO. 1048404

I wish to introduce to you **Rose Nyangweso** a MED student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya; and request you to assist her accomplish her academic research requirements.

Rose's area of specialization is Educational Psychology. Every student in the programme is required to conduct research, write a report/dissertation and submit it for examination in the final years of study. Accordingly, **Rose's** research proposal has been approved and she will conduct research on the following topic:

"Effectiveness of Psychosocial Support Systems on Academic Performance of Adolescent Students in Junior Secondary Schools in Makadara Sub-County, Nairobi City County, Kenya."

Thanking you in advance for according **Rose** the assistance she may require to conduct her research successfully.

Sincerely,

H.O.D.

SR. PROF. ELIZBETH NDUKU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT - POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA) P.O. BOX 62157 00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel: 020-2525811-5, 8890023-4, Fax: 8891084, Email: pgse@cuea.edu, Website: www.cuea.edu
Founded in 1984 by AMECEA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa)

ISO 9001:2015 Certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards

APPENDIX IX: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 171238

Date of Issue: 01/September/2025

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss., ROSE ADHIAMBO of Catholic University of Eastern Africa, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAKADARA SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 01/September/2026.

License No: NACOSTI/P/25/417878

171238

Applicant Identification Number

Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX X: APPROVAL LETTER FROM MAKADARA SUB-COUNTY

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING", Nairobi
Telephone: Nairobi 0202453699
Email: deomakadara@gmail.com
When replying please quote:
REF: **MAK/EDU/FSS/43/VOL. I (110)**

Sub County Director of Education
Makadara Sub County
P.O.BOX 74629- 00200
NAIROBI

10th September, 2025.

Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Ms. Rose Adhiambo

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

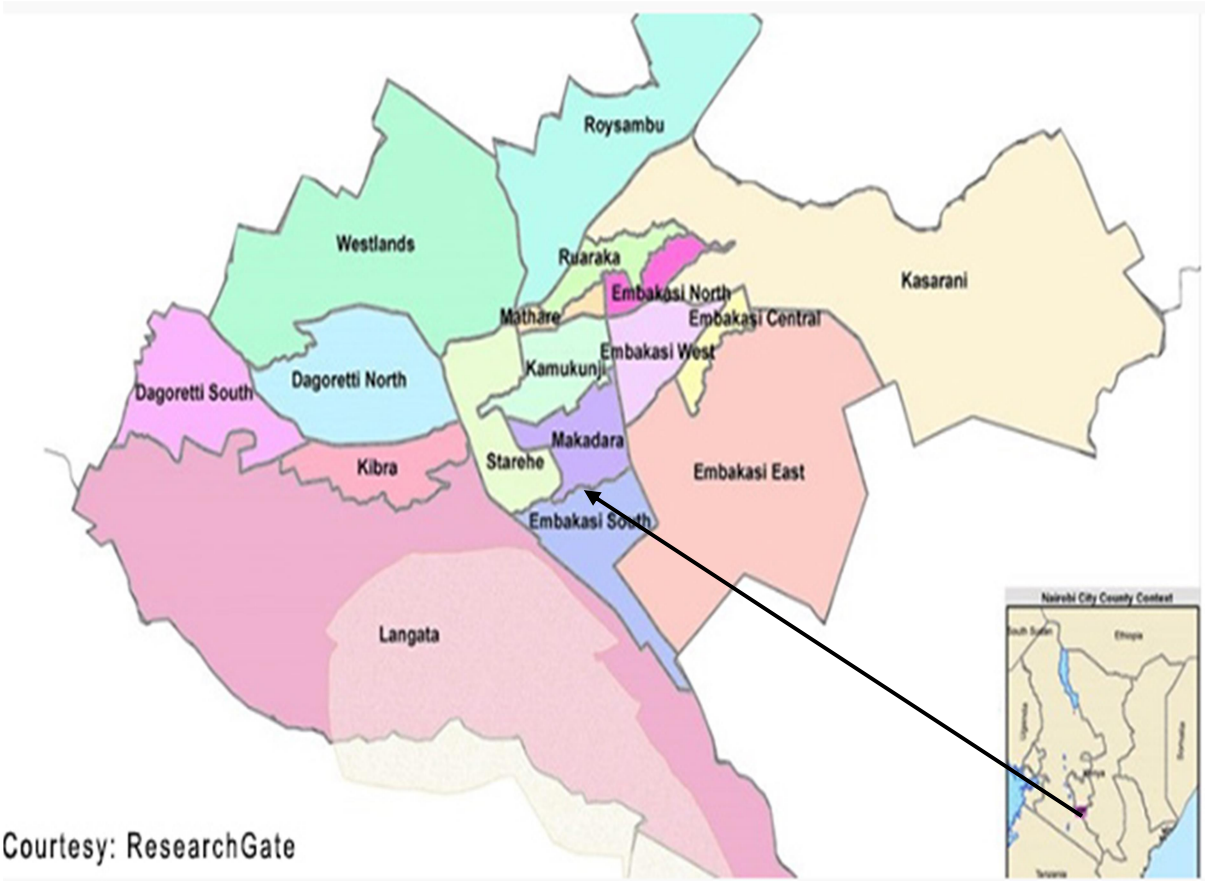
We are in receipt of a letter from National commission for Science , Technology & Innovation, regarding research authorization, County Commissioner, Nairobi letter reference **ED 10/6 VOL:XXXII(106)** and from Regional Director of Education Nairobi **(Ref No. RDE/NRB/RES/1/65 Vol.2(41)** dated 10/9/2025 in Makadara Sub-County on the topic: ***"Effectiveness of Psychological Support Systems on Academic Performance of Adolescent Students in Junior Secondary Schools in Makadara Sub-county, Nairobi County Kenya."*** For the period ending 01/09/2026

This office has no **Objection** and **Authority** is hereby granted on condition that the exercise will be carried out professionally and report on this exercise will be required on completion.

SUB-COUNTY DIRECTOR
OF EDUCATION
MAKADARA

James K. Koigi
Sub-County Director of Education.
MAKADARA.

APPENDIX XI: MAP OF MAKADARA SUB-COUNTY



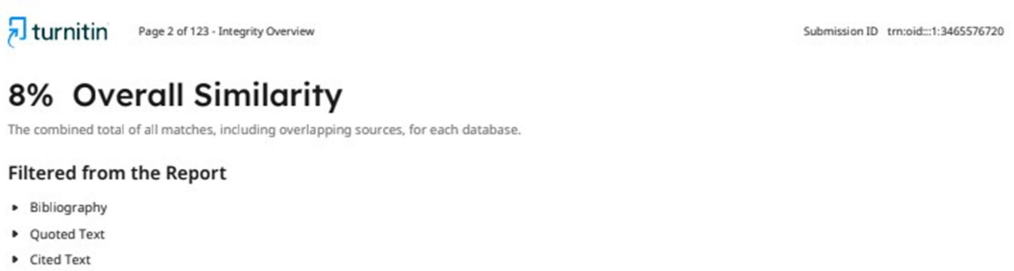
APPENDIX XII: ANTIPLAGIARISM CETIFICATE

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

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TURNITIN ORIGINALITY REPORT

REF: PGS/FOE/839/DEFENSE/LANGATA,



I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT **ROSE NYANGWESO** REG NO: **1048404**, SUBMITTED A CHECK OF ANTIPLAGIARISM ON CRITICAL EVALUATION OF **EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN MAKADARA SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA. A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE POST GRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER'S DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA.**

Verification by Systems Librarian:

Name: HARUN MAINA ..... Signature: ..... Date: 26/1/2026

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