

**ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SEXUAL  
ORIENTATION AMONG STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN  
THIKA SUB-COUNTY, KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**


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**A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of  
the degree of Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology in the Department of  
Counseling Psychology of Africa Nazarene University**

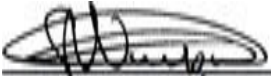

**September 2020**

**DECLARATION**

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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This research was conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my husband Ephantus and my children Gertrude, Marcellina, Mildred, Theophilus and Amelia for their support, encouragement, understanding and prayers as I carried out this research.

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## ABSTRACT

Over the last decades, views on sexual orientation have gradually but substantially changed globally, especially in the Western societies. In Africa, individuals whose sexual orientation is homosexual are a minority group that differs from heterosexual individuals, who are the majority, with respect to sexuality. There is an increase in population of young people in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County due to an increase in number of tertiary institutions. The aim of the study was to check whether varied psychosocial dynamics influence sexual orientation of students. The purpose of the study was to assess psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The study objectives sought to determine whether peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics, and drug abuse influence sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The study was guided by the Sexual Orientation theory, Durkheim's Social Integration theory, and the Labelling theory. This research study adopted a correlational study design. The researcher targeted 13,100 students from public and private tertiary institutions in Thika sub-county in the following tertiary institutions: Jodan College of Technology, Thika Institute of Business Studies, Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences and the Thika Technical Training Institute. Through the use of Cochran sample size formula, 374 students were selected. The researcher collected data from 301 students. Data collection was collected through the students' questionnaire and KII interview guide for counselors. A pilot test of 37 students was carried out to examine the reliability and validity of the research instruments. The questionnaire reliability was estimated by computing Cronbach alpha coefficient while validity of data collection instruments was ascertained through the university supervisors' scrutiny. The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze primary data. The four formulated hypotheses of the study were tested by use of Chi-square tests. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Science Program (SPSS) version 25. The tests were conducted at  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance. From the results, there was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 34.523$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ), there was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 72.098$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ), there was a statistically significant relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 37.712$ ,  $p = 0.02 < 0.05$ ), and there was a statistically significant relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 58.009$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ). Therefore, peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics and drug abuse had statistically significant influences on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The study recommended strengthening of counseling departments so as to reach out to many students. Parents and adult family members should provide favorable environments for children to grow with love, care, attention and protection. For further studies, it would be important to use segmentation analysis as well as a different research approach in assessing factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Bisexual:** Bisexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behavior toward both males and females, or romantic or sexual attraction to people of any sex or gender identity; this latter aspect is sometimes termed pansexuality (Cochran, Sullivan, & Mays, 2013). In this study, this refers to having both homosexual and heterosexual orientations.

**Drug Abuse:** This is the use of substances in methods and amounts that cause harm to the consumer and other people close to them (De Cock, Rutherford, & Akhwale, 2014). In this study, this means the use of legal and illegal substances for purposes of getting intoxicated.

**Family Background-** Family background refers to the kind of family that one comes from, and the features of the family such as proper upbringing, mistreatment, financial and education status (Roberts, Glymour, & Koenen, 2013). In this study, this means the kind of family in terms of stability, financial and moral support as well as any negative influences in the family.

**Gay-** Gay is a term that primarily refers to a homosexual person or the trait of being homosexual (Sandner, 2014). In this study, a gay refers to homosexual males but lesbians may also be referred to as gay.

**Lesbian-** A lesbian is a female homosexual (Sandner, 2014). In this study, this is a female who experiences romantic love or sexual attraction to other females.

**Multicultural Dynamics-** Multicultural dynamics refer to the many beliefs, practices and ideas from people coming from different countries and cultural backgrounds (Vance, 2011). In this study, this means the diverse socio-cultural influences and value systems that influence sexual orientation among students.

**Peer Influence-** Peer influence refers to the direct pressure on individuals by peers (Mednick, Christakis, & Fowler, 2010). In this study, this is the effect on students who are encouraged to follow peers by changing their attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors to conform to those of the peers.

**Psychosocial Factors:** These are factors such as mental state, psychological traits, or aspects of the social environment that may have may have a negative influence on a person (Meyer, 2013). In this study, this is the combined influence of psychological factors and the surrounding social environment on students' physical and mental wellness and their ability to function. This study will focus on family background, peer influence, drug abuse, and multicultural dynamics.

**Sexual Orientation-** Sexual orientation can be defined as sexual attraction, emotions, fantasies, behavior, or self-labeling, or a combination of these (Mock & Eibach, 2012). In this study, sexual orientation is the sexual labels that students give to themselves such as lesbian, gay and bisexual.

**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CSA</b>	Childhood Sexual Abuse
<b>GLB</b>	Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual
<b>LGBTQ</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Transsexual, 2/Two-Spirit, Questioning, Asexual, Ally
<b>MSM</b>	Men who have Sex with Men
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>SUD</b>	Substance Use Disorders
<b>WSW</b>	Women who have Sex with Women

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study, by focusing on psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Specifically, the chapter outlines sexual orientation, which is the dependent variable and presents an outline of psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation, which is the independent variable. Additionally, the chapter also presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and hypothesis of the study. The chapter describes the significance, scope, limitations, and assumptions of the study. Further, the study theoretical and conceptual frameworks are delineated.

#### 1.2 Background of the Study

Mock and Eibach (2012) regards sexual orientation as sexual attraction, fantasies, emotions, behavior, or self-labeling, or a combination of these. In a non-heterosexual individual, in any case one of these facets of sexual orientation is directed (totally or partially) toward individuals of the same sex (Clarke *et al.*, 2010). Although there are various theoretical formations of sexual orientation, resulting in disparity about base rates of homosexuality and bisexuality, all approaches agree that a moderately small percentage of the general population is non-heterosexual. This holds particularly true for individuals who consistently claim non-heterosexual orientation and identity. In a study that done in a universal population but focusing on a sample of 2917 LGBT subset mental health, 32 people self-identified as bisexual men and women while 41 were self-identified homosexuals (Savin-Williams, Joyner & Rieger, 2012). This number constituted 2.5% of persons labeling themselves as gay, lesbian, and



bisexual. In general, support rates of non-heterosexuals in the population range between 0.5% to 2% for bisexual men, 2% and 4% for homosexual men, 2% to 4% for bisexual women, and 1% to 3% for homosexual women (Mock & Eibach, 2012; Savin-Williams, Joyner, & Rieger, 2012).

A study found out that early childhood development factors could contribute to same sex relationships (Gundlach, 2015). The writer observed that what happens after the child is born is complicated by many factors; there are not only inner biological and emotional factors, parental and familial surroundings, social and cultural circumstances; but the various pressures and expectations shift as the child grows and hardens as he establishes his ways into his eventual adult character structure. Byne and Persons (2013) further observed that it is reasonably correct to suggest that the experiences established during the first four years of a child development contribute to the sexual orientation. It was thus concluded, the scantiness of present psychosocial explanations do not justify turning to biology by default especially when, at present, the biological alternatives seem to have no greater explanatory value. In fact, the current trend may be to underrate the explanatory power of extant psychosocial models.

Conceptually, sexual orientation encompasses all orientations, however as noted by Green (2008), the study of sexual orientation in psychology has focused generally on individuals with bisexual (LGB) sexual orientations, lesbian and gay. Traditionally, heterosexuality has been considered normative or the straight way, thereby attracting no critical examination as done to LGB sexual orientations. The presumption of hetero-sexuality as the only psychologically normal and legal form of sexual orientation and the successive understanding of other sexual orientations as pathological or abnormal, is termed as heterosexism (Bohan, 2006; Patterson, 2005).

The psychological research view of sexual orientations is further faulted in that it fails to ask crucial and relevant questions about the origins and determinants of all sexual orientations (Sandner, 2014). It rather selectively obscures information about all nontraditional orientations leading to a range of mistaken assumptions about sexual orientation in general. Traditionally, nontraditional sexual orientations have been viewed as the manifestation of pathological development arrest or a psychological disturbance. (Sandner, 2014; Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2012).

Most of the cross-sectional studies on sexual orientation done in the past have established that individuals with non-heterosexual sexual orientation indicate lower levels of psychological well-being and functioning than heterosexuals (Potki, Potki, Faramarzi, Moosazadeh, & Shahhosseini, 2017). A study conducted by Potki et al. (2017), was based on identity formation theory (Sokol, 2009), minority stress theory (Meyer, 2013) and life span theory, to analyze developmental trajectories in psychological functioning from adolescence to young adulthood in heterosexual and non-heterosexual populations. The research utilized data from the Michigan Study of Adolescent and Adult Life Transitions (MSALT), non-heterosexual young adults and which was compared with their heterosexual peers regarding their psychological development from the ages of 16 to 28.

According to Potki *et al.*, (2017), overall levels of alcohol consumption, depressive affect, social alienation and suicidal ideation are elevated for non-heterosexual young adolescents. For social alienation and depressive affect as well as suicidal ideation, the two groups grew separately throughout their high-school years but united after leaving high school. For alcohol consumption, a deviating trend appeared after high school. No variations were established for self-esteem. However, none of the interactions between gender and sexual orientation reached statistical significance. The

study results deviated from the previous studies in that it pointed toward a higher degree of complexity in developmental patterns. The study emphasizes the dynamic nature of mental health disparities and stresses the potential and the need to prevent psychological instability for non-heterosexual populations.

Globally, views on sexual orientation have gradually but substantially changed over the last decades, especially in the Western societies (Clarke, Ellis, Peel, & Riggs, 2010; Herek & Garnets, 2017). Meyer (2013) argues that, the categorization of same-sex sexual orientation as a psychopathology in the 19th century is a major shift from condemnation as a sin. This has further promoted the tolerance of homosexuality as being within the normal range of sexuality and identity (Meyer, 2013). However, despite the gradual acceptance of same-sex sexual attraction and behavior as within the normal human behavior, there is an evidence of elevated levels of psychological distress among homosexuals (Balsam, Beauchaine, Mickey, & Rothblum, 2015; Cochran, Sullivan, & Mays, 2013; King, *et al.*, 2018). An attempt for explanation of this phenomenon has placed focus on the distinction between same-sex sexual desires and behaviors, on the one hand, and the attributed minority status, on the other. Research has however, attributed most of the negative consequences and stress to condition of being in the minority status (Meyer, 2013; Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter, & Gwadz, 2012).

In Africa, individuals whose sexual orientation is homosexual are a minority group that differs from the majority with respect to sexuality, a rather tabooed aspect of life, non-heterosexual populations have been stigmatized and legally discriminated against in most cultures and era. Still in modern African societies that emphasize a practice of equivalent rights, same-sex sexual actions between consenting adults has frequently been criminalized (Dankwa, 2009; Essien & Aderinto, 2009). Prejudice

against non-heterosexuals is still a widespread phenomenon, and the risk of being bullied and victimized is substantially higher than it is for heterosexuals (Sandner, 2014; Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2012).

Sexual orientations that are not heterosexual are banned in Kenya, under the constitution (Kenya Law Reports, 2010). Even though some human rights groups are coming up in defense of homosexual sexual orientation, the phenomenon still faces great opposition (Nabwire, 2014). With the increasing population growth of youths in tertiary institutions however, same sex sexual orientation has been experienced. Even though the studies above give information on sexual orientation worldwide, in Africa, and in Kenya, there is limited literature on homosexuality in Thika Sub-County. This research study will bridge this research gap by conducting the study in Thika Sub-County. Additionally, there is scanty information on sexual orientation among students (Marshal, et al., 2011). This study will seek to fill this gap by examining psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

There is a rapid increase in the number of tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County thus leading to an increase in the number of youths. This increase in the population of young people is expected to bring in varied psychosocial impacts in developmental aspects of the students, such as sexual orientation, substance abuse, relationship issues and petty crimes. Sexual orientation is influenced by underlying factors affecting the young people's social and psychological lives (Meyer, 2013).

While the researcher was carrying out her practicum in one of the tertiary institution, she realized that there were cases of non-heterosexual relationships among the students at the institution. After engaging some of the students across several institutions in the Sub-County about sexual orientation, some opened up about factors that influence sexual orientation. Given that majority of the institutions in the Sub-County are tertiary institutions, challenges in sexual orientation are common among students in such institutions. Some of the most common factors mentioned by the students include trauma experienced during childhood as a result of maltreatment, sexual abuse, influence from close friends, and drug abuse. This revelation pushed the researcher into undertaking this study, in order to examine whether peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics and drug abuse sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

Studies on general psychological functioning and mental health of bisexual, gay, queer and lesbian (LGBQ) populations (including non-LGBQ self-identified populations of women who have sex with women (WSW) and men who have sex with men (MSM) are scarce, and even rarer are studies based on students' random samples (King, et al., 2018; Marshal, et al., 2011). Additionally, previous studies have focused on sexual orientations in the Western world, with few research studies having been conducted in Africa, specifically in Kenya (Felter & Renwick, 2019; Adamczyk & Cheng, 2015; Sandner, 2014). This research study will fill this gap in literature through an examination of psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

1. To determine the influence of peers on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.
2. To establish the influence of family background on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.
3. To examine the influence of multicultural dynamics, on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.
4. To determine the influence of drug abuse on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

#### **1.5 Hypotheses of the Study**

The following null hypothesis will be tested.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no statistically significant influence of peer influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no statistically significant influence of family background on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no statistically significant influence of multicultural dynamics on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no statistically significant influence of drug abuse on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

Oso and Onen (2009) aver that significance of the study refers to the relevance of the study in terms of academic contributions and practical use that might be made of the findings. It shows how the research benefits or impacts others in part or whole. It also highlights the contributions of the research to other researchers, practitioners and policy makers. The research study will be important to researchers, by acting as a point of reference for more research on psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation. The information will be important to counselors to enable them in coming up with effective ways to counsel students who are experiencing psychosocial challenges as a result of non-heterosexual sexual orientation. The research will also benefit various policy actors (including social organizations and the government) who focus on addressing the issue of sexual orientation. The study will be of great importance to the parents, educators and guardians, by helping them identify and prevent psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation, thus advise their children accordingly.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is the geographical area and methodological boundary within which the study operates (Marylin & Goes, 2013). This research study was conducted in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. Specifically, the researcher targeted tertiary institutions in the Sub-County, and a representative sample of the institutions was randomly selected. The study targeted students in the tertiary institutions. The independent variables were: peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics, and drug abuse, while the dependent variable is sexual orientation.

### **1.9 Delimitations of the Study**

This particular study was limited in scope to students enrolled in tertiary institutions around Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The researcher did not therefore, interview students from institutions that were outside the sub-county. Secondly, the study was limited to tertiary institutions, meaning that students in other types of institutions were not involved in the study. Additionally, the study was limited in that not all tertiary institutions were engaged during the research process mainly due to logistical constraints.

### **1.10 Limitations of the Study**

This research study was likely to encounter a number of limitations. The researcher was aware that some of the targeted respondents might not give honest information on sexual orientation, due to the sensitive nature of the information. However, the researcher and research assistants assured confidentiality of the data gathered from the respondents. Further, the researcher did not only target respondents with non-heterosexual orientations, but also those who were heterosexual. This was important in avoiding the profiling of study respondents.

### **1.11 Assumptions of the Study**

During the study the researcher made the following assumptions. There is a relationship between psychosocial factors and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The data will be relevant and useful for informing on psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students.



## **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

Kombo and Tromp (2006) explicates that, theoretical framework serves to give an explanation of the phenomena as well as clarification of why things happen and appear the way they are. They further posit that theoretical framework enables the researcher to conceptualize the topic in its entirety as an outcome of the larger society. As such, the researcher acknowledges avoids viewing the problem from a narrow personalized self-centeredness and prejudiced stance. In this study, the following theories were used to explain the variables: The Sexual Orientation Theory, the Durkheim's Social Integration theory, and the Labelling theory as explained in the section below.

### **1.12.1 Sexual Orientation Theory**

The sexual orientation theory was formulated by several developmental psychologists and advocated by several partisans and social advocates. According to Sexual Orientation Theory, a person's sexual preferences are immutable and thus, should be accepted by society (Whitehead, 2016). Researchers on human genes state that humans exercise free will when making their behavioral choices and therefore, they should be held accountable. They further observe that a person has at least a 10% genetic influence in thinking and behavior- simply because in the absence of genes, human activity or behavior of any kind would not exist (Whitehead , 2016).

According to Whitehead (2016), sexual orientation theory promotes a context in which heterosexuality and homosexuality hold equal status. It therefore follows that the notion of equivalency between heterosexuality and homosexuality is crucial to "gay" cause. The sexual orientation theory defuses the safety and health arguments against the legitimization of homosexuality. Heterosexuality is indisputable unlike

homosexuality. Whitehead (2016) argues that to regard heterosexuality as merely sexual conduct between people of well-matched genders is to quash a fundamental truth of what to be human entails. It is a fact that all human beings with the exception of hermaphrodites (people with both male and female genitalia due to congenital deformity) are born with a reproductive system that is heterosexual by nature. Thus, one is either female or male as reflected in natural order. It is because of chemical and other processes rooted in procreative heterosexual form that people experience sexual feelings. Thus, it is self-evidently natural and normal for a female 'sexual orientation' towards a male (or vice versa). Conversely, a female-to-female 'orientation' or male-to-male is self-evidently unnatural and abnormal, a form of sexual disorientation.

The sexual orientation theory sufficiently defines sexual orientation. The strength of the theory in this research is that it tends to point out that sexual orientation occurs naturally. The theory therefore points out to the fact that sexual orientation can be influenced. In that regard, this research will check whether psychosocial factors have an impact on sexual orientation. This theory does not, however, consider the impact of the pressure experienced from the society on the beliefs and choices that individuals make. This pressure adversely affects the psychosocial aspects of people, and might significantly influence sexual orientation. The Durkheim's Social Integration Theory, as explained below, takes into account the impact from families, friends, cultures, social groups and institutions, and the influence that they have on people's lives and decisions.

### **1.12.2 Durkheim's Social Integration Theory**

This research study inclines to Durkheim's social integration theory (Turner, 1981) and the sexual prejudice concept, in this case referred to as heterosexism. This is to examine the association between psychosocial factors and sexual orientation. In a bid to interpret the Durkheim theory into substantive theoretical principles, McGeorge & Stone-Carlson (2011) describe social integrations as a matter of being attached to group morals, that is values, norms and ideas.

According to the theory, human beings have immense pressure from the society. Therefore, how a group of unseen institutions including norms, values and beliefs influence how people live, and the choices they make. Concrete institutions including families, religious affiliations, schools, social groups also have an impact on people's lives and decisions. The psychosocial institutes have effects on attitude change through continuous relations and interdependence, which lead to the creation of an integrated society. Different aspects of heterosexism are propagated by these factors leading to an ideological system that stigmatizes and denies homosexuals usually on the grounds of norms and values, customary beliefs and consequently on attitudes and perceptions towards non-heterosexual individuals (McGeorge & Stone-Carlson, 2011; Adela, 2010).

Durkheim believed that individuals were normally under powerful pressure from society to conform. According to Durkheim, people's values, beliefs, and norms make up a collective consciousness, or a shared way of behaving and understanding in the world. The collective consciousness creates social integration and binds individuals together. Durkheim viewed increasing population density as a crucial factor in the advent of modernity. The society becomes more complex as the number of people in a given area increases.

Kushner & Sterk (2005) used the Durkheim theory to study the limits of social capital, considering suicide and social cohesion. The researchers stated that recent applications of social capital theories to population health often draw on classic sociological theories for validation of the protective features social cohesion and social integration. The authors of the theory argued that Durkheim's work on sexual orientation has been cited as evidence that modern life disrupts traditional social norms and results in a greater probability of affecting sexual orientation. A close reading of Durkheim's evidence supports the conclusion that the incidence of abnormal behaviors such as homosexuality is often greatest among those with high levels of social integration.

In summary, the Social Integration theory's strength in this study is that it points out to the fact that pressure from social interactions such as family, friends, strangers and social institutions could influence sexual orientation of people. This theory adequately explains that increased socialization with peers, friends and the society in general significantly influences the choices that people make. Such choices have an impact on sexual orientation of individuals. However, the theory is weak in this case since it does not explain how the society perceives people who act or react differently from what is normally or naturally expected. In that regard, the researcher considered the Labelling theory which explains labelling of deviant actions by the society. The theory is as explained below.

### **1.12.3 Labeling Theory**

The labeling theory is based on the meanings that individuals derive from other people's actions, reactions, symbols or labels. The theory was developed by Howard Becker in 1963. The labeling theory holds that actions are deviant only when a society

labels them deviant. Therefore, following members of a given society who view certain actions as deviant and assign the label to certain individuals, determines whether a certain behavior is deviant or non-deviant. The labeling theory enquires who applies what label to whom, the reason behind the labeling, and the results of such labeling (Becker, 2018). In this study, the Labeling theory is critical in explaining how different societies view non-heterosexual sexual orientations. While in some cases the orientations are fairly acceptable as explained in the background section of this study, some cultures consider them unacceptable and deviant.

Becker (2018) states that individuals who are mostly labeled in a society include those addicted to drugs, alcohol addicts, convicts, sex predators, retarded individuals and psychic patients. The results of labeling an individual could have huge effects than anticipated. Previous research has revealed that individuals who are negatively labeled tend to have low self-esteem, could highly reject themselves, and might even act more abnormal due to labeling. Regrettably, individuals who have labeled others (either negatively or positively), find it difficult to re-label the individuals even when there is enough information to show that the labeling is incorrect.

Advocates of the labeling theory, back the theory's insistence of the importance that the labeled people's attitudes and reactions have on growth of deviance. However, opponents of the labeling theory hold that the theory only applies to few deviants, because such people have actually been labeled as deviants. This group of individuals also argues that the concepts of the theory are not clear, and therefore cannot be scientifically tested and proved (Bernburg, Krohn, & Rivera, 2006).

Barrick (2014) conducted a study to review the Labeling theory. Barrick pointed out that deviance has been one of the main pillars of the sociological school of thought. The interactionist method in deviance has clarified the deviance phenomenon that has

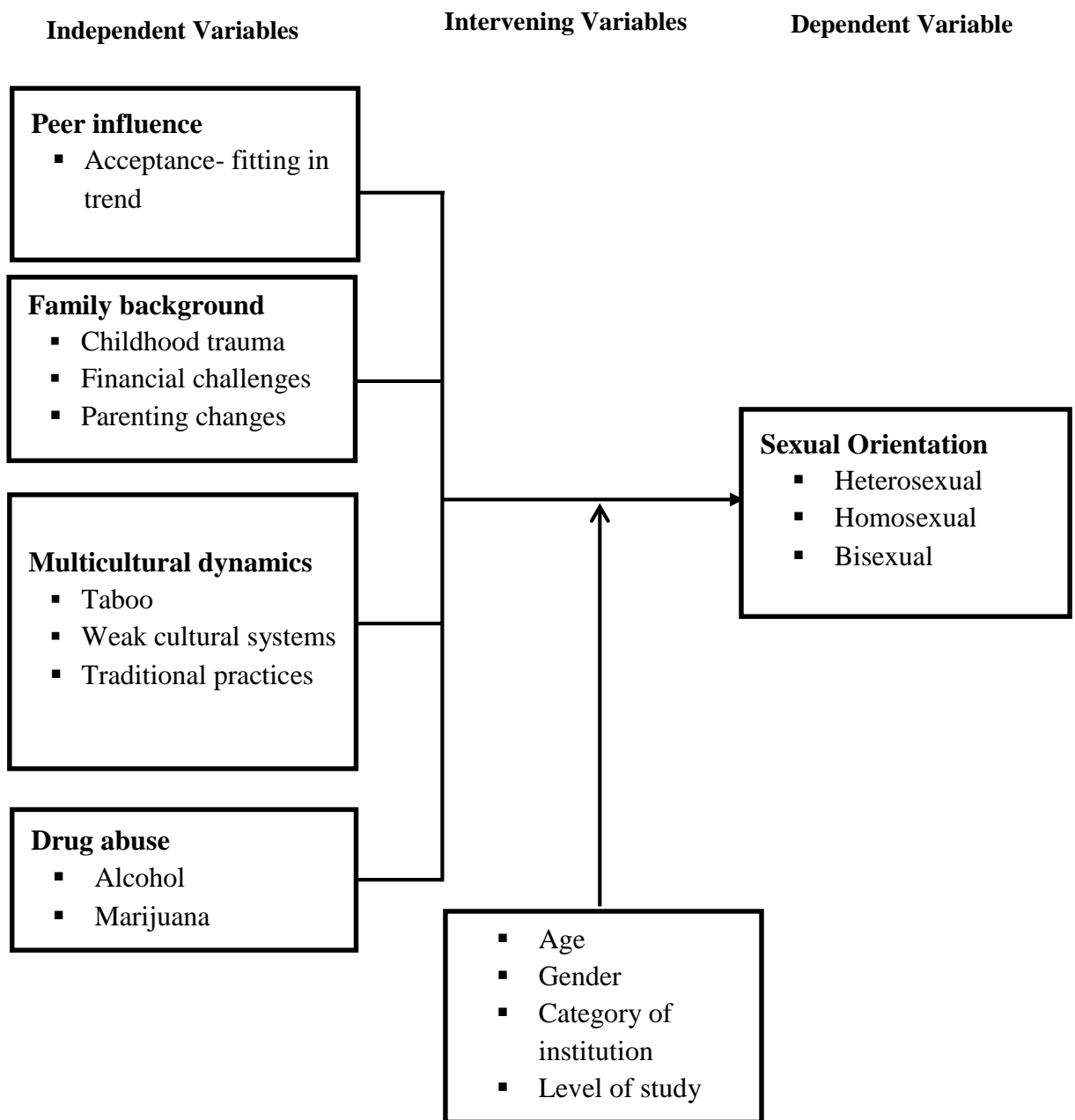
been studied over time, as well as provided a clear shot on how people view deviance. Labeling, which is an act that is practiced by moral watchdogs, cannot be used as the only explanation behind how deviant individuals act. It would be very misinformed to assume that crooks carry out harmful activities just because someone labeled them as crooks, or that homosexuals carry out homosexual activities because people labeled them as homosexuals. The labeling theory, therefore, focuses on more factors other than the act of labeling.

In summary, the Labelling theory's strength in this study is that it proposes that individuals could change their orientations based on the labels they receive from other people (Researcher, 2020). Specifically, when the society labels an individual's sexual orientation as deviant, then the person is likely to hold onto the 'deviant sexual orientation'. This therefore points out to the fact that labels from social interactions could lead to psychological changes that cement a certain sexual orientation. The researcher will attempt to confirm this ideology by checking whether psychosocial factors influence sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

### **1.13 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework provides a clear concept of the areas in which meaningful relationships are likely to exist which may work in conjunction with goals of your study (Cargan, 2007). Conceptual framework shows the relationship between variables of the study and it is represented diagrammatically (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Kamau & Njau, 2011). The conceptual framework shows the interrelatedness of independent variables peer pressure (indicated by fitting trend), family background (indicated by childhood trauma, financial challenges and parenting changes), multicultural dynamics (indicated by taboo, weak cultural systems and traditional

practices) and drug abuse (use of alcohol and Marijuana) and the dependent variable, sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual). The interaction of independent and dependent variables have an impact psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students. It is further conceptualized by the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is influenced by age, gender, category of institution and level of study (intervening variables).



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework for Psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in terry institutions**



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter suitably reviews the current literature on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The independent variables are: peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics, and drug abuse, while the dependent variable is sexual orientation. The empirical literature review is in accordance to the study objectives. Therefore, the chapter will have sections on: peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics, and drug abuse. The chapter closes with the summary of the reviewed literature and research gaps.

#### **2.2 Review of Literature**

This section reviews literature according to the objectives of the study. There are four sections on peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics and drug abuse, in relation to sexual orientation.

##### **2.2.1 Peer Influence and Sexual Orientation**

The belief that peers are engaging in sexual behavior is one of the consistent predictor of adolescents' engagement in sexual activities (Widman *et al.*, 2016). However, some youth overcome such peer influence and become instrumental in mentoring their susceptible peers. Identification of adolescents at risk of negative health outcomes require a thorough understanding of individual differences in susceptibility to peer influence. Widman *et al.* (2016) study aimed at identifying predictors of susceptibility to peer influence using a novel performance-based measure of sexual risk-taking. The study involved 300 adolescents. A performance based measure of peer

influence susceptibility was achieved by comparing the changes in private sexual scenarios and responses during the public chat room. The study findings showed that 78% of youth provided more open responses in the chat room than in private sexual scenarios. Further, it was found that gender was the most robust predictor of this change where boys were significantly more susceptible to peer influence than girls. Boys with late pubertal development and mostly African American had significant interactions and greater susceptibility. It was also noted that susceptibility to peer influence varied among the youth. Consistent with sexual script theory, girls were found to present lower susceptibility to social pressure in regard to sexual behavior than boys.

Golshirazian *et al.*, (2015) conducted a research study to examine empirical and theoretical research on how peers teach each other about gender roles and gender relations. This research was enriched with childhood information as contained in articles written by students, from upper division classes at two public universities. The study involved 65 students who were asked to narrate and post their daily experiences with sexism, racism and homophobia to an online class forum. The data collection instrument comprised of 22 articles that were coded into five categories namely; race, peer influence in play activities, sexual identity, evaluation of non-conforming behavior as deviant and the impact of “popularity”. The outcome suggested that peer groups is a primary influence on sexual identity construction among adolescents and children. Further, peer group influence starts in preschool and continues as children go through school and expand as their social world widens. This influence reinforces activities involved in academic success, play, popularity, dress and body image and continues throughout the life cycle.

Delay *et al.*, (2018) stated that young individuals actively evaluate their identities as they grow, and sexual orientation identity has been found to be one of the

most salient and central identities of concern. Unfortunately, peer victimization in form of homophobic name calling happens to most of the youth. It is however, not clear how the youth internalize these peer messages as well as influencing their sexual identity. A study that involved 299 students where female constituted 53% aimed at assessing the role of homophobic name calling on changes over the course of an academic year in students' sexual identity. The study findings showed that students experienced homophobic name calling, peer relationships, sexual identity. Further, Longitudinal social network analyses revealed that there occurred changes in sexual identity over time as a result of homophobic name calling early in the school year.

The results from Delay *et al.*, (2018) supported the “looking glass self” hypothesis that homophobic name calling was a significant predictor of students' less identification with their own-gender peers and marginally more with other-gender peers over the course of an academic year. Further, the effects held after controlling for participant characteristics such as social network features, gender and peer experiences such as victimization. Thus, homophobic name calling emerged as a key factor in changing students' sexual identity. Students internalized the messages they received from peers and which influenced them in construction of their own gender identity.

Influences from social associations play a huge role in young people's development and behavior (Mednick, Christakis, & Fowler, 2010). For instance, research has shown that young individuals tend to take more risks in the presence of their peers compared to when they are alone (Gardner & Steinberg, 2005). Premature romantic affairs, which form a strong part of development among young people, are strongly affected by associations among peers especially among the heterosexual young adults. Networks formed among friends are crucial in determining the organization and quality of dating relationships among young adults. For instance, previous research has

found out that the number of friends of opposite sex among children in the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grades significantly forecasted the possibility of adolescents being in romantic affairs during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The amount of support received, and amount of conflicts in preceding friendships determine the quality of such romantic relationships among young people (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007).

Additionally, research has proved that several occurrences including being lonely, depressed, alcoholism, smoking and obesity are carried forward from adolescence into adult social relationships (Rosenquist, Murabito, Fowler, & Christakis, 2010). This form of influence from social relationships would be more pronounced in young people, considering the amount of effect that peer influence has on their conduct. From previously conducted studies, it is not clear whether social networks affect all forms of sexual relationships or whether they affect some specific conducts and attitudes (Mednick, Christakis, & Fowler, 2010; Sieving , Eisenberg, Pettingel, & Skay, 2006; Gardner & Steinberg, 2005).

Majority of the research studies on growth of early sexual affairs are inclined to heterosexual sexual orientation (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007; Sieving , Eisenberg, Pettingel, & Skay, 2006; Rosenquist, Murabito, Fowler, & Christakis, 2010). Therefore, there is scanty information on the growth of homosexual orientations. This means that there is inadequate proof that the growth of homosexual sexual orientation is similar or different from the orientation of heterosexuals. This research study will therefore focus on adding more information to the existing knowledge on factors influencing sexual orientation. Specifically, the research study will aim at finding out whether peer influence has an impact on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

### **2.2.2 Family Background and Influence on Sexual Orientation**

According to Roberts, Glymour & Koenen (2013) epidemiological studies point to positive association between neglect, sexual and physical abuse witnessed in childhood and homosexual sexual orientation in adulthood. Nonetheless, studies on direct assessment of connection between these diverse types of maltreatment and sexuality, have not been able to establish the causal direction because of the difficulty and uncertainty involved in the sequencing of maltreatment and emerging sexuality. It was also established that the influence of sexual abuse on women sexual orientation were substantially lower than on men. Thus, the results suggested that the impetus behind the association between sexual orientation and childhood abuse may be bidirectional, may differ by sex and by the type of abuse. Better understanding of this potentially complex causal structure is crucial in development of targeted strategies to reduce sexual orientation differentials in regard to abuse exposure. In that regard, the current study will use data collected from students in tertiary institutions to check whether family background influences sexual orientation.

Separation from parents has adverse effects on children. These effects include short term consequences of the separation, as well as long-term effects that spill into the adult life of children. Some of the reported effects include adverse influences on the cognitive capacity, education, physical, emotional and mental health, social interactions and behavior, interpersonal relationships, criminal activities, smoking cigarettes, abusing drugs, escaping from home at an early age, sexual interests, as well as early pregnancies (Ellis, et al., 2003; Lianne, Fergusson, & Horwood, 2001). Early marriages, marriage break-ups, single parenting, poor jobs, financial difficulties, unhealthy relationships with parents, being unhappy, lack of satisfaction with life, lack of trust in

people and low levels of endurance are other effects of separation from the parents (Amato & DeBoer, 2001).

Epidemiological studies find a positive association between childhood maltreatment and homosexual orientation in adulthood, with lesbians and gay men reporting 1.6 to 4 times greater prevalence of sexual and physical abuse than heterosexuals (Roberts, Austin, Corliss, Vandermorris, & Koenen, 2010). Research has proposed four justifications for this relationship. The first justification points out that signs of same sex sexuality lead to mistreatment of children in two ways: Young individuals who reveal their sexual orientation as homosexual are targeted and mistreated (Saewyc, et al., 2006); and young adults who assess homosexual activities might put themselves at risks thus increasing the chances of being mistreated (Corliss, et al., 2010). The second justification points to the fact that children with homosexual acts display abnormal sexual behaviors during early days, and are therefore targeted by other people and mistreated (Alanko, *et al.*, 2010).

Thirdly, the relationship could be explained by differences in remembrance of sexual mistreatment due to sexual orientation. The differences in this case are explained by either self-recollection while coming out of the closet, or due to differences in the readiness to accept stigmatizing occurrences (Corliss, *et al.*, 2010). The fourth justification is that sexual mistreatment could lead to an increase in the occurrence of homosexuality. To this end, four propositions have been made: sexual mistreatment might lead to the loss of self-esteem and create an identity full of stigma in the victims. This might therefore lead to the mistreated people adopting a sexual identity of the minority sexual alignment (Saewyc, et al., 2006). Another proposition is that sexual abuse by older men leads to young boys believing that they are homosexual; sexual abuse of girls by male perpetrators causes victims to be aversive to sexual relationships

with men and sexual abuse of boys by men “teaches” homosexuality (Marvasti & Dripchak, 2004).

A research study was carried out by Dolezal and Carballo-Diequez (2002), using a descriptive research design and data was gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire. The data was gathered from approximately 1,000 homosexual men. The research findings showed that more than 35% of the respondents were coerced or lured into having sex with older and socially powerful people, before they turned 19 years old. Approximately 95% of these older people were men. Such sexual harassment significantly influences sexual orientation among the young people in later ages. From these findings, it is correct to assume that there could be a connection between sexual abuse during childhood and homosexual tendencies. Research has also proven that in addition to same-sex orientation, gay men who recall being sexually abused during their childhood days were found to be having more alcohol-related problems compared to men who were not abused as kids (Dolezal & Carballo-Diequez, 2002). This study shows that sexual maltreatment during childhood significantly influences sexual orientation in adulthood. The current study will add onto this literature by assessing whether family background as a whole influences sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

### **2.2.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

History of human kind is awash with many references to sexual orientation, however, it is noteworthy that the same-sex orientations are normally regarded as deviations by different cultures, and in many cases, are punished or discriminated against. Despite the noted attitude change among people from different countries in the world, same-sex remains controversial and it still attracts brutal

reprisals in some countries (Vance, 2011). Of critical concern is the controversy arising from the aspect of whether or not same gender sexual attraction is natural or a matter of choice. In some countries, the tendency of men gayism is attributed to scarcity of women of marrying age. However, it has been found that among all cultures, same-sex sexual activities exist at varying degree of prevalence, even when numbers of both genders are comparable (Vance, 2011).

Research has shown that culturally and socially based stress that emanates from discrimination can lead to impairment of psychosocial functioning as well as substantial risk factor for certain psychosocial disorders (Dohrenwend, 2000). Drawing on stigma, and general stress theory and general social psychological models of prejudice, Meyer (2013) proposed a minority stress theory focusing on LGBTQ. He identified three mechanisms that are potentially responsible for non-heterosexual minority status turning into a stress factor: the anticipation of prejudice-related events and the costs of concealment, victimization arising from the experience of prejudice-related events, and the homophobia internalization. The encounter of prejudice-related events such as discrimination at social settings, physical and verbal physical aggression (Meyer, 2013).

Shoveller *et al.*, (2014) found out that the dynamics that shape sexual orientation at the population level are based on the interplay between the more “upstream” forces that shape our social contexts and the individual. The study involved 18 to 24 year olds living on one urban Canadian community and the other in rural. The researchers examined how social context shaped their perceptions and experiences pertaining to sexual behavior. Among other findings, the study found that young people’s sexual orientation is significantly influenced by socio-cultural factors.



Blackwood (2012) points out that heterosexual orientation is not the only type of sexual behavior, and that sexual orientation far reaching than what individuals normally find eye-catching. Blackwood found out that in the Lesotho culture, young girls have sexual relations with older girls. In these cases, older girls act as mentors to the young girls, and therefore sexual activities are carried out in line with the mentorship ideology. Such relationships continue as a cycle, where the young girls grow up into mentors to other younger girls in sexual matters, courtship, and other aspects of their traditions. This happens even when the older girl is married to a man. Such traditional forms of sexual relationships are accepted within the aforementioned culture, since they mirror their traditions. However, the practices are highly distanced from existing ideas of sex in the Western culture.

Bertosa (2009) found out that another prevalent instance of same sex mentorship is present among men in ancient Greece, where older men trained young boys and had sexual affairs with them. In those particular relationships, the younger man was the passive sexual partner until he attained the age of 20 years. After that, the man now assumed more dominant and active sexual responsibilities. In classical Greece therefore, homosexual relationships were established but only for the purposes of a homosocial livelihood, where a man was naturally expected to form close ties of homosexual kinds with another man. However, a close investigation of the culture in the nation led to the discovery that same-sex orientations among men were assumed to be natural. In this regard, research pointed out that the family pressure bestowed on men due to responsibilities, lack of sexual relationships with women outside the marital homes, lack of a bad term for homosexual relations, and the hyper-sexual norm in Greek the culture made close bonds between men generally acceptable.

Through religion and other linked beliefs, some cultural settings accord an exceptional significance to sexual associations. For instance Wardlow, (2007) found out that in Papua Guinea genital fluids have special cultural meanings. The male semen is seen as a sanctified and pure embodiment of masculinity, while the female's sexual fluid is considered poisonous particularly to the males. Therefore, intersexual associations could be limited to few occasions, more so at appropriate ages for procreation purposes only. This practice could be viewed as a homosexual behavior in the western culture. However, the practice is an established tradition for the aforementioned Papua Guinea culture. When the young men grow up into older men, they pass on the tradition by sharing their own sexual fluid with the next generation.

The information above tends to bring out an association between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation. However, there is still scanty information on multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among young people in tertiary institutions located in Thika Sub-County. For that reason, this research study aims at finding out how multicultural dynamics influence sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

#### **2.2.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

Medley at al. (2016) observes that a number of federally funded surveys have embarked on studies focusing on sexual orientation and gender identification. According to the surveys conducted, it has emerged that the sexual minorities have higher prevalence of substance use disorders (SUDs) and substance abuse than heterosexuals. A 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, people in the category of LGBT were found to be more than twice as likely as heterosexuals to have used an illicit drug in a year's time (Medley, et al., 2016). The report established that 30.7 % of

LGBT used marijuana in the past one year as compared to 12.9 % of heterosexual adults. Only about 4.5% of heterosexuals abused prescription pain relievers as compared to about 10.4 % sex orientation minorities.

A survey conducted by U.S. Census Bureau in 2013, established that the percentage of LGBT adults between 18 and 64 who reported binge drinking (five or more drinks on a single occasion) was more than in heterosexual adults (Ward , Dahlhamer , Galinsky , & Joestl , 2014). Further, the LGBT people indulged in SUDs initiated alcohol consumption earlier than their heterosexual counterparts (McCabe , West , Hughes , & Boyd , 2013). In a similar study, LGB adolescents were 90 percent more likely to use substances than heterosexual adolescents. The difference was more pronounced in some subcategories of population such as bisexuals. Lesbian and bisexual females misused substances at four times the rate of their heterosexual counterparts while bisexual adolescents used substances at 3.4 times the rate of heterosexual adolescents (Marshal , Friedman , & Stall , 2008).

Generally, the health conducts of students in colleges have been extensively researched over time, and the findings obtained from such research studies provide a significant reason for concerns (Green & Feinstein, 2012). For instance, the average rate of smoking among adults generally has steadily reduced. However, the rate of smoking among the college students has risen substantially over time. This is alarming since research has previously shown that the rate of smoking is lower among adults who have college education compared to adults with a lower education attainment. Another area of concern is in alcohol uptake. Research has found out that over 40% of students in tertiary institutions are engaged in spree drinking, and approximately 20% of the youth were involved in the drinking behavior frequently (Slater, Godette, Huang, Ruan, & Kerridge, 2017).

According to the findings, uptake of alcohol was linked to several other problems such as absconding classes, carrying out unsafe sex practices, drink driving, and in general taking part in activities that are regrettable in future. Lastly, the research findings revealed that approximately half of the students in tertiary institutions have used marijuana previously, with approximately 15% of the students having used the drug recently. These statistics are comparable to recent use among young adults aged 18 to 25 years old (Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, & Lee, 2000; Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000).

According to Kerr and Oglesby, (2017) , gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) individuals use drugs and other stimulants such as alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and others at an approximate rate of 2 to 4 times more than the general population (Kerr & Oglesby, 2017). The reason behind substance abuse among this group of people is the stigma, mistreatment, and discrimination that they continually receive from the general population. According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the maltreatment that is directed to the individuals practicing same- sex activities is stressful to them, and they are therefore pushed into using substances to escape the depressive feelings that they experience frequently (Centre for Addiction & Mental Health, 2006).

Corliss *et al.*, (2010) stated that the purity and effect of substances cannot be put in check when a substance is not regulated, and this puts the users at high risks of over dosage or sickness. Substance abuse might also put users into other social risks such as discrimination from society, falling into criminal gangs, and being stigmatized. In that regard therefore, drug or substance abusers are always reluctant to discuss about their conditions even with health officers. While it is true that substance abuse might lead to harm to the users or other people around, it is also crucial to note that substance

abuse could be also an avenue of escaping suffering especially mentally (Corliss, et al., 2010).

LGBT sub category of people have a higher likelihood of experiencing a substance use disorder (SUD) in their lifetime than non-LGBT persons (McCabe , West , Hughes , & Boyd , 2013). Treatment of sexual orientation minorities for SUD has presented numerous challenges. However, some modalities in treatment of SUD such as contingency management, social support therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and motivational interviewing, have been effectively applied (Green & Feinstein, 2012). It has also been established that sexual minorities with SUDs are more prone to have comorbidity or co-occurring psychiatric disorders. For instance, lesbian, gay, bisexual women and bisexual men report greater frequency of depression and mental distress than their heterosexual counterparts (Gonzales & Henning-Smith, 2017). Similarly, children and adolescents associated with sexual orientation minorities have greater levels of self-harm, suicidality, eating disorders and depression than their non-transgender counterparts (Connolly , Zervos , Barone , Johnson , & Joseph , 2016). Therefore, it is incumbent to screen LGBT people in SUD treatment for other psychiatric problems so as to treat these conditions concurrently.

Substance use might cause physical or emotional pain yes, but it might also be an avenue towards socialization with similar people to gain social support and acceptance. It is therefore crucial to decipher substance use according to an individual's personal life. This is especially useful for the LGBTQ individuals who are faced with high levels of stigmatization and social discrimination (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000).

There is limited research on substance abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Research studies conducted on LGBTQ college students

utilize small samples, thus the results might not be sufficiently generalizable. For that reason, this research study will use a sufficient sample size to determine how drug abuse influences sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

### **2.3 Summary of Literature Review and Gaps**

Majority of the research studies on sexual orientations are inclined to heterosexual associations, thus there is scanty information on the growth of homosexual orientation (Hair, Park, Ling, & Moore, 2009; Steinberg & Monahan, 2007; Rosenquist, Murabito, Fowler, & Christakis, 2010). There is therefore, inadequate proof that the factors influencing growth of homosexual relationships are different from the ones influencing growth of heterosexual relationships. As opposed to having evidence on psychological factors influencing heterosexual relationships, research studies have not yet found out any substantive links between psychological factors and sexual orientations.

Researches that have been conducted among students in tertiary institutions have used small samples, thus making the results difficult to generalize. Much of the research that has been done in this area of study was done in the western countries, with minimal research studies conducted in Africa and especially East Africa. This research study therefore sought to fill the aforementioned gaps, by using data gathered from students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County. The researcher therefore collected sufficient data that enabled the exploration of psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

Additionally, previous studies have focused on sexual orientations in the Western world, with few research studies having been conducted in Africa, specifically

in Kenya (Felter, &Renwick, 2019; Adamczyk & Cheng, 2015; Sandner, 2014). This research study was to fill this gap in literature through an examination of psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology and design adopted for this study. Specifically, the chapter outlines the research methodology, research design, target population, study location, sample and sampling procedures, pretesting, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments. The chapter culminates with delineation of data analysis techniques and ethical consideration.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Creswell (2012) defines a research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problem. It constitutes the blue print for the collection of measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2014). This research study adopted the correlational research design, which assessed the relationships between selected study variables. For this research study, the relationship between independent and dependent variables was assessed. The dependent variable was sexual orientation. The independent variables were: peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics and drug abuse. These independent variables in this case, were assumed to influence sexual orientations among students in tertiary institutions.

#### **3.3 Research Site**

The importance of research site is to identify where the actual site and data will be collected (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This research study was conducted in Thika Sub-County, which is approximately 45 kilometres from Nairobi. Specifically, the researcher targeted tertiary institutions in the area. The research site was selected owing



to the fact that the number of tertiary institutions is on the rise in Thika Sub-County. This increase in the number of young people is expected to cause some social complexities such as homosexual orientations (Kushner & Sterk, 2005). When the researcher was conducting her practicum, several cases of non-heterosexual orientation were reported in the institution, thus raising the need to conduct the study in Thika Sub-County.

### **3.4 Target Population**

According to Singh (2007), population is a group of individual, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The research study targeted students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County. The age of students in tertiary institutions is considered a transitional age between adolescence and adulthood. This group of individuals is highly vulnerable to self-identity issues. The group is especially vulnerable to peer pressure, effects of poor upbringing in their families, cultural changes and drug abuse (Hair, Park, Ling, & Moore, 2009; Rosenquist, Murabito, Fowler, & Christakis, 2010). These factors in turn could influence sexual orientation among the young individuals. For that reason, the study used data captured from the students to assess whether the aforementioned factors have an impact on sexual orientations.

### **3.5 Study Sample**

According to Kothari (2004), census deals with the whole population or entire population.

### 3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

A two-stage sampling procedure was used to select a sample of students from tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County. First, four tertiary institutions (private and public) was randomly selected from a list of tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County. Secondly, random sampling was used to select students from the target tertiary institutions. The selected institutions were Jodan College of Technology, Thika Institute of Business studies, Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences and Thika Technical Training Institute (TTTI). The Sample size was determined using the Cochran sample size formula (Cochran, 1977).

### 3.5.2 Study Sample Size

The target population size was 13,100 students (4,500 in Jodan College of Technology; 5,000 in Thika Technical Training Institute; 1,500 in Thika Institute of Business Studies; and 2,100 in Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences). The sample size was calculated using the Cochran sample size formula as given below:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{(n_0-1)}{N}}$$

Where:

$n_0 = 385$ : Cochran's sample size recommendation (Cochran, 1977).

$N =$  Population size = 13,100 students

Therefore,

$$n = \frac{385}{1 + \frac{(385-1)}{13,100}} = 374$$

Thus, the sample size for this study was 374 students. The sample size was divided proportionally among the four tertiary institutions as given in the table below.

**Table 3.1 Sample Size Distribution**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Population size (N)</b>	<b>Population proportion</b>	<b>Sample size (n)</b>
Jodan College of Technology	4,500	0.34	128
Thika Technical Training Institute	5,000	0.38	143
Thika Institute of Business Studies	1,500	0.11	43
Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences	2,100	0.16	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>374</b>

### **3.6 Data Collection**

The section below outlines development of the research instrument, pilot testing the instrument, instrument reliability, and the instrument validity.

#### **3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments**

The data collection instrument for this research study was a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed according to the research objectives. Specifically, the questionnaire was divided into six sections. The first section measured the study respondents' demographic variables; the second section assessed sexual orientation among the students. This section was measured using a modified Klein Sexual Orientation Grid. The third section measured peer influence, the fourth section assessed family background, the fifth section measured multicultural dynamics, while the sixth section measured drug abuse among the students in tertiary institutions.

#### **3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments**

According to research, 10% to 30% of the calculated sample size is enough for pilot tests (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, a number equal to 10% of the target sample size

(37 students ) was used for pilot testing. Pilot testing was conducted at Uzuri Institute. The respondents were guided into understanding the questionnaire questions. The pilot test was helpful in correcting any errors that were found in the questionnaire. Secondly, the test informed on validity and reliability of the research study questionnaire.

### 3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

In this case, the questionnaire's reliability was measured using the Cronbach's alpha. Research has proven that the higher the Cronbach alpha value, the more reliable an instrument is for social sciences. Cronbach alpha of values of more than 0.7, which is considered to be an acceptable reliability (Brown, 2002), were obtained for all study variables. Additionally, sexual orientation was measured using a modified Klein Sexual Orientation Grid. This tool has previously been tested and found reliable.

**Table 3.2 Cronbach Alpha Test**

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
Sexual orientation	15	0.814
Peer Influence	6	0.733
Multicultural Dynamics	5	0.871
Family Background	6	0.752
Drug Abuse	5	0.813

Source (Researcher, 2020)

### 3.6.4 Instrument Validity

The research instrument's validity was determined through pre-testing. That is, pilot testing enabled the researcher to check whether the research questionnaire answered all the research questions in line with the given study objectives. Content validity was measured, to ensure the instrument answered all the research questions in line with the given research objectives. Additionally, the supervisors' expert validation

and other university research experts were used for validation. In this regard, their opinion was used to improve the instruments.

### **3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures**

This research used the questionnaires and KII informants guide as the instrument of data collection method. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions or items intended to capture responses from respondents in a standardized manner (Bhattacharjee, 2012). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a questionnaire is used to obtain information about a population. The researcher visited the tertiary institutions prior to data collection day to obtain permission to carry out the research in the institutions and also to obtain the information from registrar's office on the target population.

The questionnaires were distributed to the target population in Thika Institute of Business studies, Jodan College, Thika Technical Training Institute and Thika School of Medial and Health sciences. The researcher planned for the appropriate time to administer data. The researcher trained one research assistant from each institution who assisted in administering the questionnaires in the institution. The researcher used semi-structured questionnaire and KII informants' interview guide for collecting data from the population. The advantage of the interview method is that there is an in-depth response from the respondent and one can probe the respondents (Kothari, 2004). The questionnaires were issued and collected at a later day. Face to face interviews were conducted with the respondents at a convenient time. The researcher obtained permission from the NACOSTI and institutions authorities to conduct the research.

The researcher factored the following in constructing a questionnaire the first part of the questionnaire measured the study respondents' demographic variables; the

second section assessed sexual orientation among the students. This section was measured using a modified Klein Sexual Orientation Grid. The third section measured peer influence, the fourth section assessed family background, the fifth section measured multicultural dynamics, while the sixth section measured drug abuse among the students in tertiary institutions.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The research used both qualitative and quantitative statistics to analyze data. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) explain that descriptive statistics enables the researcher to give meaningful description of scores or measurements using a few indices or statistics. Data processing before analysis involved data cleaning (checking for and removing errors, outliers and missing entries), organizing the data, and then coding data using numerical values. After processing the data was entered into the Social Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 25, for analysis.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Objectives of the study was answered using chi-square tests, which was conducted at an  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance. The objectives sought to determine whether peer influence, family background, multicultural dynamics, and drug abuse influences sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results from data analysis were presented using figures and tables.

### **3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations**

For legal and ethical purposes, the researcher sought permission from relevant bodies before conducting the research. First, the researcher sought research clearance from the Africa Nazarene University (ANU) board of research. The researcher then

sought permission to conduct research from the target tertiary institutions (Jodan College of Technology and Thika Technical Training Institute). Additionally, a research permit was sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

Written consents were then sought from the respondents of the study. The researcher made it clear that participation in the research exercise was totally voluntary, and one could therefore choose to either participate or not. The researcher clearly explained the purpose of the research study, and the reason behind selecting the given target respondents. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the collected information, which only be used for the purposes of the research. Data collection was conducted in private for each research respondent. Contact information was not collected from the study respondents; the questionnaires was differentiated using numerical values.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This research section outlines data analysis, presentation and interpretation of results. The study sought to assess psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Kenya. The section is divided into several subsections including demographic characteristics; sexual orientation; peer influence and sexual orientation, family background and sexual orientation; multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation; as well as drug abuse and sexual orientation.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

Table 4.1 shows the study's response rates.

**Table 4.1 Response Rate**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Target	374	100.0
Returned	301	80.5%

Source: Field Data, 2020.

The study targeted 374 respondents. Of the target, 301 successfully completed the questionnaire representing a response rate of 80.5%. The study also targeted four counsellors, one from each institution. The remaining 19,5% were unable to fill due to the COVID 19 pandemic and accessibility of the questionnaires through Google link form. According to Babbie (2014), a response rate of more than 70 percent is considered sufficient for the study.

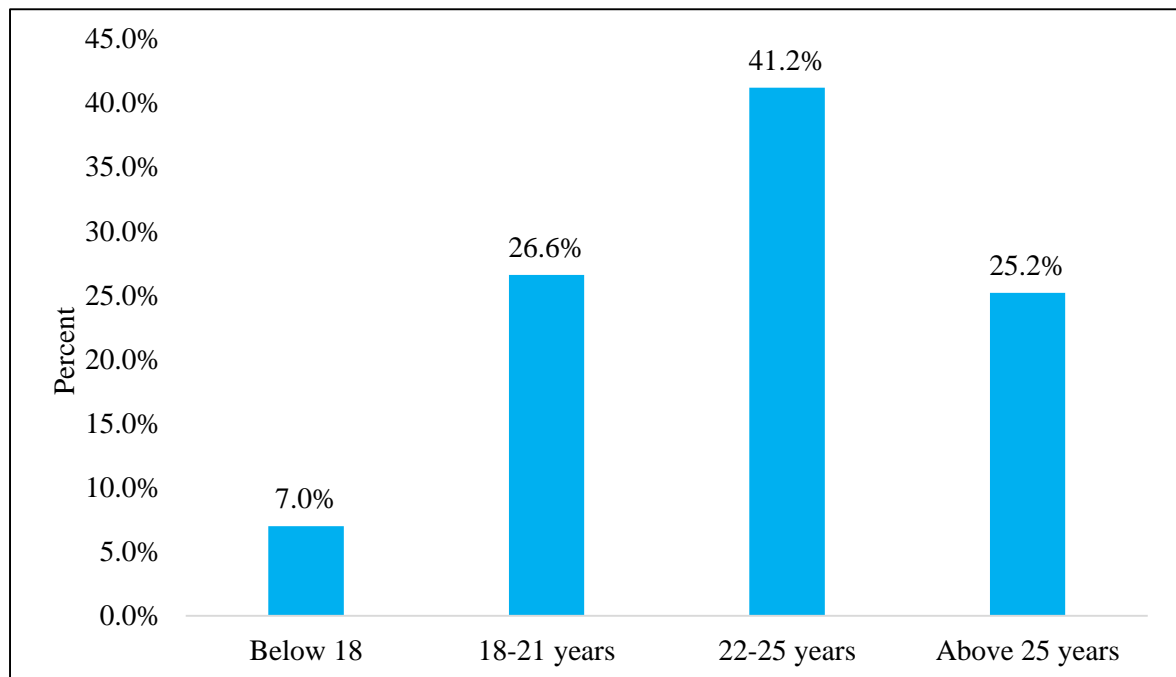


### 4.2.1 Social Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The section below presents descriptive statistics on the respondents' age, gender, category of institution, as well as their level of study.

#### 4.2.1.1 Age of Respondents

Figure 4.1 presents a distribution of the respondents' age.



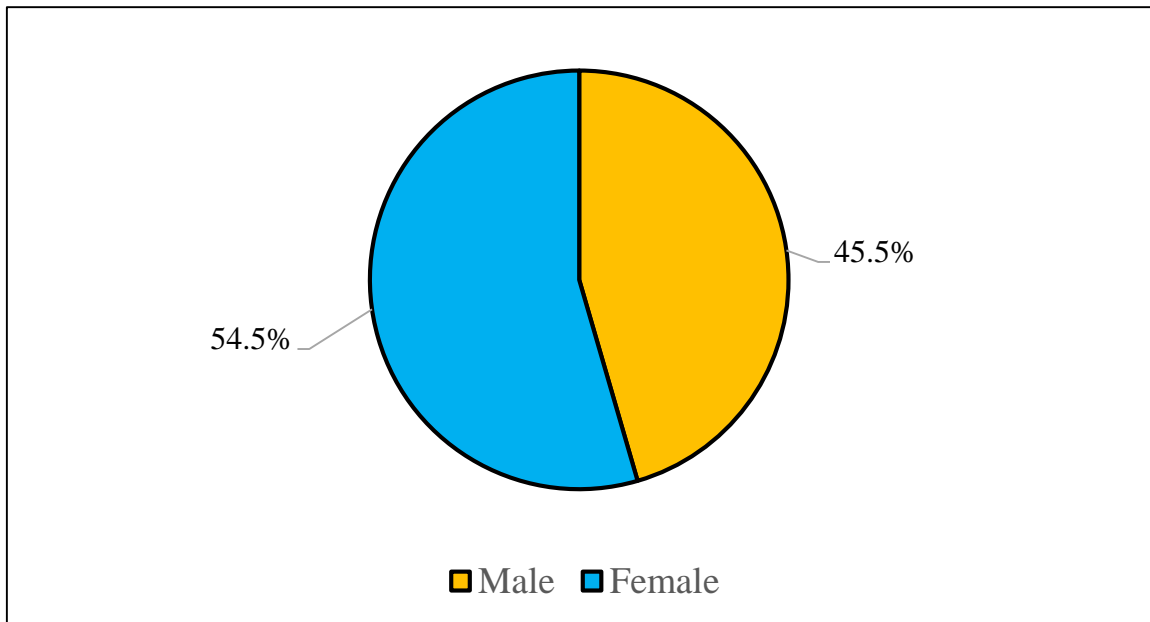
**Figure 4.1 Respondents' Age**

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From the results in figure 4.1, it is evident that majority of the respondents (41.2%) were aged between 22-25 years, 26.6% were aged between 18-21 years, 25.2% above 25 years, while 7% were aged below 18 years. This indicates most of the students at tertiary institutions fall under this age bracket.

#### 4.2.1.2 Gender of Respondents

Figure 4.2 presents a distribution of the respondents' gender.



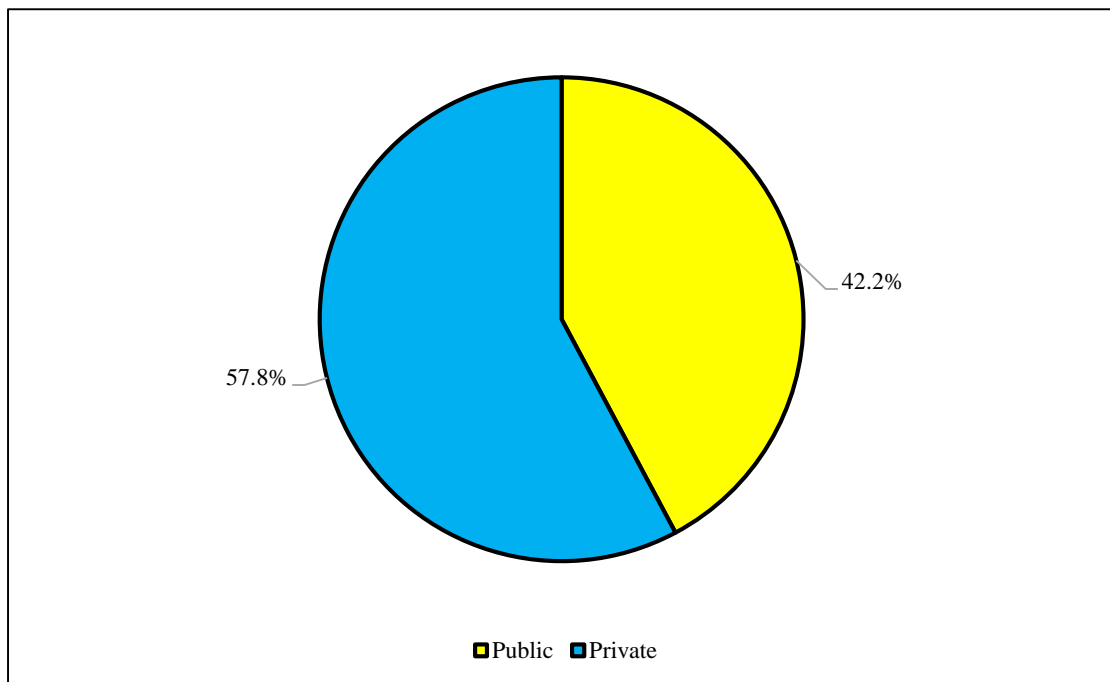
**Figure 4.2 Respondents' Gender**

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From the results in Figure 4.2, most of the interviewed students were female (54.5%) while 45.5% of them were male. This shows that there is a high number of female students in the institutions.

#### **4.2.1.3 Category of Institutions**

Figure 4.3 presents a distribution of the category of institutions.



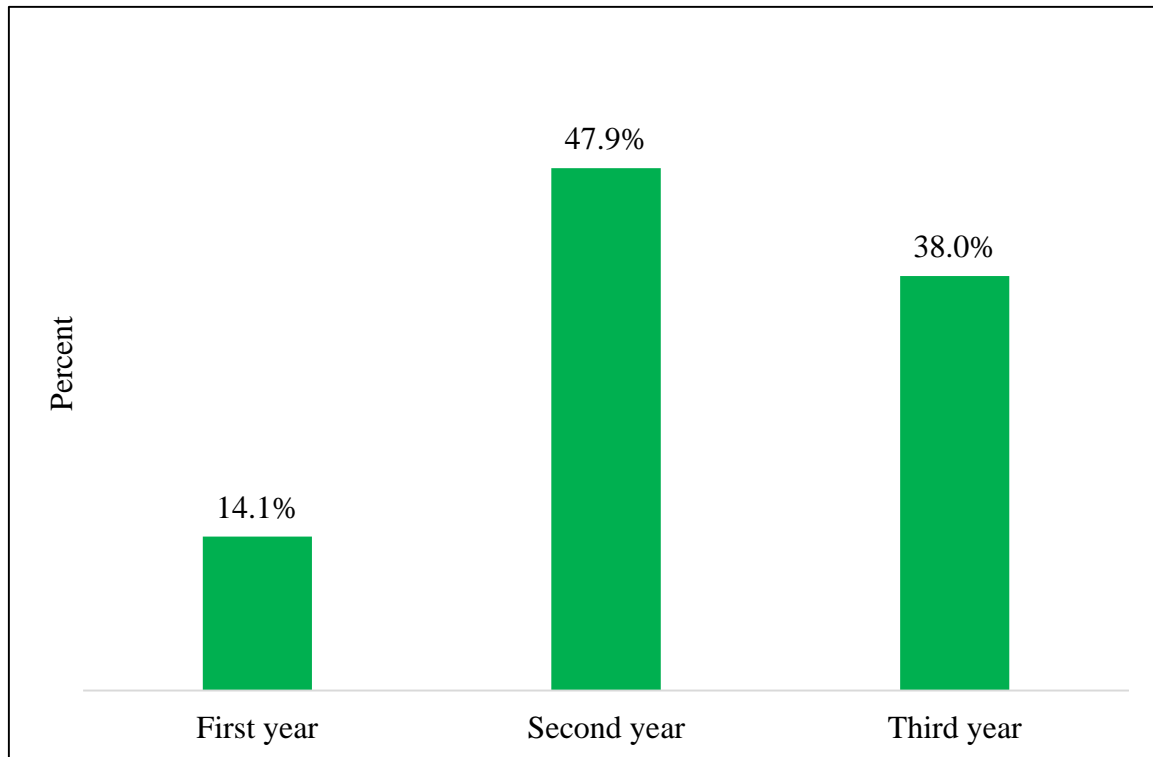
**Figure 4.3 Category of institutions**

Source: Field Data, 2020.

The findings in figure 4.3 indicate that 57.8% of the reached institutions were private, while 42.2% of them were public.

#### **4.2.1.4 Level of Study**

The respondents' level of study is as presented in Figure 4.4 below.



**Figure 4.4 Level of Study**

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From figure 4.4, majority (47.9%) of the students were second year students, 38% of them were third year students, while 14.1% of them were first year students.

### **4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis and Findings**

This section presents the findings of the study. This is done in line with the study objectives.

#### **4.3.1 Peer influence and Sexual Orientation**

Under this section, analysis was conducted to check the relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. It begins

by presenting findings on the sexual orientation of students before delving into the relationship between peer influences and sexual orientation.

#### 4.3.1.1 Sexual Orientation

This section presents descriptive statistics on sexual orientation of the participants based on results from the Klein sexual orientation grid.

**Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Sexual Orientation**

	Mean	SD
Sexual attraction	1.85	1.131
Sexual behavior	1.73	1.121
Sexual fantasies	1.71	1.071
Emotional preference	1.83	1.101
Social preference	2.51	1.053

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From the results in table 4.3, students from tertiary institutions are somehow sexually attracted to the other sex (mean = 1.85, SD = 1.131), they somehow have sexual relationships with the other sex (mean = 1.73, SD = 1.121), they somehow have sexual fantasies with the other sex (mean = 1.71, SD = 1.071), and they somehow love and like the opposite sex (mean = 1.83, SD = 1.101). However, the students socialize with both sexes equally (mean = 2.51, SD = 1.053).

The findings were supported by a key informant who after being asked whether there are cases of unnatural sexual orientations stated: “... *Yes. As the college counselor I have come across such cases,*” [Respondent A, May 12, 2020]. These findings were corroborated by another college counselor who said: “*Yes, these cases are there in the institution.*” [Respondent F, May 20, 2020]. Further, another counselor in the same

accord said: “.... *Sure, there are cases reported in the institution*” [Respondent C, May 14, 2020]. Lastly, another counselor said: “... *Yes, there are new cases reported in the institution.*” [Respondent E, May 17, 2020].

#### 4.3.1.2 Peer Influence

This section analyses the influence of peer pressure on sexual orientation.

**Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics on Peer Influence**

<b>Peer influence</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I belong to a peer group	3.63	1.47
My peer group general sexual orientation influenced my sexual orientation	2.59	1.42
My peer group comprises of members who sexually attracted to people of their gender	3.03	1.38
The ratio of boys to girls in my peer group influences my sexual orientation	2.41	1.42
The number of individuals with non-heterosexual inclinations in our peer group makes me want to be one of them	3.51	1.27

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From the results, the students mildly agreed that they belong to a peer group (mean = 2.63, SD = 1.47); they were neutral on whether their peer groups’ general sexual orientation influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 2.59, SD = 1.42); the students mildly agreed that their peer groups comprise of members who are sexually attracted to people of their gender (mean = 3.03, SD = 1.38); they mildly disagreed that the ratio of boys to girls in their peer groups influence their sexual orientation (mean = 2.41, SD = 1.42); and their also mildly disagreed that the number of individuals with non-heterosexual inclinations in our peer group makes them want to be one of them (mean = 3.51, SD = 1.27).

Chi square analysis was conducted to check the relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results are as given below.

**Table 4.4 Peer Influence And Sexual Orientation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.523 <sup>a</sup>	16	.005
Likelihood Ratio	30.120	16	.017
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.295	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	216		

a. 15 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .16.

Source: Field Data, 2020.

From the results in table 4.4, there was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 34.523$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ).

**H<sub>01</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of peer influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.**

Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that peer influence has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. This implied that peer pressure plays a vital role in influencing the student's sexual orientation. This is because they want to fit, be accepted and look normal as the trend in the institution and society at large.

The findings were supported by key informants who stated: "... *Most students are influenced by their peers in an effort to look "normal" ... students end up adopting the sexual orientation of their peers,*" [Respondent E, May 14, 2020]. This was also

attested also by another respondent who said: “...*Yes. In terms of peer pressure,*” [Respondent G, May 14, 2020]. In the same accord, another respondent said: “... *Peer pressure plays a vital role in defining one’s behavior and in this case, the students want to fit in and look normal as their peers thus ending up in adopting the sexual orientation.*” [Respondent A, May 14, 2020].

### 4.3.2 Family Background and Sexual Orientation

Analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between family background and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results are as given below.

**Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics on Family Background**

<b>Family background</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I was sexually abused as a kid, by a man and it made me hate men, and am therefore sexually attracted to women	2.33	0.781
I was sexually abused as a kid, by a woman and it made me hate women, and am therefore sexually attracted to men	2.39	0.870
My poor family background has influenced my sexual orientation	3.91	1.32
My rich family background has influenced my sexual orientation	3.76	1.26
Fights between my parents has influenced my sexual orientation	3.71	1.17
The good relationship between my parents has influenced my sexual orientation	3.67	1.67

From the descriptive statistics, the students disagreed that they were sexually abused as a kid, by a man and it made me hate men, and am therefore sexually attracted to women (mean = 2.33, SD = 0.781); and also disagreed that they were was sexually abused as a kid, by a woman and it made me hate women, and am therefore sexually attracted to men (mean = 2.39, SD = 0.870). These results might have been influenced by the fact that fact that some respondents were uncomfortable in responding to the questions.



However, the students agreed that their poor family background has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.91, SD = 1.32); they agreed that their rich family background has influenced their sexual orientations (mean = 3.76, SD = 1.26); they agreed that fights between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.17); and also agreed that good relationships between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.67, SD = 1.67).

*Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between family background and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results are as given below.*

**Table 4.6 Family Background and Sexual Orientation**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	72.098 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	60.313	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	28.851	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	216		

16 cells (64.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

**H<sub>02</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of family background on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.**

From the chi-square test above, there was a statistically significant relationship between family background and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 72.098$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ). From the results above, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that family background has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The parenting change and skills, poor and rich family background influences the students on sexual orientation.

### 4.3.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation

Under this section, analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

**Table 4.7 Descriptive Statistics on Multicultural Dynamics**

<b>Multicultural dynamics</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
The fact that same-sex orientations are considered a taboo in my culture has influenced me to be heterosexual	3.71	1.51
The weak cultural systems in my community has made it easy for me to embrace non-heterosexual orientations	1.82	1.14
Traditional practices that support same-sex activities have influenced me into accepting same-sex orientations	1.81	1.23
Traditional practices that are against same-sex activities have influenced me into rejecting same-sex orientations	3.54	1.58
Our culture considers opposite-sex relationships natural, that's why I am heterosexual	2.17	1.48

The students agreed that the fact that same-sex orientations are considered a taboo in their culture has influenced them to be heterosexual (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.51); and also agreed that traditional practices that are against same-sex activities have influenced them into rejecting same-sex orientations (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.58).

However, they disagreed that weak cultural systems in their community has made it easy for them to embrace non-heterosexual orientations (mean = 1.82, SD = 1.14); disagreed that traditional practices that support same-sex activities have influenced them into accepting same-sex orientations (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.23); and disagreed that their culture considers opposite-sex relationships natural, that's why they are heterosexual (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.48). Additionally, a chi-square test was conducted to assess the relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results are as given below.

**Table 4.8 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.712 <sup>a</sup>	16	.002
Likelihood Ratio	35.286	16	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.708	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	216		

a. 15 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

The chi-square test indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 37.712$ ,  $p = 0.02 < 0.05$ ).

**H<sub>03</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of multicultural dynamics on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.**

From the results therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that multicultural dynamics has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The students come from different cultural backgrounds with different cultures. The interaction from each other influences the student's sexual orientation to a significant level. These results were supported by key informants who stated: "... *Students in our college are from different cultural backgrounds... as they interact, these multicultural dynamics end up influencing their sexual orientations*" [Respondent D, May 12, 2020]. These findings were also buttressed by those of another counselor who said: "...*it is true, we have students from all over, with different cultures, this end up influencing some students on their sexual orientation.*" [Respondent F, May 20, 2020].

#### 4.3.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation

Under this section, analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

**Table 4.9 Descriptive Statistics on Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

<b>Drug abuse</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I have used drugs other than those required for medical purposes	3.90	1.54
I have engaged in same-sex activities while high on drugs	1.74	1.26
Drugs give me the confidence to accept that am attracted to people of the same gender as me	2.17	1.14
Drugs give me the confidence to talk against same-sex orientations	2.01	1.23
I tend to think that engaging in same-sex activities while on drugs stimulates a feeling of happiness	1.81	1.31

From the descriptive statistics, students in tertiary institutions agreed that they have used drugs other than those required for medical purposes (mean = 3.90, SD = 1.54); they disagreed to have engaged in same-sex activities while high on drugs (mean = 1.74, SD = 1.26); they were neutral on whether drugs give them confidence to accept that they are attracted to people of the same gender as them (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.14); they disagreed that drugs give them confidence to talk against same-sex orientations (mean = 2.01, SD = 1.23); and disagreed with the statement that they tend to think that engaging in same-sex activities while on drugs stimulates a feeling of happiness (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.31).

Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. Results are as given below.

**Table 4.30 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	58.009 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	54.283	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.406	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	214		

a. 16 cells (64.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

From the chi-square test above, there was a statistically significant relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 58.009$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ).

**H<sub>04</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of drug abuse on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.**

From the results above, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that drug abuse has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. On this, key informants stated: “... *Although drug abuse is rampant, we do not have evidence that it has had a direct influence on the sexual orientation of our students. However, it has led to irresponsible sexual behavior.*” [Respondent C, May 14, 2020].

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This section of the report outlines a discussion of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations from the study.

#### **5.2 Discussions**

From the results majority of the respondents were aged between 22-25 years, most of the interviewed students were female, majority of the reached institutions were private, and most of the students were second year students. In addition, students from tertiary institutions are somehow sexually attracted to the other sex, they somehow have sexual relationships with the other sex, they somehow have sexual fantasies with the other sex, and they somehow love and like the opposite sex. However, the students socialize with both sexes equally. A presentation of the findings according to the objectives of the study, as well as a linkage of findings to previous studies is given in the section below.

##### **5.2.1.1. Response rate**

From the study findings, it was clear that 41.2% of the respondents were in age brackets ranging from 22- 25 years. From the results majority of the respondents were aged between 22-25 years, most of the interviewed students were female, majority of the reached institutions were private, and most of the students were second year students. It is evident that majority of the respondents (41.2%) were aged between 22-25 years, 26.6% were aged between 18-21 years, 25.2% above 25 years, while 7% were aged below 18 years. This indicates most of the students at tertiary institutions fall under

this age bracket. From the results in table 4.3, most of the interviewed students were female (54.5%) while 45.5% of them were male. This shows that there is a high number of female students in the institutions. It was also noted that majority of the respondents were female this was attributed to the fact that, female respondents were more willing to participate in the study while some of their male counterparts were hesitant or declined.

The study had targeted 374 respondents that included students, and 4 Key informants from the institutions. In reference to Table 4.2, Out of these, 301 students, making a response rate of 80.5% and 4 key informants responded; some of the students who never responded, were given forms and never returned them, while others did not attempt to use the Google link form provided, to answer the questionnaire. The COVID 19 pandemic significantly affected the response rate due to the closure of the tertiary colleges. The researcher had to use the research assistants to get reach of the respondents. This was also done through the use WhatstApp group to send the Goggle link forms to the respondents in the platform for response.

A presentation of the findings according to the objectives of the study, as well as a linkage of findings to previous studies is given in the section below

### **5.2.1 Peer influence and Sexual Orientation**

The first objective of the study was to determine the influence of peers on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The students from tertiary institutions pointed out that they are somehow sexually attracted to the other sex (mean = 1.85, SD = 1.131), they somehow have sexual relationships with the other sex (mean = 1.73, SD = 1.121), they somehow have sexual fantasies with the other sex (mean = 1.71, SD = 1.071), and they somehow love

and like the opposite sex (mean = 1.83, SD = 1.101). However, the students socialize with both sexes equally (mean = 2.51, SD = 1.053). The findings were supported by a key informant who after being asked whether there are cases of unnatural sexual orientations in the school answered in the affirmative. *This agrees with the findings by Clarke et al. (2010) who were of the same opinion.*

From the results, the students mildly agreed that they belong to a peer group (mean = 2.63, SD = 1.47); they were neutral on whether their peer groups' general sexual orientation influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 2.59, SD = 1.42); the students mildly agreed that their peer groups comprise of members who are sexually attracted to people of their gender (mean = 3.03, SD = 1.38); they mildly disagreed that the ratio of boys to girls in their peer groups influence their sexual orientation (mean = 2.41, SD = 1.42); and they also mildly disagreed that the number of individuals with non-heterosexual inclinations in our peer group makes them want to be one of them (mean = 3.51, SD = 1.27). These findings agree are also in line with the findings by Clarke et al. (2010) who who indicated a direct link between peer pressure and sexual behaviour.

Chi square analysis was conducted to check the relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. There was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 34.523$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ). Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that peer influence has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. This implied that peer pressure plays a vital role in influencing the student's sexual orientation. This is because they want to fit, be accepted and look normal as the trend in the institution and society at large. These findings were supported by Widman *et al.*, (2016) in a study which found out that



adolescents' engagement in sexual behavior is highly predicted by their belief that peers are engaging in similar behavior. Golshirazian *et al.*, (2015) further confirmed that peer groups should be considered a primary influence on sexual identity construction among children and adolescents. In this study this is significantly demonstrated by the results, how peer influence behaviours, particularly when it comes to making decisions on their sexual orientation.

The findings were supported by key informants who said that most students were influenced by their peers and ended up adopting the sexual orientation of their peers (Delay *et al.*, 2018). This was supported by another respondent who said that peer pressure played a vital role in defining one's behavior (Golshirazian *et al.*, 2015) and in this case, the students wanted to fit in and look normal as their peers thus ending up in adopting the sexual orientation.

### **5.2.2 Family Background and Influence on Sexual Orientation**

The second objective was to establish the influence of family background on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. From the descriptive statistics, the students disagreed that they were sexually abused as a kid, by a man and it made me hate men, and am therefore sexually attracted to women (mean = 2.33, SD = 0.781); and also disagreed that they were sexually abused as a kid, by a woman and it made me hate women, and am therefore sexually attracted to men (mean = 2.39, SD = 0.870). These results might have been influenced by the fact that some respondents were uncomfortable in responding to the questions.

However, the students agreed that their poor family background has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.91, SD = 1.32); they agreed that their rich family

background has influenced their sexual orientations (mean = 3.76, SD = 1.26); they agreed that fights between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.17); and also agreed that good relationships between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.67, SD = 1.67). This corroborates the findings of Amato and DeBoer who said that “unhealthy relationships with parents” could affect the behaviour of children (Amato & DeBoer, 2001).

Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between family background and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between family background and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 72.098, p < 0.00$ ). From the results above, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that family background has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The parenting change and skills, poor and rich family background influences the students on sexual orientation. These findings are in line with those of Roberts, Glymour and Koenen (2013) who posits that there is a positive association between physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and witnessing violence in childhood and homosexual sexual orientation in adulthood. This study asserts to this theory because statistically it was evident the parenting change, child trauma, family wealth played a major role to influencing the sexual orientation choices among the tertiary students in Thika.

### **5.2.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of multicultural dynamics, on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The students agreed to the fact that same-sex orientations are

considered a taboo in their culture has influenced them to be heterosexual (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.51); and also agreed that traditional practices that are against same-sex activities have influenced them into rejecting same-sex orientations (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.58). These findings agree with the study by Vance that shows that people from different cultures influenced sexual behaviour (Vance, 2011).

However, they disagreed that weak cultural systems in their community has made it easy for them to embrace non-heterosexual orientations (mean = 1.82, SD = 1.14); disagreed that traditional practices that support same-sex activities have influenced them into accepting same-sex orientations (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.23); and disagreed that their culture considers opposite-sex relationships natural, that's why they are heterosexual (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.48).

Additionally, a chi-square test was conducted to assess the relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The chi-square test indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 37.712$ ,  $p = 0.02 < 0.05$ ).

From the results therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that multicultural dynamics has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The students come from different cultural backgrounds with different cultures. The interaction from each other influence the student's sexual orientation to a significant level (Vance, 2011).

This was echoed by Blackwood (2012), in a study that significantly found facets of sexual orientation that are linked to cultural practices, institutions, and given traditions, rather than to only sexual associations. The researcher found evidence of same-sex sexual activities among intimate females in Lesotho. This study therefore,

asserts the culture, traditions can determine the choice of the sexual orientation, and cultural competence determines the influence of sexual orientation. Importantly, within the context of culture, determines how both intracultural and intercultural factors influence the conception, perception, and treatment of sexual orientation across and within nationally which defines the cultural groups. It is therefore evident that in this study the student's cultural background influences the choice of sexual orientation. This is due to the social interaction within their environment (Bertosa, 2009).

The study findings were also supported by key informants pointed out that students in the colleges were from different cultural backgrounds. Due to their interactions, their multicultural dynamics ended up influencing their sexual orientations (Bertosa, 2009). These findings were also buttressed by those of another counselor who said that they had students from all over and with different culture; which ended up influencing some students on their sexual orientation

#### **5.2.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

The forth objective was to determine the influence of drug abuse on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. From the descriptive statistics, students in tertiary institutions agreed that they have used drugs other than those required for medical purposes (mean = 3.90, SD = 1.54) (Medley, et al., 2016); they disagreed to have engaged in same-sex activities while high on drugs (mean = 1.74, SD = 1.26); they were neutral on whether drugs give them confidence to accept that they are attracted to people of the same gender as them (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.14); they disagreed that drugs give them confidence to talk against same-sex orientations (mean = 2.01, SD = 1.23); and disagreed with the statement that they tend

to think that engaging in same-sex activities while on drugs stimulates a feeling of happiness (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.31).

Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. From the chi-square test above, there was a statistically significant relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 58.009$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ). From the results above, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that drug abuse has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

Medley et al., (2016) found out that sexual minorities have higher rates of substance misuse and substance use disorders (SUDs) than people who identify as heterosexual. Slater et al., (2017) further found out that the GLB youths and adults reportedly consume higher levels of alcohol and associated substances, with reports showing that they consume three times as much more substances than the heterosexuals. In this study it is evident that drug abuse influences the choice of sexual orientation among students. The students who engaged in non-heterosexual orientation confirmed, it is when they are on drugs, they engage to the sexual orientation comfort zone.

### **5.3 Summary of the main Findings**

This section presents the summary of the study findings in accordance to the objectives of the study.

#### **5.3.1 Peer influence and Sexual Orientation**

The study sought to check the relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The students from tertiary institutions are somehow sexually attracted to the other sex (mean = 1.85, SD = 1.131),

they somehow have sexual relationships with the other sex (mean = 1.73, SD = 1.121), they somehow have sexual fantasies with the other sex (mean = 1.71, SD = 1.071), and they somehow love and like the opposite sex (mean = 1.83, SD = 1.101). However, the students socialize with both sexes equally (mean = 2.51, SD = 1.053). The findings were supported by a key informant who after being asked whether there are cases of unnatural sexual orientations in the school.

From the results, the students mildly agreed that they belong to a peer group (mean = 2.63, SD = 1.47); they were neutral on whether their peer groups' general sexual orientation influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 2.59, SD = 1.42); the students mildly agreed that their peer groups comprise of members who are sexually attracted to people of their gender (mean = 3.03, SD = 1.38); they mildly disagreed that the ratio of boys to girls in their peer groups influence their sexual orientation (mean = 2.41, SD = 1.42); and they also mildly disagreed that the number of individuals with non-heterosexual inclinations in our peer group makes them want to be one of them (mean = 3.51, SD = 1.27). These findings are in line with those of Golshirazian et al., (2015).

Chi square analysis was conducted to check the relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. From the results, there was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 34.523$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ). Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that peer influence has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. This implied that peer pressure plays a vital role in influencing the student's sexual orientation. This is because they want to fit, be accepted and look normal as the trend in the institution and society at large.

The findings were supported by key informants who said that most students were influenced by their peers and ended up adopting the sexual orientation of their peers. This was supported by another respondent who said that peer pressure played a vital role in defining one's behavior and in this case, the students wanted to fit in and look normal as their peers thus ending up in adopting the sexual orientation.

### **5.3.2 Family Background and Sexual Orientation**

Analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between family background and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. From the descriptive statistics, the students disagreed that they were sexually abused as a kid, by a man and it made me hate men, and am therefore sexually attracted to women (mean = 2.33, SD = 0.781); and also disagreed that they were sexually abused as a kid, by a woman and it made me hate women, and am therefore sexually attracted to men (mean = 2.39, SD = 0.870). These results might have been influenced by the fact that some respondents were uncomfortable in responding to the questions.

However, the students agreed that their poor family background has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.91, SD = 1.32); they agreed that their rich family background has influenced their sexual orientations (mean = 3.76, SD = 1.26); they agreed that fights between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.17); and also agreed that good relationships between their parents has influenced their sexual orientation (mean = 3.67, SD = 1.67).

Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between family background and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between family background and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 72.098, p < 0.00$ ). From the results above, there is sufficient

evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that family background has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The parenting change and skills, poor and rich family background influences the students on sexual orientation.

### **5.3.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

The relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions was assessed. The students agreed that the fact that same-sex orientations are considered a taboo in their culture has influenced them to be heterosexual (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.51); and also agreed that traditional practices that are against same-sex activities have influenced them into rejecting same-sex orientations (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.58).

However, they disagreed that weak cultural systems in their community has made it easy for them to embrace non-heterosexual orientations (mean = 1.82, SD = 1.14); disagreed that traditional practices that support same-sex activities have influenced them into accepting same-sex orientations (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.23); and disagreed that their culture considers opposite-sex relationships natural, that's why they are heterosexual (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.48). Additionally, a chi-square test was conducted to assess the relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The chi-square test indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 37.712$ ,  $p = 0.02 < 0.05$ ).

From the results therefore, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that multicultural dynamics has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. The students



come from different cultural backgrounds with different cultures. The interaction from each other influence the student's sexual orientation to a significant level. These results were supported by key informants pointed out that students in the colleges were from different cultural backgrounds. Due to their interactions, their multicultural dynamics ended up influencing their sexual orientations. These findings were also buttressed by those of another counselor who said that they had students from all over and with different culture; which ended up influencing some students on their sexual orientation.

#### **5.3.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

The study went on to assess the relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. From the descriptive statistics, students in tertiary institutions agreed that they have used drugs other than those required for medical purposes (mean = 3.90, SD = 1.54); they disagreed to have engaged in same-sex activities while high on drugs (mean = 1.74, SD = 1.26); they were neutral on whether drugs give them confidence to accept that they are attracted to people of the same gender as them (mean = 2.17, SD = 1.14); they disagreed that drugs give them confidence to talk against same-sex orientations (mean = 2.01, SD = 1.23); and disagreed with the statement that they tend to think that engaging in same-sex activities while on drugs stimulates a feeling of happiness (mean = 1.81, SD = 1.31).

Chi-square analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. From the chi-square test above, there was a statistically significant relationship between drug abuse and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 58.009$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ). From the results above, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that drug abuse has a statistically significant influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

This section presents the conclusions of the study findings which are based on the objectives of the study.

### **5.4.1 Peer influence and Sexual Orientation**

From the results, the study found that peer has influence on sexual orientation at the significance level of ( $\chi = 34.523, p = 0.05$ ). It was found that students belong to peer groups where interactions and conversations occur and learning of new behaviours consequently influencing one another. It was also evident that peer general sexual orientation influenced the students' sexual orientation. The ratio of boys to girls in the peers also influenced on the sexual orientation. In this study it can be concluded peer pressure is a primary contributing factor to sexual orientation

### **5.4.2 Family Background and Sexual Orientation**

The study established that there was a statistically significant relationship between family background and sexual orientation ( $\chi = 72.098, p < 0.00$ ). In this regard, poor relationships with parents, parenting change and skills, poor and rich family background influences the students on sexual orientation. Students from poor backgrounds characterized with abuse and lack of the requisite financial support was an important factor influencing propensity to get into same-sex relationships.

### **5.4.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

The study found that multicultural dynamics and sexual orientation had a relationship at ( $\chi = 37.712, p = 0.02 < 0.05$ ). Cultural factors and traditional practices

influenced the students' sexual orientation. Being in the same institution with students from different cultures and background who tolerated same sex relationships was an important factor contributing to tendency change sexual orientation towards bisexual and homosexual relationships among students who came from backgrounds that purely tolerated heterosexual relationships.

#### **5.4.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

The study lastly concludes that drug abuse by the students had significant influences on a students' sexual orientation ( $\chi = 58.009, p < 0.00$ ). It made students have confidence and being high made them see things as normal and thus end up engaging in certain sexual activities and sexual orientation.

### **5.5 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made based on this study.

#### **5.5.1 Peer influence and Sexual Orientation**

Counselling departments within institutions should be strengthened so as to reach out to many students. Additionally, students in tertiary institutions should be keen on interactions with their peers, as they may end up being encouraged into some sexual orientations unknowingly.

#### **5.4.2 Family Background and Sexual Orientation**

Parents and adult family members should provide favorable environments for children to grow with love, care, attention and protection so as to avoid unwanted influences on sexual orientation.

### **5.4.3 Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation**

Some cultural practices encourage a certain direction of sexual orientation. To avoid unwanted influence, it is important for students to avoid some cultural practices, especially when they are not members of such cultures.

### **5.4.4 Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation**

Drug abuse has been proven to have significant influence on sexual orientation. In that regard, the government, staff members of tertiary institutions, parents and other interested parties should work to fight drug abuse among students. This would reduce unwanted influence on the students' sexual orientation.

## **5.4 Areas of Further Studies**

For further studies, it would be important to use segmentation analysis in assessing factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions. That is, the population of students can be divided in the lines of age, gender, category of institution and level of study, to check whether there are any differences in the amount of influence that psychosocial factors have on sexual orientation specific to the levels of the categorical variables. Considering that sexual orientation is a sensitive subject, a different approach can be employed during data collection. Even though it might take time, it would be important to identify groups of individuals with homosexual orientations and find out exact factors that led to their orientations.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Introduction Letter

Dear respondent,

My name is Catherine Wanjiku Muturi. I am a student at Africa Nazarene University, pursuing a degree in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. As a partial fulfillment for award of the degree, I am required to carry out a research to *assess psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika - Sub-County*.

I would like to request you to respond to the questions presented in the questionnaire attached to this letter. Please **tick** in the boxes where applicable. Your responses shall be confidential and shall be used for academic purposes only. **DO NOT** indicate your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you.

**Catherine Wanjiku Muturi**



## **Appendix II: Questionnaire**

This questionnaire seeks to assess psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kenya. Please respond to the questions accurately. Please **tick** in the boxes where applicable. The responses shall be confidential and shall be used for academic purposes only.

### **Section 1: Demographic Information**

1. Please indicate your age

Below 18 [ ]      18-21 years [ ]    22-25 years [ ]    Above 25 years [ ]

2. Gender

Male [ ]                      Female [ ]

3. What category of institutions does your institution lie?

Public [ ]                      Private [ ]

4. What is your current level of study?

First year [ ]      Second year [ ]      Third year [ ]      Fourth year [ ]

5. Sub-County of origin .....

### **SECTION 2: SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

#### **6. The Modified Klein Sexual Orientation Grid**

There are five variables in this section. For each of them, rate yourself according to these three life phases: your past (from age 16 to one year ago), your present (the past year), and your ideal (what you would decide to be now if given a choice)

**For Variables I – V, use the following rating scale to rate yourself:**

1	2	3	4	5
Other sex only	Other sex somehow	Both sexes equally	Same sex somehow	Same sex only

**I. Sexual Attraction – Who are you sexually attracted to?**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>A. <b>Past</b> (age 16 through 1 year ago). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>B. <b>Present</b> (during the past year). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>C. <b>Ideal</b> (what you would choose now if given a choice). 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Circle one.</p> |
|--|

**II. Sexual Behavior- With whom do you have sexual relationships?**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>A. <b>Past</b> (age 16 through 1 year ago). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>B. <b>Present</b> (during the past year). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>C. <b>Ideal</b> (what you would choose now if given a choice). 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Circle one.</p> |
|--|

**III. Sexual Fantasies- About whom do you have sexual fantasies?**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>A. <b>Past</b> (age 16 through 1 year ago). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>B. <b>Present</b> (during the past year). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>C. <b>Ideal</b> (what you would choose now if given a choice). 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Circle one.</p> |
|--|

**IV. Emotional Preference- Do you only love and like opposite sex or are you emotionally attached to the same sex as you? Where are you on the scale?**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>A. <b>Past</b> (age 16 through 1 year ago). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>B. <b>Present</b> (during the past year). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>C. <b>Ideal</b> (what you would choose now if given a choice). 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Circle one.</p> |
|--|

**V. Social Preference- Some people only socialize with their own sex, while others only socialize with the opposite sex. How would you rate yourself?**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>A. <b>Past</b> (age 16 through 1 year ago). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>B. <b>Present</b> (during the past year). Circle one. 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>C. <b>Ideal</b> (what you would choose now if given a choice). 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Circle one.</p> |
|--|

### 7. Section 3: Peer Influence and Sexual Orientation

Please tick one choice that best describes your response. Where: SD – Strongly Disagree, DM – Disagree Mildly, N – Neutral, AM – Agree Mildly, and SA – Strongly Agree.					
Statements	SD	DM	N	AM	SA
a. I belong to a peer group					
b. My peer group general sexual orientation influenced my sexual orientation					
a. My peer group comprises of members who sexually attracted to people of their gender					
b. The ratio of boys to girls in my peer group influences my sexual orientation					
c. The number of individuals with non-heterosexual inclinations in our peer group makes me want to be one of them					

### 8. Section 4: Family Background and Sexual Orientation

Please tick one choice that best describes your response. Where: SD – Strongly Disagree, DM – Disagree Mildly, N – Neutral, AM – Agree Mildly, and SA – Strongly Agree.					
Statements	SD	DM	N	AM	SA
a. I was sexually abused as a kid, by a man and it made me hate men, and am therefore sexually attracted to women					
b. I was sexually abused as a kid, by a woman and it made me hate women, and am therefore sexually attracted to men					
c. My poor family background has influenced my sexual orientation					
d. My rich family background has influenced my sexual orientation					
e. Fights between my parents has influenced my sexual orientation					
f. The good relationship between my parents has influenced my sexual orientation					

### 9. Section 5: Multicultural Dynamics and Sexual Orientation

Please tick one choice that best describes your response. Where: SD – Strongly Disagree, DM – Disagree Mildly, N – Neutral, AM – Agree Mildly, and SA – Strongly Agree.					
Statements	SD	DM	N	AM	SA

a. The fact that same-sex orientations are considered a taboo in my culture has influenced me to be heterosexual					
b. The weak cultural systems in my community has made it easy for me to embrace non-heterosexual orientations					
c. Traditional practices that support same-sex activities have influenced me into accepting same-sex orientations					
d. Traditional practices that are against same-sex activities have influenced me into rejecting same-sex orientations					
e. Our culture considers opposite-sex relationships natural, that's why I am heterosexual					






### 10. Section 6: Drug Abuse and Sexual Orientation

Please tick one choice that best describes your response. Where: SD – Strongly Disagree, DM – Disagree Mildly, N – Neutral, AM – Agree Mildly, and SA – Strongly Agree.					
Statements	SD	DM	N	AM	SA
a. I have used drugs other than those required for medical purposes					
b. I have engaged in same-sex activities while high on drugs					
c. Drugs give me the confidence to accept that am attracted to people of the same gender as me					
d. Drugs give me the confidence to talk against same-sex orientations					
e. I tend to think that engaging in same-sex activities while on drugs stimulates a feeling of happiness					

**Appendix III: Key Informant Interview (KII) Tool- For Counsellors**

1. In your opinion, are cases of unnatural sexual orientations widespread in your institution? Kindly explain.
2. How have you approached cases of unnatural sexual orientations (if any) in your institution?
3. What are some of the psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County?
4. In your opinion, do peers have influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County?
5. Do multicultural dynamics have influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County?
6. Does drug abuse have an influence on sexual orientation among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County?
7. What are your recommendations towards managing cases of unnatural sexual orientations among students in tertiary institutions in Thika Sub-County?

### Appendix IV: Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	
Ref No: 176924	Date of Issue: 23/May/2020
<b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b>	
	
<b>This is to Certify that Ms.. CATHERINE WANJIRU MUTURI of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research in Kiambu on the topic: ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AMONG STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN THIKA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 23/May/2021.</b>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/20/5039	
176924	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
<b>NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.</b>	

## Appendix V: Research Authorization Letters



AFRICA NAZARENE  
UNIVERSITY

10<sup>th</sup> March 2020

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Catherine Wanjiku Muturi (15SO3DMCP002) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University. She has finished her course work in Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology and has defended her thesis proposal entitled: - "*Assessment of Psycho-social Factors Influencing Sexual Orientation among Students in Tertiary Institution in Thika Sub County, Kiambu County, Kenya*".

Any assistance accorded to her to facilitate data collection and finish her thesis is highly welcomed.

Prof. Rodney Reed  
DVC, Academic & Student Affairs.



**THIKA TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE**  
**P.O BOX 91- 01000, Thika, Tel: 020 -2044965, 0743 514 539**

E-mail: thikatech@yahoo.com, thikatechnical@gmail.com  
 Website: www.thikatechnical.ac.ke



TTTI/EXT.COMM/GEN/VOL.II/

27/8/2020

The Senate Council  
 Africa Nazaine University  
 NAIROBI

**CATHERINE WANJIKU MUTURI: 15503DMCP002: ID.NO: 21843541:**  
**TEL: 0720741320**

I write to confirm that the above named person approached the Management of Thika Technical Training Institute to undertake her research on assessment of psychosocial factors influencing sexual orientation among students in Tertiary Institutions in Thika Sub-county, Kiambu County.

The request was granted and she has completed her Research.

Thank you.

*for*   
 Sammy K. Cheruiyot

**PRINCIPAL/SECRETARY BOG**

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL  
 ADMINISTRATION  
 THIKA TECHNICAL  
 TRAINING INSTITUTE

SPONSOR: Ministry of Education - Chairman B.o.G, Dr. Joseph Muguthu, Principal Cheruiyot K. Sammy

VISION: To be the Centre of Excellence in Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training

MISSION: To provide Training, Research and Outreach Programmes that impart Skills and utilize Applied Knowledge to spur Economic Growth and Solve Problems in Society





# TIBS COLLEGE

## THIKA INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS STUDIES

### TOWN CAMPUS

New Jogoo Hse., 4th Floor,

Behind Thika Stadium, Next to ECO Bank

Tel: 067-2221786/ 0722437926

### HIGHWAY CAMPUS

Thika Super Highway

Near Vincetian Prayer House

Tel: 067-2231160/ 0715067272

Email: [info@tibs.ac.ke](mailto:info@tibs.ac.ke)

P. O. BOX 321-01000 THIKA - Kenya

Website: [www.tibs.ac.ke](http://www.tibs.ac.ke)

2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2020

Catherine Wanjiku Muturi

P.O. Box 10252-0100,

**NAIROBI**

Dear Madam,

**RE: APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH AMONGST OUR STUDENTS**

This is to inform you that the institution has approved your request to conduct research titled "Assessment of Psychological Factors Influencing Sexual Orientation Among Students in Tertiary Institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya" amongst some of our students.

The telephone and email contacts of the fifty (50) students requested shall be availed to you. However, you are required to treat the information with utmost confidentiality and not to, among other things, divulge the same to any third party. In addition, you are not authorized to use the information for any other purpose apart from the one mentioned herein. Feel free to contact my office in case of any inquiries.

Yours faithfully,

**CHARLES LWANGA OMOLLO**  
**THE PRINCIPAL**



## THIKA SCHOOL OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

P.O. BOX 429-01000, Thika  
0724005291, 0723-991866  
Website: [www.tsmhs.ac.ke](http://www.tsmhs.ac.ke) Email: [info@tsmhs.com](mailto:info@tsmhs.com)  
Affiliated to Thika Nursing Home LTD



Our Ref: TSMHS/129/20  
Your Ref:.....

DATE: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Catherine Wanjiku Muturi  
Po Box 102352-010001  
NAIROBI

### RE: PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

Reference is made to your letter date 11th June, 2020, requesting permission to conduct research in TCMHS Thika campus for your Master Thesis.

The data collection tool for your proposal titled, "Assessment of Psychosocial Factors Influencing Sexual Orientation among Students in Tertiary Institutions in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya" has been studied and we are satisfied that no ethical issues will be violated among the respondents during the data collection process.

Permission is therefore granted and upon completion of the study, you are requested to submit one (1) hardcopy of the research report to the principal.

Yours sincerely,

**MUCHULE AKANGA**  
**PRINCIPAL-THIKA CAMPUS**

PRINCIPAL  
THIKA SCHOOL  
OF  
MEDICAL & HEALTH SCIENCES  
P.O. Box 429-0100, THIKA  
TEL 087-22280

CC:  
Registrar academics  
Dean of students

Thika Campus 0723 991 866

### Appendix VI: Study Sites' Map

