

FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE  
OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AT THE NAIROBI  
EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF THEOLOGY

BY

ROSEMARY WAHU MBOGO

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NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
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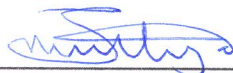
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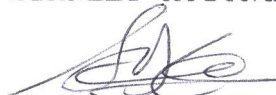
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**Declaration**

Factors affecting academic performance  
of graduate students at the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology.

I declare that this is my original work and has never  
been submitted to any other college or university for  
credit.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT

This study reports an attempt to find out some of the factors affecting the academic performance of graduate students at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T). In order to achieve this purpose an extensive review of the related literature was scrutinized. These dealt with the following areas 1) The effect of lack of finance on academic performance. 2) The effect of age on academic performance. 3) The effect of language proficiency on academic performance. 4) The effect of family responsibilities on academic performance. 5) The effect of academic aspirations on academic performance. 6) The effect of student-faculty interactions on academic performance.

The data collection involved the use of a questionnaire with both close-ended and open-ended questions. Some of the close-ended questions were developed using the *Likert Scale of Summated Ratings* to determine the opinion of the respondents. The questionnaire was administered directly by the researcher to twenty-seven graduate students. The research sought to investigate some of the factors affecting the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T. The test of the difference between the means of two independent sample groups was used as a statistical instrument to test hypotheses.

## **DEDICATION**

To my dear husband Stephen

and

our son Victor

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to God, who brought me to the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T.), for enabling the successful end of this study. I am also grateful to the following people:

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

The Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T.) began in October 1983 with four students. It was a result of the concern of the late Dr. Byang Kato of Nigeria, to train pastors beyond the certificate and the diploma level. N.E.G.S.T. requires that those admitted to the school be accompanied by their family (spouses and sometimes children). This is done in order to train both spouses for the work of the ministry. The college therefore offers Christian Ministries Programme to the wives of the graduate students.

The purpose of NEGST is to provide graduate training for leaders and missionaries for and from the church in Anglophone Africa, from other parts of Africa and else where (NEGST prospectus 1996-97).

In order to achieve the goal of academic excellence, N.E.G.S.T. has a set of academic regulations and requirements. For example, every applicant must have attained an average score of 3.0 on the 4.0 grade system or its equivalent on other systems. For this reason, it is expected that those admitted would keep a good academic record. Tests, examinations and projects are graded through the 4.0 graded on a 4.0 grade point system.

The institution has been granted provisional registration as a private university with the Government of Kenya. Full accreditation with both the Commission for Higher Education and the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (A.C.T.E.A) is also being sought (N.E.G.S.T. prospectus 1997-8). Paul Bowers, writing on accreditation as a catalyst for renewal in theological education points out that there are three ingredients of accreditation. These are: quality, credibility, and collaboration. On credibility he says:

Theological schools feel themselves increasingly gripped by a need to secure recognition, from within society at large and especially from within the academic market place, in order to facilitate admission of their graduates to advanced studies, proper job placement, local financial and moral support, and open doors for ministry and proclamation (Bowers 1982, 27-29).

Therefore, it can be inferred from the above information that students, institutions, and the society at large aspire for academic excellence. With this idea in mind the researcher was interested to find out some factors that might have affected academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T.

Since the researcher is a student in this Institution, it is expected that affordable cost will be incurred for the study. Also no distant travelling is involved and therefore it is hoped that the research will be carried out within the specified time limit.

### Background information

Felicia Adeniji carried out a research to find out the factors that had contributed to the overstay of students of Masters of Theology, in completing their programme of study. From records, she illustrated that, \* out of thirteen students who had graduated, twelve had not graduated at the expected time. Some had taken three additional years to meet all requirements for graduation. Only one student had completed on time. The information gathered was summarized as shown in the following table.

**Table 1**

**Time taken by student to complete their M.Th. course.**

Time in months	Number of students
10	1
18	2
22	2
24	3
34	1
36	1
47	1
48	1
58	1
60	1

The expected duration for the M.Th. student is sixteen months. One student was waiting to graduate \* while thirteen had graduated. These shows that students varied in their performance. It took some students more

time to acquire a certain level of academic performance while others took less time. This can be further demonstrated by grade point averages for students who have already graduated from N.E.G.S.T. The Table below shows the G.P.A. of students since 1992 to 1996. Most of the graduates of N.E.G.S.T. were concentrated within this time span.

**Table 2**  
**Students G.P.A.**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>GPA</u>	3.5-4.0	3.4-3.0	Below 3.0
1992		1(6.7%)	10(66.7%)	4(26.7%)
1993		8(38.7%)	9(42.9%)	4(19 %)
1994		6(35.2%)	7(41.2%)	4(23.5%)
1995		3(21.4%)	6(42.9%)	5(35.7%)
1996		6(23.1%)	17(65.4%)	3(11.5%)

These differences in performance among students may be attributed to various factors including; personality differences, group intelligent differences, as well as diverse environmental causes.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The aim of this study was to find out some of the factors affecting the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T. Second and consequently, the researcher also sought to make useful recommendations, on the basis of the conclusion arrived at, to both the university authorities and to the student body.

### **Problem statement**

It is a fact that no one plans to fail; still, the lack of good planning can lead to failure. It is a goal of N.E.G.S.T. to attain academic excellence. All excellence involves discipline and tenacity of purpose (Gardener 1961, 92). As Herbert Zimiles notes, "If we are to do justice to individual differences, if we are to provide suitable education for each person who comes into our colleges and universities, then we must cultivate diversity in our larger educational system to correspond to the diversity of the clientele (Zimiles 1961, 83). Having noted the diversity of students academic performance as shown earlier in the background information, the researcher sought to investigate some factors affecting academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T.

### **Significance of the study**

In every academic institution students, faculty and school administration seek to maintain academic excellence. For this reason there is need of some effort to achieve this goal. Specifically, the student must be motivated to learn while the teacher must be concerned with the teaching and learning process and the school administration must create a conducive learning environment. This study offers to expose useful information for researchers who may be interested in exploring a related area of study. It also hopes to



reveal some of the areas that policy makers at N.E.G.S.T. need to address so as to achieve the goal of academic excellence.

### **Research questions**

R.Q.1. What factors affect the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T.?

R.Q2. What do the students perceive as necessary for improving their academic performance?

### **Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1.** We would expect that lack of finance negatively affects academic performance of students .

**Hypothesis 2.** We would expect that aging negatively affects academic performance.

**Hypothesis 3.** We would expect that proficiency in the language of instruction positively affects academic performance.

**Hypothesis 4.** We would expect that family responsibilities negatively affect academic performance of students .

**Hypothesis 5.** We would expect that academic aspirations of students positively affect academic performance.

**Hypothesis 6.** We would expect that student-teacher friendly interactions positively affect academic performance.

### **Delimitations**

Due to the scope of the subject, this study was limited to the following factors that might have affected the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T., namely finance, student's age, language proficiency, family responsibilities, academic aspirations, and student-faculty interactions. The researcher also limited the study only to the continuing students in 1997/98 academic year.

### **Definition of concepts**

**Academic Performance:** Is the efficiency with which something reacts or fulfils its intended purpose (Stein and Urdang 1983). Academic performance therefore refers to the efficiency with which a student achieves his/her programme requirement in order to graduate. The grade point averages of students were used to measure academic performance.

**Nuclear Family:** The nuclear family consist of parents and/or siblings. This paper only took into consideration members of the nuclear family currently living with the graduate students.

**Language proficiency:** Is the ability to understand and to communicate efficiently in the English language which is the avenue of communication at N.E.G.S.T.

**Academic aspiration:** A goal or end to which effort is aimed. In this case, it specifically refers to setting a goal to acquire a second masters degree or a doctoral degree.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This section looks into the substantive and the methodological precedents as presented in literature.

The substantive literature covered the following variables:

- 1) The effect of the lack of finance on academic performance.
- 2) The effect of language proficiency on academic performance.
- 3) The effect of age on academic performance.
- 4) The effect of family responsibilities on academic performance.
- 5) The effect of academic aspirations on academic performance.
- 6) The effect of student-teacher interactions on academic performance.

The methodological literature covered the various methods that were used in this study.

## Substantive Literature

### The effect of the lack of finance on academic performance

"Most programs conducted by universities extension division are partially or wholly self-supporting by fees from participants" (Smith et al 1970, 505). As pointed out above, tuition and fees are the main source of income for most academic institutions. During the last few decades, many institutions relied on donations from overseas. This is further illustrated by a case study conducted among Lutheran academic institutions in the United State of America by Charles Schlimpert. He stated that financial support for building the Lutheran Academic Institutions in the 1950's exceeded the expenses to be met, but this has changed as the twentieth century entered its final quarter (Schlimpert 1995, 18). Today the demand for scholarship funding is higher than the available resources. Students make effort to raise enough finance to support themselves during the period of study. Where possible they even take loans (Galloway and Hartle 1995, 74).

Financial challenges often create discouragement or anxiety among students. Where these emotions are experienced, it becomes very difficult to concentrate in academic work. Studies require a sound mind since it is a mental activity. Data from the National Post Secondary Students and survey of 1986-87 were used to investigate the effect that tuition charges and the amount of student aid had on the students attending community colleges. It

revealed that increment in tuition charges decreased the persistence of students in colleges (John and Starkey 1995, 74). This implies a decline in motivation and effort in academic work which, in turn, may negatively affect performance. In any field, persistence is directly related to performance. A decline in persistence would have negative implications on performance. This has been proved in psychological studies.

The findings of the research carried out by Adeniji to investigate factors that caused the overstay of Masters of Theology students at N.E.G.S.T., in their programme of study, led her to reject the hypothesis which stated that, "lack of finance will be a contribution to the overstay of M.Th. students". She did so partly due to the moderate ranking by students of that factor as a contribution to their overstay and also because the faculty did not perceive that factor to have contributed to the overstay of the students in their M.Th. programme of study. However, six out of thirteen students indicated that the factor contributed either to a very large extent or to a large extent to their overstay. Moreover, she did not carry out a statistical test of significance (Adeniji 1995,39). Since the time of her research, tuition and fees have increased (N.E.G.S.T. Prospectus 1994/5, 1997/8), and the rate of inflation is similarly higher. The population studied was also too small to represent the whole of the student body. Due to these reasons, lack of

finance was considered as a factor that may negatively affect academic performance.

### **The effect of age on academic performance.**

All adults in your class, even the younger ones, are declining physically. Every one is aging, even those who refuse to admit it. Our physical state affects our capacity to learn. Physique and intelligence are related because our bodies influence how and whether we can learn (Draves 1984,9).

William Draves shows how problems related to aging affect learning. He correlated intelligence with physical well being. This is an observation that is highly debated upon by researchers. In literature, some researchers have come up with findings that show that aging adversely affects learning but others prove otherwise. Some of these have been analyzed by Lefrancois who presented various research findings carried out to show how intelligence is correlated with age. Some were of the view that intelligence declines with age yet others were not. He concluded that most intellectual functions decline with age (Lefrancois 1983, 374). He further stated that older students seem not to perform well in timed tasks due to extra caution taken not to make mistakes by the older students as compared to their younger counterparts (Lefrancois 1983, 374).

In the United States, a study was carried out by Paul Janos to compare the academic achievements of markedly younger (14-16) and older (above 16) undergraduate students in selected colleges. It showed that younger students earned higher grades, more academic honours, and

participated in more extra-curriculum activities than their older counterparts (Janos et.al.1989, 496). Though the study involved undergraduate students, it might yet be inferred that students age affect academic performance even among graduate students. The case may be the same for graduate students. However factors that may be directly connected with age would be time-lapse between their undergraduate studies and the present graduate studies. The longer it is the more difficult it would be to readjust to school life. Also, whether one was involved in short term courses during the intervening time would determine his or her ability to engage in the mental activity that studies demand.

Other factors related to age would be other diverse responsibilities, for example, business that one would be involved in alongside studies. This implies extra workload which may affect academic performance.

#### **The effect of language on academic performance.**

"Research suggests that we must work toward the short-term goal of language proficiency with the intermediate goal of autonomy clearly in mind" (Perderson 1995, 14). Skill in the language of instruction is a basic necessity for students in all learning institutions. Learning can only take place where there is effective communication.

A descriptive study was carried out in the United States of America to find out the relationship between



performance of students when taught by overseas teachers, versus their performance when taught by native teachers in America. The study revealed that there were language-related complaints that were believed to create a major interference that may have hindered student's learning process. Also, the understanding of the subject matter was negatively affected by the accent of the foreign teaching assistants (Jacob and Charles 1988, 552-3). Although, the study was carried out in the United States of America, similar outcomes may be observed in Africa. These may be due to problems related to lack of English proficiency among students. Students therefore fail to grasp the instruction given. Also, most instruction in institutions of higher learning is given through lectures. If students have disabilities in the language of instruction, they cannot take full notes helpful for good academic performance.

Related to language proficiency is the ability to understand and to take full notes for lectures. This can be illustrated by a study done to investigate the differences in study habits between successful students and failing students. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 3

## Effective study habits

	Successful students	Failing Students
Average classroom hours per week	27	18
Percentage of total work time devoted to a regular programme	57	49
Fullness of lecture notes (100= notes written out in full)	64	47
Percentage reviewing notes the same day	21	8

(Maddox 1963,13)

As can be observed in the Table above, taking notes in full was the highest difference between successful students and failing students. Successful students took fuller lecture notes (Maddox 1963, 13). This definitely requires writing skill as well as language proficiency to a greater degree. Other areas that are affected by lack of language proficiency are, understanding literature and efficiency in writing examinations and projects.

Eugene Ballagher conducted a literary research to find out an institutional response to difficulties of students in the language of instruction, in Arab Medical College. He also interviewed the Students Language Difficulties Committee (S.L.D.C.) which had been created due to the academic dean's recognition of the poor academic performance of many students, and the belief that their

difficulties were due to weakness in English. He discovered that the members of the committee were not in agreement on whether academic failure was due to language difficulties. They had therefore paid attention to other matters and had neglected the language difficulty among students without carrying out any research. Since they did not carry out a research, language difficulties among students remained rampant. Thus, students academic performance did not improve (Ballagher 1989,565-582).

A study of English proficiency was conducted to include, course patterns, and academic achievements of limited English proficient community college students . The findings revealed that students with a limited proficiency in English (where English was the student's second language), did not differ from the general student population in academic achievement. It also revealed that the persistence of students was negatively affected for students with a limited proficiency in English (Best 1994, 11). However, these findings could be different when dealing with students whose English as a language of instruction is their third, fourth, fifth or even sixth to be learnt. In this study, it is held that language proficiency may affect academic performance. Difficulties in understanding instruction can arise from poor vocabulary (Maddox 1963, 73).

## The effect of family responsibilities on academic performance

Young adult years are for marrying, raising children, deciding on careers, and gaining some equilibrium in life ... Middle age adults begin to slow down physically but may begin to take greater interest in learning ... but they are also faced with guiding their teenage children through their stormy years (Javalera 1973, 42).

Graduate schools are characterized by students who are both young adults and middle-age adults (20-45 years). These students have different family responsibilities which may affect their academic performance due to the demand of time and attention. For example, if one gets married and then coupled with becoming parents while enrolled in graduate school could also influence the degree of progress in studies. The impact is expected to affect men and women differently and to directly affect their involvement in their programme of study (Girves and Wemmerus 1988, 169).

Jean Girves and Virginia Wemmerus carried out a similar research with a view to developing models of graduate students' degree of progress. They conducted survey for both masters and doctoral studies. This included several sections dealing with respondent's experiences during and after graduate school. From the section containing environmental variables, they determined the marital status of the respondents at entry to schools and any changes during their time of study. They also determined parental status at entry and changes of the same during graduate school. They found out that student characteristics, including their marital and

parental status, were related to the degree of progress at masters level (Girves and Wemmerus 1988, 173, 180). The family is an integral part of an individual and hence may affect academic performance.

### **The effect of educational aspirations on academic performance**

"It is true that students who expect to continue their education have higher gained scores on intellectual experiences than do the students who do not plan to continue their education" (Pace 1986, 289). When one has a goal, there is the tendency for one to work hard in order to achieve it. This, in turn, keeps one motivated and more effort is put in contrast with a person who does not have a goal. A study carried out among students and lecturers to find out what they considered to be factors influencing student's academic performance, revealed that both students and lecturers considered insufficient student effort as the factor most likely to contribute to academic failure (Roy 1996, 74). Lack of effort may be related to lack of a goal for further studies. This means that the student may fail to know the academic qualifications (including G.P.A.) needed for admission for further studies. An investigation done at a University by giving mental tests on entry to the students, and comparing their test scores with subsequent examination scores revealed that: nearly half of the under-achievers had weak or unsatisfactory motives, whereas most of the

over-achievers had a definite vocational goal or strong intellectual interest in their courses. The result of this investigation is illustrated in the following table.

**Table 4**  
**Over-achievers and under-achievers**

	Definitive vocational goal interest percent	Weak or unsatisfactory motives percent
Over-achievers	88	12
Under-achievers	57	43

Thus, the lack of adequate motivation is a cause of academic failure (Maddox 1963, 18-19).

In many cases, students do not have a clearly defined goal for further studies. Shoemaker observes that in recent decades, the church has rediscovered the Reformation emphasis upon the priesthood of all believers, promoting the vital theme every one is a minister. Regretfully, there has not been an equal emphasis upon the need for professional ministers as shepherds and teachers of the flock. (Shoemaker 1992, 106).

This attitude may bring contentment on a master's level education and also on any grades achieved. On the contrary, those who have a goal for furthering their studies may aim to improve their low grades, in order to attain the required academic qualification for further studies.

## The effect of student-teacher interactions on academic performance

Christian higher education institutions assume that student-faculty informal interaction naturally occurs because of the fraternal nature of our faith. In reality perhaps it does not, to the degree we assume. A more deliberate course of action that intentionally seeks to impact student lives is more effective (Lampont 1988, 18).

According to Mark Lampont, student-teacher informal interaction can impact students lives. This can be a method of motivating students. While his challenge is to teachers to enhance informal interactions with students, Steven Stratton indicates that it should be done both by the students and by the teachers. This requires purposeful time and effort on the part of both the teachers and the students (Stratton and James 1993, 101). There is need for healthy interactions between students and teachers. This is because learning is not only an academic exercise but also a relational issue. Studies have revealed that there are both field dependant and field independent learning styles for all human beings (Hanson and Silver 1986, 3). Since both categories are involved in the learning process, effort must be made to fulfil both. For field dependent students regular interactions with the teacher is very beneficial.

The literature review was carried out to find out the influence of student-teacher interactions on students life including academic achievement. It revealed that students differ in the degree to which faculty influence may have a socializing effect. Again, the quality of relationship is more important than the frequency of interaction. The

following factors are positively affected by friendly interactions: academic achievement, satisfaction with college, intellectual development, persistence and attention, career and educational aspirations (Lampert 1988, 18).

Quality of interaction is an important factor that Lampert observes. It is possible to have high level of informal interactions that may not be aimed at academic excellence. This may not affect academic performance significantly. Intentional, quality student-teacher interactions will positively influence academic performance.

### **Methodological Literature**

In literature, we find various methodologies that could be used in carrying out research. Some of these methods were adopted for this study.

A questionnaire is used when factual information is desired (Best and Kahn 1989, 181). A questionnaire may consist of open-ended questions or close-ended questions, or both. The questionnaire that was used for this study consisted of both open-ended and close-ended items. The close-ended items were used to gather quantitative data. The open-ended items which probed for source, were used to gather qualitative data. The questionnaires were administered directly to each respondent. Now this was beneficial as the researcher was afforded the chance to develop rapport with the respondents, to explain the



purpose of the study, and to explain the meaning of items that may not have been clear to the respondents.

It is always necessary to try out a questionnaire with a few friends and acquaintances. This helps to identify whether some items are ambiguous and hence make them clear. Pilot testing may also be done (Best and Kahn 1989, 191). For this research, a pilot test was carried out among a selected number of students to test the clarity of the items.

Once the questionnaire has been administered, the major challenge is analysing the results. A crisis presents if some items have not been responded to. If only a small percentage of the subjects fail to respond, the question is not critical. "If more than 20 percent are missing, however, it is very likely that most of the findings of the study could have been altered considerably if the non-responding group had returned the questionnaire and had answered in a markedly different manner from the responding group" (Borg and Gall 1989, 443).

The Likert Method of Summated Ratings is a popular method used to measure people's opinions. It measures the opinion of people on a scale which contains five responses rated with scores from 1-5. The responses range from a very strong positive assertion to a very strong negative assertion concerning an issue. Midway between these two extremes are moderated responses. Since it takes much less time to conduct compared to other methods (Borg and

Gall 1989, 196). it was deemed appropriate to use for this research.

The Likert scaling technique assigns a scale value to each of the five response, that is, (very great extent, great extent, small extent, very small extent, and not at all). Percentage responses are thereafter reported and analyzed.

If the samples are small and if their variances are equal or nearly equal, the method of poles variances is the appropriate test for the significance of the difference between two independent means, called the t test (Borg and Gall 1989, 280). The t test was used in this study to test the hypotheses. A hypothesis is rejected if the t value obtained exceeds the t critical value (1.708) necessary to reject the hypothesis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methods and the procedures that were used in carrying out the field research. These include: population definition, sampling methods, design of instrument, and research design.

#### **The population**

The population of this study consisted of continuing graduate students, that is, those who had been students for at least one full term. This is because grade point averages for every student were needed by the researcher. Continuing students comprised a total of thirty full time students. There were twenty-six males and four females. All the female students were married but two of the male students were not. All the married students lived with their spouses and children. The population consisted of students from different regions and of difference nationalities; from Anglophone and Francophone Africa, Britain, United States of America and Asia.

### **Sampling**

No sampling was done for this study. This is because the population was small and was easily accessible to the researcher. However three students (two males and one female) were not available during the time the research was carried out.

### **Designing instrument**

A questionnaire was used to gather information. The questionnaire contained both close-ended and open-ended questions. The close-ended questions were used to gather factual information. The open-ended questions gave the respondents freedom to express themselves using their own words.

In constructing the questions on the questionnaire, various steps were taken by the researcher. Through observation and discussion with students, the following factors were suggested as affecting academic performance: lack of finance, English language difficulties, and family responsibilities. In addition, the researcher then reviewed literature and the following factors were added: Proficiency in the language of instruction, students age, and academic aspirations.

Based on the six factors, the researcher has developed twenty-eight questions to find out how these factors affected academic performance of the graduate students at N.E.G.S.T. An example of these questions is:

How often do you consult with your teachers for academic assistance?

- |             |      |
|-------------|------|
| Very often  | [ ]5 |
| Often       | [ ]4 |
| Rarely      | [ ]3 |
| Very rarely | [ ]2 |
| Never       | [ ]1 |

An example of an open ended question is:

In what ways do you think age affects your academic performance either,

Positively?

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or Negatively?

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(Please fill one)

### **Pilot testing**

The questionnaire was pilot-tested among students in the Christian Education Programme at N.E.G.S.T. This is because they were also involved in thesis writing. They were also in a position to test the clarity of the items, since they had taken a course on research methods.

### **Research design**

The researcher used a descriptive research design. Information was gathered from records and through a questionnaire which was administered to continuing students of the 96/97 academic year.

### **Administering the instrument**

The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents individually and directly. The questionnaire was personally handed to the students within a week according to the availability of the students.

### **Method of data analysis**

The first section of the questionnaire contained twenty-eight questions. Some were closed-ended and others were open-ended. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis were used. Closed-ended questions were analyzed quantitatively while open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively. The open-ended questions were meant to probe the responses given to the closed-ended questions and to give the respondents the choice for free expression and comment.

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions which were meant to learn from students what other factors affected their academic performance, and what they thought should be done to improve their academic performance.

The following independent variables were used to analyze the students' responses, namely: the lack of finance, the lack of language proficiency, students' age, family responsibilities, academic aspirations and student-faculty interactions.

The opinions of the students on the extent to which they thought each variable affected their academic

performance were measured on the *Likert Scale of Summated Ratings*. The responses of the students on the Likert Scale were summed up to know their opinions about how each variable affected their academic performance. Summations higher than eighty-one were considered to strongly affect academic performance compared to summations lower than eighty-one. The number of respondents in this study was twenty-seven students.

Six hypotheses were formulated for this study. These were tested using the statistical test known as the *t test* (Best and Kahn 1989, 271) which is used to test the significant difference between the means of two small sample independent groups. These sample groups comprised the second and the third year students. The formula used is as follows:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(N_1-1)S^2_1 + (N_2-1)S^2_2}{N_1 + N_2 - 2} \left( \frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2} \right)}}$$

$\bar{X}$  = Mean Score     $N$  = Sample Size     $S^2$  = Variance

The formula was applied because of the small samples involved in this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS.**

#### **Data analysis and findings**

This chapter will look into how the data gathered were analyzed as well as the interpretation of the findings. The findings were reported in two sections. The first entailed the return of the questionnaire, and the second contained the survey of findings used to test the hypotheses derived from the research questions. It also contained the interpretation of the findings in light of the two research questions raised in this study.

#### **Questionnaire Returns**

Table 5 below shows the rate of returns of the questionnaire distributed to students in the masters program. All the twenty-seven questionnaires were returned. Hence a hundred percent (100%) response rate was obtained.



Table 5

## Rate of Questionnaire Returns

No.of Questionnaire distributed	No.of Questionnaire returned	Percentage returned
27	27	100

## Possible factors affecting academic performance

## Research question 1

What factors affect the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T.?

## The effect of lack of finance on academic performance

The related hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 1: We would expect that the lack of finance negatively affects academic performance.

The following Table shows the organizations that sent students to N.E.G.S.T.

Table 6

## Students organizations

	Church Organization	Para-church Organization	No Organization
Percentage	70%	11%	19%

Eighty-one percent of the students have been sent either by Church or Para-Church Organizations to study at N.E.G.S.T.

Table 7 below shows how the senders support students financially in their studies.

**Table 7**  
**Sender's financial support**

	Frequency	Percentage
Full Scholarship	7	26%
Partial Scholarship	8	30%
No Scholarship	9	33%
Not sure	3	11%
TOTAL	27	100%

Table 7 above shows that at least sixty-three percent of the students only had partial or no scholarship, and therefore lacked financially.

Table 8 below shows the responses of students on the extent to which the lack of finance affected their academic performance negatively.

**Table 8**  
**Students response (Likert Scale) of the effect of lack of finance on academic performance.**

Opinion	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not at all	Total
Score	25	40	18	4	4	91

N = 27

A total score of ninety-one was obtained from the respondents in relation to their view on how lack of finance affected their academic performance. A score of

25 (28% of the respondents) indicated that lack of finance affected academic performance to a very great extent, a score of 40 (44% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a great extent, while a score of 18 (28% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a small extent. Further, a score of 4 (4% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a very small extent and a score of 4 (4% of the respondents) indicated that they were not affected at all.

The following variables in the population were used to test the related hypothesis 1:

- a). Students in the second year of study.
- b). Students in the third year of study.

The responses of student were tabulated as shown in Table 9 below. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent sample groups was performed with the following results.

**Table 9**

**Effect of lack of finance on academic performance**

Variable	Very great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very small Ext.	Not at all	TOTAL
Second year students	5	6	4	2	4	21
Third Year Students	-	4	2	-	-	6
TOTAL	5	10	6	2	4	27

$t = 0.72$   
 $df = 25$

Significance level = 0.05

The t value of 0.72 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom was below the t critical value (1.708) necessary for the rejection of the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Thus at the 0.05 level of confidence, it can be asserted that the lack of finance negatively affects academic performance of students.

Table 10 below shows the problems related to lack of finance as indicated by students.

**Table 10**  
**Issues related to lack of finance**

Issue	Frequency
Anxiety	18
Lack of text books	4
Time spent in work study	8

**The effect of age on academic performance.**

The related hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 2: We would expect that aging negatively affects academic performance.

Table 11 below shows ages of students (at N.E.G.S.T) in the population.

**Table 11**  
**Students' ages**

Age	No. of students
46 - 55	3
35 - 45	14
Below 35	10
TOTAL	27

Twenty-four (89%) of the students were below forty-four years of age. When responding on whether they thought their age affected their academic performance, ten indicated that it did, ten indicated that it did not and seven indicated that they were not sure. Of the ten who responded that their age affected their academic performance, only five indicated that it did so negatively.

The following Table 12 shows the supposition of students on how age negatively affected their academic performance.

**Table 12**  
**Students Responses (Likert Scale)**  
**on the effect of age on academic performance**

Opinion	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not at all	TOTAL
Score	—	4	9	2	22	37

N = 27

A total score of thirty-seven was obtained. A score of 4 (11% of the respondents) indicated that their age affected them negatively to a great extent, a score of 9

(24% of the respondents) indicated that it affected them to a small extent, and a score 2 (5% of the respondents) indicated that it affected them to a very small extent. finally, a score of 22 (66% of the respondents) indicated that it did not affect them at all. Therefore age was not viewed by students to have negatively affected their academic performance.

The following variables in the population were used to test the related hypothesis 2:

- a). Students in the second year of study
- b). Students in the third year of study

The responses of students were tabulated as shown in Table 13 below. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent groups was performed with the following results:

**Table 13**  
**Effect of age on academic Performance**

Variables	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not At All	TOTAL
Second year Students	1	5	7	1	7	21
Third Year Students	-	-	3	1	2	6
TOTAL	1	5	10	2	9	27

N = 27

t = 0.03

df = 25

Significance Level = 0.05

The t value of 0.03 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom was below the t critical value (1.708) necessary to reject the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Therefore, at the 0.05 level of confidence, it can be asserted that aging negatively affects academic performance.

### The effect of Language proficiency on academic performance

The related hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 3: We would expect that proficiency in the language of instruction positively affects academic performance.

The following Table shows where students first learnt the English Language which is the language of instruction at N.E.G.S.T.

**Table 14**  
**Mastery of English Language**

Place	Frequency
Home	2
Kindergarten	3
Primary School	6
Secondary School	9
Post-Secondary	7

When asked to give their view as to what extent their mastery of the English Language affected their academic performance, the students responded as follows:

Table 15

Students responses (Likert Scale)  
on the effect of English Language Proficiency

Opinion	Very great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not at All	Total
Score	5	20	30	6	9	70

A total score of seventy was obtained from the respondents in connection to their estimation of how lack of mastery of the English Language affected their academic performance negatively. A score of 5 (7% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a very great extent, a score of 20 (29% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a great extent, and a score of 30 (43% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a small extent. Further, a score of 6 (8% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a very small extent, and a score of 9 (13% of the respondents) indicated that they were not affected at all.

The following variables in the population were used to test the related hypothesis 3:

- a). Students in the second year of study
- b). Students in the third year of study

The responses of students were tabulated as shown in Table 16. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent groups was performed with the following results:



Table 16

**Effect of lack of English language  
proficiency on students academic Performance**

Variables	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not At All	TOTAL
Second year Students	1	5	7	1	7	21
Third Year Students	-	-	3	1	2	6
TOTAL	1	5	10	2	9	27

N = 27

t = 0.08

df = 25

Significance Level = 0.05

The t value of 0.87 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom was below the t critical value (1.708) necessary for the rejection of the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore confirmed. Consequently, at the 0.05 level of confidence, it can be asserted that proficiency in the language of instruction positively affects academic performance.

**The effect of family responsibilities on academic performance**

The related hypothesis is as follow:

Hypothesis 4: We would expect that family responsibilities negatively affect academic performance.

The following Table shows students responses on the extent to which they thought family responsibilities negatively affected their academic performance.

Table 17

Students responses (Likert Scale) on the effect of family responsibilities on academic performance

Opinion	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not at All	Total
Score	15	32	21	10	4	82

From table 17 above, a total score of 82 from the respondents was obtained in association to students supposition on the effect of family responsibilities on academic performance. A score of 15 (18% of the respondents) indicated that family responsibilities affected their academic performance negatively to a very great extent, a score of 32 (39% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a great extent, and a score of 22 (26% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a small extent. Finally, a score of 10 (12% of the respondents) indicated that they were affected to a very small extent, and a score of 4 (5% of the respondents) indicated that they were not affected at all.

The following variables in the population were used to test the related hypothesis 4:

- a). Students in the second year of study
- b). Students in the third year of study

The responses of students were tabulated as shown in Table 18 below. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent groups was performed with the following results:

Table 18

**Effect of family responsibilities  
on academic Performance**

Variables	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not At All	TOTAL
Second year Students	3	8	6	4	-	21
Third Year Students	-	-	3	1	2	6
TOTAL	3	8	9	5	2	27

N = 27

t = 0.87  
df = 25  
Significance Level = 0.05

The t value of 0.87 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom was below the t critical value (1.708) necessary to reject the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Hence, at the 0.05 level of confidence, it can be asserted that family responsibilities negatively affect students academic performance.

**The effect of academic aspirations on academic performance**

The related hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 5: We would expect that academic aspirations positively affect academic performance.

When asked whether they had a goal for further studies, Sixteen students marked that they had; five indicated that they were not sure, six pointed out that they did not have a goal for further studies. When asked

whether they aimed to achieve the required G.P.A. for further studies, Twenty-five indicated that they did.

The following Table 18 shows students cumulative G.P.A. by the end of 1996/97 academic year. Four students declined to reveal their G.P.A. and saying that it was a private matter. Since this number only constituted sixteen percent of the population, it was not considered to have negatively affected the findings of the study in a significant way.

**Table 19**

**Students' cumulative G.P.A.**

G.P.A	Frequency
Above 3.5	3
3.0 - 3.4	12
2.5 - 2.9	7
2.0 - 2.4	1
Below 2.0	-
Total	23

N = 23

Of the eight students whose G.P.A. was less than 3.0, six indicated that they had a goal for further studies.

The following Table illustrates students view on what extent they thought the goal for further studies affected their academic performance.

Table 20

Students responses (Likert Scale) on the effect of academic aspirations on academic performance

Opinion	Very Great Ext.	Great Ext.	Small Ext.	Very Small Ext.	Not at All	Total
Score	30	56	3	-	6	95

N = 27

Table 20 above shows that a total score of ninety-five was obtained in relation to having a goal for further studies and its effect on academic performance. A score of 30 (32% of the respondents) indicated that setting a goal for further studies positively affected their academic performance to a very great extent, a score of 56 (59% of the respondents) indicated that it affected them to a great extent, while a score of 3 (3% of the respondents) indicated that it affected them to a small extent. Further, a score of 6 (6% of the respondents) indicated that they were not affected at all.

A t test was performed to test the related hypothesis. The following variables were used to perform the test,

- a). Students in the second year of study
- b). Students in the third year of study

The responses of students were tabulated as shown in Table 21 below. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent sample groups was performed with the following results:

Table 21

**Effect of academic aspirations  
on academic performance**

Variables	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Small Extent	Very Small Extent	Not at All	TOTAL
Second year Students	4	12	-	-	5	21
Third Year Students	2	2	1	-	1	6
TOTAL	6	14	1	-	6	27

N = 27

t = 0.23  
df = 25  
Significance Level = 0.05

The t value of 0.23 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom is below the t critical value (1.708) necessary to reject the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Thus, at the 0.05 level of confidence, it was asserted that students academic aspirations positively affects academic performance.

**The effect Student-Teacher Interactions on academic performance**

The related hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 6 : Student-teacher friendly interactions affects academic performance positively.

The Table 22 below shows students rating of their friendly interactions with the faculty.

Table 22

Students responses (Likert Scale) on their friendly interactions with the teachers

Opinion	Very good	Good	Average	Weak	Very weak	Total
Score	15	56	27	2	-	100

N = 27

This show that a total score of a hundred was obtained. A score of 15 (15% of the respondents) indicated that their friendly interactions with their teachers were very good, a score of 56 (56% of the respondents) indicated that friendly interactions were good, while a score of 27 (27% of the respondents) indicated average rating. Further, a score of 2 (2% of the respondents) indicated weak interactions with their teachers. This shows that seventy-seven percent of the responses indicated interactions above average.

The following Table shows the regularity of student consultation with teachers on academic matters on a Likert Score.

Table 23

Student-faculty interactions on academic matters

Opinion	Very often	Often	Rarely	very rarely	Never	Total
Score	-	32	39	12	-	83

A total score of eighty three was obtained. A score of 32 (39% of the respondents) indicated that they

regularly consulted their teachers for academic assistance, a score of 39 (47% of the respondents) indicated that they rarely consulted their teachers, while a score of 12 (14% of the respondents) indicated that they rarely consulted their teachers.

A t test was performed to test the related hypothesis. The following variables were used to perform the test,

- a). Students in the second year of study
- b). Students in the third year of study

The responses of students were tabulated as shown in Table 24 below. A test of significant difference between the means of two independent sample groups was performed with the following results:

**Table 24**

**Rate at which students consult teachers for academic assistance**

Variables	Very often	often	Average	Very rarely	Not At All	TOTAL
Second year Students	6	11	4	-	-	21
Third Year Students	2	2	2	-	-	6
TOTAL	8	13	6	-	-	27

N = 27

t = 0.30  
 df = 25  
 Significance Level = 0.05



The  $t$  value of 0.30 obtained at 25 degrees of freedom was below the  $t$  critical value (1.708) necessary to reject the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Thus, at the 0.05 level of confidence, it was asserted that student-teacher friendly interactions positively affect students academic performance.

#### Other factors affecting academic performance

Students were asked to indicate other factors, which were not among the variables, that affected their academic performance. They indicated the following factors as shown in tables 25 and 26 below.

Table 25 below illustrates other factors positively affecting academic performance as indicated by students.

**Table 25**  
**Other factors positively affecting**  
**academic performance**

Factor	Frequency
Interest in subject	2
Experience in writing	1
Stimulation in ministry	1

Two students pointed out that interest in each subject positively affected their academic performance. Experience in writing and stimulation in ministry were other factors thought to have affected academic performance.

Table 26 below illustrates other factors negatively affecting academic performance as indicated by students.

**Table 26**

**Other factors negatively affecting academic performance**

Factor	Frequency
Work overload in some courses	11
Commitments outside the school	4
Poor time management	2
Discontentment with the programme of study	2

Most students complained that work overload in some courses negatively affected their academic performance other engagement outside the school and poor time management were thought to have negatively affected their academic performance.

**Research Question 2**

The second research question stated as follows:

What did students perceive as necessary for improving their academic performance?

To answer this research question one open-ended item was formulated. The respondents were asked to indicate what they thought would improve their academic performance. The suggestion given was tabulated in the Table below.

The following suggestions were indicated by students as tabulated below:

Table 27

## Suggestions on how to improve academic performance

Suggestion	Frequency
Proper time management by students	22
Reduction of workload in some courses	11
More effort in study	9
Strengthened mentorship	8
Full scholarship	5
Revised programme of study	3

As Table 27 above shows, twenty-two students thought that they needed to have proper time management to improve their academic performance. The following suggestions were given by students as ways in which the school could participate to assist them manage time properly: better medical facilities, help with transport for shopping, and training in English language.

Eleven students pointed out that work overload in some courses affected their academic performance negatively. Table 26 above shows that students are of the view that reduced workload in some courses would help students improve their academic performance. Nine were of the view that more effort in study would improve their academic performance. Eight students suggested that more commitment by the faculty in mentoring students would improve academic performance. Five students felt that if they obtained a full scholarship they would do better academically. Finally, three students thought that if

their programme of study was revised, they would be motivated and hence better academic performance.

## **Research question 2**

### **Discussion**

Data analysis above revealed that students considered two factors to have affected their academic performance positively. These are academic aspirations and student-faculty interactions.

#### **Academic aspirations**

Seventy-four percent of the students had a goal for further studies and indicated that they would like to achieve the required G.P.A for further studies. However thirty percent of these students did not have the G.P.A required (at least 3.0-3.7 depending on the type of degree) for further studies.

#### **Student-faculty interactions**

Seventy-one percent of the respondents indicated to have good interactions above average with the faculty, forty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they rarely consulted their teachers for academic assistance. Some indicated that they discussed other issues apart from academic matters with the teachers.

On the other hand, students considered two factors to have negatively affected their academic performance, namely: lack of finance and family responsibilities.

**Lack of finance**

Seventy two percent of the responses indicated that students were negatively affected by this factor to a very great extent or to a great extent. This could be the case since sixty-six percent of the total population had either partial scholarship or no scholarship. Students G.P.A.S. did not show any significant difference between students with full scholarship and partial scholarship since only one of the seven who had a full scholarship had achieved a cumulative G.P.A. above 3.5.

**Family responsibilities**

Fifty-seven percent of responses indicated that students were negatively affected by this factor to a very great extent or great extent. Students attributed this to the time demanded by family members and to the financial implications of maintaining a family especially for those students who had either partial or no scholarship and they had to think of ways of raising funds. All those whose cumulative G.P.A.'s were below 3.0 were all married and also had financial problems.

Contrariwise, students did not think that the following factors were negatively affecting their academic performance: English language proficiency and age.

**English Language proficiency**

On this factor, thirty-six percent of the responses indicated that the lack of English language proficiency

negatively affected their academic performance either to a very great extent, or to a great extent. Sixty-four percent of the respondents were of the view that this factor negatively affected their academic performance to a very small extent, to a small extent or did not affect at all. However students G.P.A's show that all those who achieved cumulative G.P.A's of 3.5 and above learnt English either as a first language or before they joined primary school. On the other hand, those who achieved cumulative G.P.A's below 3.0 (apart from one) learnt English after High School.

### Age

On this factor, sixty-percent of the respondents indicated that age did not negatively affect students academic performance at all. Since fifty-two percent of the students in the population were between thirty-five years and above and thirty seven percent of the total population were below thirty five years of age, we may conclude that all students were young adults and middle-aged adults. Hence they indicated that their age contributed positively to their academic performance due to experience and motivation. However all the three students who were above forty-five years of age complained of weak memory and physical tiredness which affected their academic performance negatively. The three of them had G.P.A's below 3.0.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This descriptive study was an attempt to investigate some of the factors affecting academic performance of graduate students at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T) and to find out the necessary measures that could be taken to improve students academic performance. This was done through the generation of relevant hypotheses, and finding answers to the following Research Questions (R.Q.):

**R.Q.1. What factors affect the academic performance of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T?**

In regard to the Research Question 1, six hypotheses were generated and each was tested.

**Hypothesis 1:** We would expect that the lack of finance negatively affects academic performance.

This hypothesis was not rejected as it was found that students responses indicated that the lack of finance negatively affected their academic performance. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion on this factor.

**Hypothesis 2:** We would expect that aging negatively affects academic performance.

This hypothesis was not rejected, even though the available data revealed that students age did not affect academic performance negatively for graduate students at N.E.G.S.T. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion of this factor.

**Hypothesis 3:** We would expect that proficiency in the language of instruction affects academic performance positively.

This hypothesis was not rejected. The research revealed that proficiency in the language of instruction affected academic performance positively. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion of this factor.

**Hypothesis 4:** We would expect that family responsibilities affects academic performance negatively.

This hypothesis was not rejected since the research revealed that family responsibilities affected academic performance negatively. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion of this factor.

**Hypothesis 5:** We would expect that aspiration for further studies affects academic performance positively.

This hypothesis was not rejected since the research clearly revealed that aspirations for further studies affected academic performance positively. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion of this factor.



**Hypothesis 6:** We would expect that student-teacher friendly interactions positively affect academic performance.

This hypothesis was not rejected since the research revealed that student-teacher interactions positively affected students academic performance. Difference in students duration at N.E.G.S.T. did not influence their opinion of this factor.

**R.Q.2. What do the student perceive as necessary for improving their academic performance?**

In relation to Research Question 2, no hypotheses were generated, but students gave suggestions on what they thought would improve their academic performance.

Eighty-two percent of the respondents indicated that they needed to manage time properly; forty-one percent of the respondents indicated that regulation of work load to manageable level in each course would help improve their overall academic performance; thirty-three percent of the respondents indicated that they needed to put more effort in their study; thirty percent indicated that more commitment in mentoring students by the faculty was needed; nineteen percent indicated that a full scholarship would help them fully concentrate on their academic work and hence better their performance; and eleven percent indicated that a revised programme of study for relevance would motivate them in their study and therefore would lead a to better academic performance.

From the above analysis, the students suggested that more effort on their part on time management and studying was required. They also pointed out that the school could help to ease their workload in each course and in revising their programme of study. These were Masters of Divinity students.

## CONCLUSION

In light of the two Research Questions posed at the beginning of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn from the summarised findings given in this chapter.

1). The majority of graduate students at N.E.G.S.T. have been sent by Churches. However, most of these Churches are giving either partial financial support or no financial support to the students. This necessitates students effort to raise the deficit funding.

2). Most students at N.E.G.S.T. learnt English Language after Primary School, either in the High School or University.

3). Majority of the students are below forty-five years. Hence they are in their middle adulthood (35-45). They generally do not feel that age affects their academic performance negatively since they are intrinsically motivated to learn.

4). The financial implications of maintaining a family creates anxiety among several students, especially when they are not able to meet their basic needs.

5). Majority of the students plan to further their

studies. They therefore target to attain a G.P.A that will enable them to do so. However, some students seem unaware of the G.P.A. required for further studies.

6). Student's interaction with the faculty is relatively good. However students rarely consult with their teachers for academic assistance.

7). Both the students and the university should cooperate to help students improve their academic performance. Most students indicated that they needed to put more effort in their studies and to manage time properly.

8). There was a complaint among students that they are overloaded in some courses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn above, the following recommendations have been made to help improve academic performance of the students.

1). Regarding the lack of finance, the school may work in collaboration with students to have their churches support them financially. For the students who have not been sent by any organisation, they could be advised on how to raise their own financial support before coming to N.E.G.S.T. This will prevent financial frustrations during the course of study.

2). In light of lack of English Language proficiency among students, the school may offer an English grammar course for those who would need to improve their writing

and their reading skills. This would, in turn, improve students academic performance.

3). Students should be able to plan their time wisely, in order to balance their academic work, family responsibilities and leisure. The school could help by planning various seminars where pertinent topics can be discussed.

4). Students ought to use the relevant materials available at N.E.G.S.T. Library to know about available schools for further studies and their academic requirements. This will help students to work towards a specific goal, and to work hard to raise their G.P.A.'s.

5). Since student-teacher friendly interaction is good, students should make attempt to consult with their teacher often for academic assistance. This will improve their performance on the various individual courses. Teachers should also express their availability to help students academically, and more so for the part-time teachers.

6). The school should also consider the complaints of the students about workload in some courses and take necessary steps. One way would be to have workshops that train students about speed reading and about time management.

#### **Areas of further research**

1). Since the ultimate goal of N.E.G.S.T. is to train leaders for Africa and beyond, a research could be

done to see the relationship between academic performance, and ministry/leadership success among students and alumina.

2). The research was limited to the continuing students in the year 1997/98. A research could be taken to include beginning students and N.E.G.S.T. alumina and faculty.

3). The researcher considered the academic performance of continuing students in all courses in general. Since the students complained of work overload in some courses, a research could be carried out to look into factors that affect academic performance on individual courses.

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SERIAL NO \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONNAIRE

The aim of this questionnaire is to investigate into some of the factors affecting academic performance of graduate students at NEGST.

You are requested to give full information.

Please tick [] only one answer where choices are given.

Finance

1. Which organization sent you to study at NEGST?

Para-church organization [ ]

Church [ ]

Non Governmental organisation [ ]

No organisation [ ]

2. To what extent does your sender support you financially?

Full scholarship [ ]

Partial scholarship [ ]

No scholarship [ ]

Not sure [ ]

3. Do you have other agencies or individuals supporting you financially?

yes [ ] No [ ] Don't know [ ]

4. To what extent does the lack of finance negatively affect your academic performance?

- Very great extent [ ] 5
- Great extent [ ] 4
- Small extent [ ] 3
- Very small extent [ ] 2
- Not at all [ ] 1

5. How does the lack of finance affect your performance, Negatively?

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6. If you are on a full scholarship how does this affect your performance positively?

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Language proficiency

7. Is English your first language?

- Yes [ ]      No [ ]      Not sure [ ]

8. If your answer above is none of the above, when did you first learn it?

- Pre-primary [ ]  
 Primary school [ ]  
 secondary/high school [ ]  
 College [ ]  
 Any other(Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

9. To what extent does the lack of English Language skill affect your academic performance negatively?

- Very large extent [ ]  
 Large extent [ ]  
 Small extent [ ]  
 Very small extent [ ]  
 Not at all [ ]

10. If you are skilled in English language, in what ways does this favour your performance?

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### Age

11. How old are you?

- Above 55 [ ]  
 46-55 [ ]  
 35-45 [ ]  
 Below 35 [ ]

12. Do you think that your age affects your academic performance?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]      Not sure [ ]

13. If your answer is no, go to question 15;  
if your answer above is yes, to what extent does your age affect your performance negatively?

- Very great extent [ ] 5
- Great extent [ ] 4
- Small extent [ ] 3
- Very small extent [ ] 2
- Not at all [ ] 1

14. In what ways do you think your age affects your academic performance either,

Positively

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or      Negatively

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(Please fill one above)

Family Responsibilities

15. Are you living with your family (Spouse and Children) in NEGST?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

16. How many children do you have with you at NEGST?

5 and above \_\_\_\_\_

3 - 4 \_\_\_\_\_

1 - 2 \_\_\_\_\_

None \_\_\_\_\_

17. What are their ages?

21 and above [ ]

15 - 21 [ ]

7 - 14 [ ]

Below 7 [ ]

18. To what extent do your family responsibilities affect your academic performance negatively?

Very great extent [ ] 5

Great extent [ ] 4

Small extent [ ] 3

Very small extent [ ] 2

Not at all [ ] 1

19. In what ways do your family responsibilities affect your academic performance

Academic aspirations

20. Do you plan to further your studies by taking either a doctoral studies or another masters degree?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]      Not sure [ ]

21. Are you aiming to achieve the required GPA for further studies?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]      Do not know [ ]

22. If your answer above is yes, to what extent does this goal affect your academic performance?

Very great extent [ ]5

Great extent [ ]4

Small extent [ ]3

Very small extent [ ]2

Not at all [ ]1

23 In what ways does this goal affect your academic performance?

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Student-faculty interactions

24. How can you rate your friendly interactions with the faculty?

- |           |       |
|-----------|-------|
| Very good | [ ] 5 |
| Good      | [ ] 4 |
| Average   | [ ] 3 |
| Weak      | [ ] 2 |
| Very weak | [ ] 1 |

25. How often do you consult your teacher for academic assistance?

- |             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| Very often  | [ ] 5 |
| Often       | [ ] 4 |
| Rarely      | [ ] 3 |
| Very rarely | [ ] 2 |
| Never       | [ ] 1 |

26. In what ways does your interaction with the faculty affect your performance?

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27. What is your cumulative GPA?

- Above 3.5 [ ]
- 3.0 - 3.4 [ ]
- 2.5 - 2.9 [ ]
- 2.0 - 2.4 [ ]
- Below 2.0 [ ]

28. Give any other factor(s) that affects your academic performance.

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29. What do you think can help improve your academic performance?

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Thank you very much for answering all questions.



## Curriculum Vitae

Rosemary Wahu Mbogo was born in Kenya, Kiambu District, Central province, in 1971. She joined Ngegu primary school in 1977 and completed primary school studies in 1983. She joined Riara Secondary School in 1984 and sat for the Kenyan Secondary Certificate examination in 1987. The following year she was admitted to Kambui Girls High School for the Kenya Advanced Certificate Education. After successfully completing in 1989, she taught science subjects (Maths, Physics and Chemistry) as an untrained teacher at Chief Wandie Secondary School. In 1990, she joined Kenyatta University where she studied for the Bachelor in Education (Science) degree. After graduation in 1994, she worked for a para-church organization, Rebuilders for Christ, as a preacher. It was during this time that she met Stephen Mbogo and got married in 1995. She later joined the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T.) in 1996 where she studied for the Masters of Art degree in Christian Education upto 1998.