

Chapter 7

Enabler Factors for the Successful Adjustment of First-Year Students

Pamela Awuor Onyango
University of Nairobi, Kenya

ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a synopsis of enabler factors for successful adjustment of first-year students. Reviewed literature addresses the main enabler factors, which include positive and helpful interaction of students with lecturers, orientation, family environment, student experience during transition into the university and information literacy. While other students have been living in rural areas, others come from urban areas. Consequently, the two categories of learners do not adjust to institutions of higher learning in the same way. This fact has been taken into account in the course of literature review. Study findings recommend the need for the university administration and other stakeholders to acknowledge the significance of enabler factors for the successful adjustment of first-year students.

INTRODUCTION

The first year of university is usually regarded as strenuous and difficult for learners who are adjusting to divergent academic and social demands (Baik & Lodge, 2019). Furthermore, adjusting to university is a major transition in life that not all upcoming adults accomplish successfully (Fernandez et al., 2017). Being able to select one's education is one of the most significant choices that individuals make because it is essential in the development of skills and qualifications that play a crucial role in the course of an individual's life (Stenseth & Baeck, 2021). Transition from high school to college leads to numerous changes that learners who join college may not be completely ready for since they have never gone through a transition of this nature (Haines, 2017). Research has revealed multiple challenges faced by first year learners as they transit to university life (Nemickienė & Nemickaite, 2020). Students experience emotional challenges and stress as they endeavor to adjust to social and academic life, which may eventually lead to dropout (Dlamini & Zogli, 2020). Notwithstanding, securing quality education persists as a significant

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-6961-3.ch007

Enabler Factors for the Successful Adjustment of First-Year Students

foundation in the life of each individual, and it is fundamental that all scholars acquire the mechanisms needed for academic success. Enabler factors for successful adjustment contribute significantly to the educational success of learners by permitting them to actively participate in the classroom. This chapter consequently advances an overview of enabler factors for successful adjustment of first year students. The upcoming section gives the background of the study.

BACKGROUND

As demonstrated in the introduction, there is a considerable body of evidence which suggests that going to the university for the first time involves transformation in young peoples' lives that brings with it a lot of stress. Hassel and Ridout (2018) maintain that passage from school to university is a concern for most learners; more importantly the gap between learners' prior expectations and the actual university life, which may lead to substantial distress, substandard academic performance and high rates of drop-out if not handled effectively. Research findings from national and international perspective reveal that the transition of a student to higher education is a complicated and inconsistent adventure (Gravett & Winstone, 2019). According to Parker et al. (2017), smooth transition to higher education is necessary for undergraduate learners to acquire academic success. Douglas et al. (2018) also believe that effective learner transition to the university is of great importance to their victory.

Enabler Factors for Successful Adjustment of First Year Students

Joining tertiary institution comes with scores of remarkable life obstacles and learners have to handle the new environment and the obstacles of stressors caused by being separated from their previous environment (Dlamini & Zogli, 2020). First year learners who are granted social support more possibly adapt to the transition to higher education (Maymon et al., 2019). This implies that all learners need enablers for successful adjustment to institutions of learning. Cele (2018) also believes that learners need a lot of support from families, schools and institutions of higher learning in order to negotiate transition smoothly. Comparatively, there are quite a number of enabler factors for successful adjustment of students. The factors discussed in this chapter include positive and helpful interaction of students with lecturers, orientation, family environment, student experience during transition into the university and information literacy.

Positive and Helpful Interaction of Students with Lecturers

The interaction between teachers and learners is one of the most significant associations in learning because it influences student understanding (Ayuwanti et al., 2021). According to Pielmeier et al. (2018), student teacher association is greatly critical for student self-concept. Students may encounter challenges as they cross over from secondary education to university and as they also try to cultivate interrelation with educators and their fellow peers (Foroodian, 2019). Since learners spend most of their time with teachers, support from the teachers can be essential to learners' educational advancement for both learning outcomes and emotional outcomes (Lei & Chiu, 2018). Spending time in building positive association with students will most likely have intense effects on the child's experiences within and outside the classroom (Varga, 2017). According to Money et al. (2017), learners appreciate support and interaction

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/enabler-factors-for-the-successful-adjustment-of-first-year-students/319249

Related Content

Leveraging Student Feedback to Enhance a Blended/Hybrid Model in Intermediate Accounting

Gregory J. Krivacek (2025). *International Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (pp. 1-18).

www.irma-international.org/article/leveraging-student-feedback-to-enhance-a-blendedhybrid-model-in-intermediate-accounting/393621

Combining Reversibility With Program Visualization (PV) to Improve Introductory Programming Instructional Design

Leonard J. Mselleand Ona N. Kowero (2024). *International Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (pp. 1-16).

www.irma-international.org/article/combining-reversibility-with-program-visualization-pv-to-improve-introductory-programming-instructional-design/356385

Building Competence: A Historical Perspective of Competency-Based Education

Kristin A. Jonesand Steven G. Olswang (2017). *Handbook of Research on Competency-Based Education in University Settings* (pp. 28-40).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/building-competence/167894

Learning While Teaching: Harnessing the Potential of Peer-to-Peer Learning to Enhance Language Learning

Sandra Vieira Vasconcelos (2023). *Fostering Pedagogy Through Micro and Adaptive Learning in Higher Education: Trends, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 93-110).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-while-teaching/328743

Meaning Making Change: Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis and an Epistemology of Power

Denise Michelle Brend (2021). *Overcoming Fieldwork Challenges in Social Science and Higher Education Research* (pp. 96-117).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/meaning-making-change/266667