

KAGWE COSMAS MUIRURI OFM
ZBIGNIEW FORMELLA SDB
Università Pontificia Salesiana, Roma

PERCEPTIONS OF PURPOSE/MEANING IN LIFE IN RELATION TO TRANSITION AND ACCESS TO KENYAN UNIVERSITIES. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AMONG FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

1. KENYAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Kenya as a country has a *philosophy* of education, a *vision*, and a *mission* in the education sector. As the education sector is headed by the Ministry of Education, the ministry is “guided by the national philosophy, which places education at the centre-stage of the country’s human economic development strategies. It focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and skills as well as provision of lifelong learning. Emphasis is placed on the provision of a holistic, quality education and training that promotes the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of learners, instilling values such as *patriotism, equality of all human beings, peace, security, honesty, humility, mutual respect, tolerance, co-operation and democracy, through education*”¹.

The Kenya’s Ministry of education’s *mission* is “to provide, promote, co-ordinate quality education, training and research for empowerment of individuals to become caring, competent and *responsible* citizens who value education as a life-long process”². The Ministry of Education stipulates the *Vision* for education in Kenya as follows; “to have a globally competitive quality education, training and research for Kenya’s sustainable development. To achieve this, the Ministry has endorsed the *Vision 2030* and shall focus education and training towards achieving the goals of the *Vision 2030*”³. It is of vital importance to this research to mention the current Kenya’s education focus because it’s the remote goal to be emphasized to the university students in Kenya; the immediate one being of course committing

¹ Republic of Kenya, *Task force on the re-alignment of the education sector to the constitution of Kenya 2010: Towards a globally competitive quality education for sustainable development*, Government printer, Nairobi 2012, p. 22.

² Ibidem.

³ Ibidem.

themselves to their degree courses, to excel in their professional trainings to be qualified stakeholders/workforce in realizing the *Vision 2030*.

Like all Africans, Kenyans had an education system even before the coming of the Europeans. This education system - *Traditional African Education* (TAE) trained individuals to fit into their societies as useful members through providing skills, knowledge and values relevant to the society. It played the role of socializing individuals to fit and participate adequately in the development of society⁴. The medium through which education was conducted was through oral tradition from one generation to the next. Examples of oral traditional methods include: riddles, proverbs, poems⁵, stories among others.

The Europeans arrived in Kenya in the middle of the 18th century, led by adventures, explorers and then the missionaries. To enhance evangelization, missionaries have promoted education in Kenya from the very beginning. In 1846, the Church Missionary Society established a school at Rabai near Mombasa in the coast province⁶. This was the start of formal education in Kenya. From this spring-board, the missionaries prepared themselves to set up other churches and schools in the interior Kenya⁷.

Education in the colonial period was structured on racial grounds between the Europeans, Asians and Africans; the former prepared for white color jobs while the latter for cheap manual labor. One of the main aims of the first education commission was to ascertain equity in accessing education and national economic development goals.

1.1. The 7-4-2-3 structure of education system and its justification

The Kenya Education Commission (Ominde Commission) adopted the 7-4-2-3 structure of education system which meant (seven years of primary education, 4 years of lower secondary education, 2 years of upper secondary education and a minimum of 3 years university education). The structure didn't include the pre-primary programmes for the children less than six years⁸. Other changes included the contents of subjects such as history and geography geared at building a national identity and the abolition of technical and vocational education in primary education⁹.

⁴ See: G. Eshiwani, *Education in Kenya since independence*, East African Educational Press, Nairobi 1993; W. Amukowa, *A call to reform secondary schools in Kenya*, American International Journal of Contemporary Research 3(2013)1, p. 196-215.

⁵ See: W. Ng'ang'a, *Kenya's ethnic communities, foundation of the nation*, Primex printers, Nairobi 2008, p. 13.

⁶ See: J. Stanfield, *Kenya's forgotten Independent school Movement*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2005.

⁷ See: P. Tum, *Education trends in Kenya: Vocational perspective*, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi 1996.

⁸ See: Republic of Kenya, *Kenya education commission report, part 1 and 2 (Ominde Report)*, Government printer, Nairobi 1964.

⁹ See: *ibidem*; C. Owino, *Vocational education in primary schools in Kenya and Tanzania*:

Such a move to stop technical and vocational education in primary education was an immediate reaction to reverse the scope for which education for African child was meant, namely for cheap manual labor and advocate equal opportunities for all (European, Asian and African children) for education with a finality to white color jobs.

1.2. Criticism of the 7-4-2-3 System

The 7-4-2-3 system of education faced criticisms from different people in a variety of areas. For instance, Owino¹⁰ argues that the system lacked capacity and flexibility to respond to changing demands of individual Kenyans and the labor market needs, in respect to new skills, technologies and the attitude to work. The great number of unemployed school leavers at both primary and secondary levels rendered 7-4-2-3 deficient in providing specific skills required for wage employment/self-employment especially because it was geared towards white colour job employment and it was biased towards intellectualism and lacked development skills. The same sentiments were echoed by Simiyu¹¹ who evaluated the system as lacking in technical and vocational components.

a) The policy was too academic and therefore not suitable for direct employment. Thus the policy lacked orientation to employment. This observation resonates what *Gachathi Report* had observed that “one of the largest problems confronting the country is that of unemployment. The problem is aggravated by the annual outputs of school leavers whose number continue to swell following the enormous expansion of the education system in the first years of independence and that unemployment which was said to have started among primary school leavers had spread to embrace even university graduates”¹².

b) The policy encouraged elitist and individualistic attitudes among school leavers, something that was considered incompatible to the African socialist milieu.

1.3. The 8-4-4 structure of education system and its justification

The 8-4-4 system of education was introduced in Kenya in January 1985 as a result of Mackay report of 1982. It consists of eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and four years of basic degree of university

A comparative study with special reference to Kenya, Moi University (Faculty of education), MA dissertation (unpublished), Eldoret 1997; W. Simiyu, *Factors, which influence the teaching of technical and vocational subjects in primary schools in Uasin Gishu, district*, Moi University (Department of Educational Communication), MA dissertation (unpublished), Eldoret 2001; A.M. Wanjohi, *Development of Education System in Kenya since Independence*, KENPRO Online Papers Portal 2011, <www.kenpro.org/papers>, (access: 15.12.2014).

¹⁰ See: C. Owino, *Vocational ...* .

¹¹ See: W. Simiyu, *Factors ...* .

¹² Republic of Kenya, *Kenya education commission report (Gachathi Report)*, Government printer, Nairobi 1976, p. 33-34.

education¹³. The new system aims at providing practically oriented curriculum that will offer a wide-range of employment opportunities.

- a) The 8-4-4 system of education ensures that students graduating at every stage should have some scientific and practical knowledge that can be utilized for self-employment, wage employment or further education and training.
- b) The 8-4-4 system of education identified the irrelevances of the past curriculum in relation to the modern needs of Kenya, which is that, a large number of youth who were unable to proceed for further education did not have alternative occupations or vocational training to turn to. What was taught at school was only good for the few who were academically able to proceed to higher education.

1.4. Criticism of the 8-4-4 System

While the 8-4-4 structure of education in Kenya was initially welcome with the new proposals to incorporate vocational training in primary education, it has its own loopholes as follows¹⁴.

- a) *Books and equipment*. Following the Government decision to implement the 8-4-4 structure of education in 1985, a lot was done by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in preparation of the programme. Books were identified from existing publications. In 1984, lists of these books were supplied both to schools and to the general public. Meanwhile, the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) authored books that would be used in the new system. All these at an enormous cost both to the government and to the parents.
- b) *Teachers*. The introduction of standard 8 classes required more teachers in primary schools. An increase of teachers was also needed in secondary schools to teach newly introduced subjects such as Economics.
- c) *Examination and assessment*. A change of mode of assessment and examination was inevitable due to subjects such as craft and Home Science, which had practical papers up to secondary school level.
- d) *Support and in-service courses*. Teachers had to be retrained to meet the demands of the new system. Teacher Advisory Centres (TACs) were set up to maintain education standards through appraisal, supervision and organization of in-service. Mathematics and science teachers were going through training every school holiday in a programme supported by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) called strengthening of Mathematics and science in secondary education (SMASSE).

¹³ See: W. Amukowa, *A call to reform ...*; Republic of Kenya, *The Presidential Working Party on Education and Man-power (Kamunge Report)*, Government printer, Nairobi 1988.

¹⁴ See: O. Abagi, G. Odipo, *Efficiency of primary education in Kenya: Situation analysis and implications for educational reform (Discussion paper No. DP 004/97)*, Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Nairobi 1997.

2. RESEARCH

To understand the issue of transition and access to Kenyan universities, it is important to understand the aforementioned change of Kenyan education system from 7-4-2-3 system of education to 8-4-4 system of education. The change of education system increased the number of those seeking admission to the public universities, while corresponding infrastructure in lodging was not put in place to meet the challenge. This brought about the introduction of the *self-sponsored programmes* (SSP) students for the full fee paying in 1997, distinguishing them from those sponsored by the government through the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB).

2.1. Definition of the problem

We state the problem as follows: Does the mode of transition and *access* affect a student's *perceptions of purpose/meaning* in life in a call to *verantwortlichkeit* (responsibility)? While the government has set a minimum criterion of an average of C+ from KCSE for accessing Kenyan universities, most of the students who qualify are not admitted through government sponsorship because they don't meet the *cut-off* point determined by the government and varies from year to year. Those students who don't access through the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) seek for other costly ways of accessing university namely through the *Self Sponsored Programs* (SSP/Module II) offered by public universities or through private universities in Kenya or abroad.

Admissions to Kenyan public universities through the two aforementioned avenues, at times create social groupings based on the mode of access. The groupings may hinder the learning process and of course affect the quality of education attained especially in view of the developmental goals of the *Vision 2030*. The promotion of a harmonious co-existence would create a cordial study climate in which a spirit of mutual respect, collaboration and co-responsibility guide the students now in their learning process and in view of future participation in making *Vision 2030* a reality.

2.2. Research Objective, Motivation and Instruments

The objective of our research is to investigate the *perception of purpose/meaning* in life among the first year Kenyan university students in relation to the *three modes of access* namely: the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) students, the *Self Sponsored Programmes* (SSP) students and the Private University (PU) students.

The motivation for this research is twofold namely: the inspirations from the psychological part that deals with perception of purpose/meaning in life and the sociological part dealing with the researches done in Kenya on transition and access to Kenyan universities. The aim was to introduce a psychological component to the sociological aspects addressed by different authors, as a novelty of our research.

In keeping with emerging adults psychosocial development considered as an integral part of the theoretical framework we were motivated to investigate whether the psychological distress that goes with *postformal stage* of cognitive development at the first year of university studies in relation with the three modes of access may increase the distress especially for the students from low income family backgrounds on self-sponsored programmes and those in private universities in relation to meeting full tuition fees. Does this affect their perceptions of purpose/meaning in life in terms of *verantwortlichkeit*/responsibleness?

2.3. Work hypothesis, Methodology and Instruments

The theoretical framework of this research is the Logotherapy of Viktor Emil Frankl (1905-1997). He defines Logotherapy as “education to responsibility”¹⁵, beyond the immediate definition as therapy through meaning. With this definition, he intends, a man’s “response-ability”, to respond to the meaning potentials that life offers¹⁶.

Logotherapy is education to responsibility since it challenges us to take on concrete tasks, to accomplish human achievements. The tasks must be self chosen, regardless of whether they are suggested by others or by society or assumed by ourselves. Frankl, in fact says that “Logotherapy sees in responsibleness the very essence of human existence”¹⁷ and that it “aims at nothing more and nothing less than leading men to consciousness of their responsibility”¹⁸.

In many of our societies today, many people experience existential frustration (vacuum) and feeling of meaninglessness. As Frankl¹⁹ asserts, more and more people feel lonely, frustrated and bored regardless of their social status. It is against this background that Frankl proposes his theory the Logotherapy, a therapy through meaning. Logotherapy helps people to discover meaning, and this task is the primary motivational force in man. Logotherapy does not supply readymade meanings or answers. It only stresses that meaning is always available under whatever circumstances and provides the conditions required for its fulfillment. The discovery of meaning is the personal responsibility of each person and hence this calls for an ongoing honest search, which is in fact an *education to responsibility*, because life is viewed as, an assignment to be carried out, a challenge to be met and a question to be answered responsibly. Frankl believes that meaning in life is possible regardless of gender, age, socio economic background, a person’s intelligence etc.²⁰.

¹⁵ See: V. E. Frankl, *The unconscious God. Psychotherapy and Theology*, Simon and Schuster, New York 1975, p. 121; V. E. Frankl, *Man’s search for ultimate meaning*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. New York 2000, p. 119.

¹⁶ See: J. Fabry, *The pursuit for meaning*, Institute of Logotherapy Press, Abilene, Texas 1987, p. 10.

¹⁷ V. E. Frankl, *Psychotherapy and Existentialism*, Square Press, New York 1985, p. 28.

¹⁸ V. E. Frankl, *The doctor and the soul*, Vintage Books, New York 1986, p. 275.

¹⁹ See: V. E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, Beacon Press, Boston 1992.

²⁰ See: V. E. Frankl, *Man’s search ...*

It is with the above background in mind that we proceed to formulate our hypotheses by first stating our general hypothesis and then the specific hypothesis according to access to Kenyan universities. Basing ourselves on literature on logotherapeutic teachings on *perceptions of purpose/meaning* in life we can come up with a general hypothesis (GH) that:

(GH): *Accessing university education correlates positively with an above average degree of perception of purpose/meaning in life.*

Accessing the university through government sponsorship (a sign of academic excellence in KCSE) promotes a student's perception of purpose/meaning in life because there is continuity in cognitive development with a sense of success from the previous level and with less distress as compared with those who access through SSP and private universities and hence will be less motivated to find meaning and purpose in life, we therefore hypothesize the following.

H1a. Given that the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) students are assured of a direct access to the university through government sponsorship we hypothesize that they will have a significantly higher score for PIL than the *Self Sponsored Programmes* (SSP) students and *Private University* (PU) students.

H1b. We also hypothesize that the JAB students will have a significantly lower score of the SONG in comparison with the SSP and PU students.

The research is empirical and of a nomothetic nature, which is oriented at knowledge which seeks to single out general laws that govern the examined phenomenon, the type of inference preferred is the generalization that is an inductive passage from the studied sample to a whole population with a law that is valid for all. The control of hypothesis must be done with statistical instruments. In this research, we will use the softwares SPSS and AMOS for data analysis and interpretation. AMOS is an added package to SPSS which is helpful in doing Path Analysis Arbuckle²¹ which we will conduct in this research to determine the predictors of meaning in our Kenyan sample ($n=1173$).

In our research, we have used three instruments of which two are logotherapeutic psychological tests namely: *The Purpose in Life Test* (PIL), *The Seeking of Noetic Goals Test* (SONG) and a *Demographic Survey Entry Form* (DSEF). We used PIL and SONG because they have a complimentary nature, which we sought verify with our research. A person who has a high perception of purpose/meaning in life would be less motivated to seek for more²².

2.2.1. Purpose in Life Test (PIL)

The *Purpose in Life test* (PIL) Test is an attitude scale constructed by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1969) from the orientation of Frankl's Logotherapy (Gr. *Logos*,

²¹ See: J. Arbuckle, *Amos 18 user's Guide*, Amos Development Corporation, Chicago 2007.

²² See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking of Noetic Goals Test* (SONG): *A complementary scale to the purpose in Life Test* (PIL), *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 33(1977)3, p. 900-907.

meaning-treatment through finding meaning in life). This is a system of existential therapy, originated by Viktor Emil Frankl. According to Frankl²³, the primary motivation in man is “the will to meaning” (*Der Wille zum Sinn*). He postulates this in opposition to Freud’s “will to pleasure” and to Adler’s “will to power”. According to Frankl, Freud’s principle of *hedonism* is the contemporary consequence of “frustration to the *Will to Meaning* and Adler’s striving for *mastery* as an expression of the means by which meaning is sought”²⁴.

The PIL Test Crumbaugh and Maholick is made up of three parts²⁵. Part A is made up of 20 self report, seven-point (1-7) Likert scale items which are scored objectively. Total PIL raw scores range from 20-140. Raw scores between 113 and 140 suggest *definite purpose and meaning in life*; raw scores between 92 and 112 indicate *somewhat uncertain purpose and meaning in life*; and raw scores below 92 suggest a *lack of clear purpose and meaning in life*. The part B of PIL involves the completion of 13 sentences (ex. “More than anything I want ...” or “The thought of suicide ...”). The part C of PIL asks the participant to write a paragraph related to his or her goals in life. Each part of the PIL is designed to measure Viktor Frankl’s concept, *existential vacuum* or lack of meaning in life; however, considering that Part B and C are clinical in nature, we will exclude them from analysis in the present study. The Part A can be completed within 10-15 minutes.

Since Crumbaugh and Maholick designed the PIL, a number of researches have been done as we shall see here below to ascertain for its validity and reliability in examining of, Frankl’s concepts of *Der Wille zum Sinn* (will to meaning) and existential vacuum. The investigations on the development and application of the Purpose in Life Test (PIL), an attitude scale designed to measure the *degree* to which an individual experiences a sense of meaning and purpose in life have been done by Crumbaugh and others for a span of years²⁶. Studies that report on the reliability and validity of the PIL Crumbaugh and Maholick (1969), Meier and Edwards (1974), Reker (1977) have shown it to be a psychometrically sound instrument.

²³ See: V. E. Frankl, *The doctor and the soul: An introduction to Logotherapy*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1955; V. E. Frankl, *The will to meaning*, Journal of Pastoral Care 12(1958), p. 82-88; V. E. Frankl, *From death-camp to existentialism*, Beacon Press, Boston 1959; V. E. Frankl, *Psychotherapy and existential analysis*, Washington Square Press, New York 1967; A. Ungersma, *The search for meaning*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1968.

²⁴ J. Crumbaugh, L. Maholick, *Manual of Instruction for the Purpose-in-Life Test*, Psychometric Affiliates, Munster 1969, p. 1.

²⁵ See: Ibidem, p. 4.

²⁶ See: J. Crumbaugh, *Cross-Validation of Purpose-in-Life-Test Based on Frankl’s Concepts*, Journal of Individual Psychology, 24, 1(1968), p. 74-81; A. Meier, H. Edwards, *Purpose-in-life Test: Age and sex differences*, Journal of Clinical Psychology, 30(1974), p. 384-386; P. Pearson, B. Sheffield, *Purpose-in-life and the Eysenck Personality Inventory*, Journal of Clinical Psychology, 30(1974), p. 562-564; G. Reker, *The Purpose-in-Life Test in an inmate population: An empirical investigation*, Journal of Clinical Psychology, 33(1977), p. 688-693; D. Sharpe, L. Viney, *Weltanschauung and the Purpose-in-Life Test*, Journal of Clinical Psychology, 29(1973), p. 489-491.

2.2.2. The Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG)

The Seeking of Noetic Goals test (SONG) like PIL is an attitude scale derived from the orientation of Logotherapy (Gr. Nous = "Spirit", the inspirational and aspirational aspects of mind, not necessarily "religious"; Gr. Logos = meaning-treatment through finding meaning in life)²⁷. The Purpose in Life test (PIL) as we discussed above is too an attitude scale formulated to examine the degree to which one has found life's meaning and purpose. The SONG is a complementary scale to measure the strength of motivation to find life meaning²⁸.

Researches that have been done combining the use of the two scales have proved to be of help in evaluating the possibility of successful therapeutic intervention. If a subject scores a high PIL and a low SONG, this means he already has a satisfactory level of life meaning and lacks motivation to find more. He therefore is not likely to be a good candidate for therapy in this area. On the other hand, if he scores a low PIL and a high SONG, he lacks life purpose and has motivation to find it; therefore he should be tractable in this type of therapy²⁹.

The SONG test is a 20-item, 7- point attitude scale formulated to measure the *strength of motivation* to find meaning in life. High (6 to 7) and low (1 to 2) scores are indicative of a strong and a weak motive to find meaning, respectively. In other words total SONG raw scores range from 20-140. According to Crumbaugh, the "normative cutting score in the possible range from 20 to 140 is **79**, halfway between the means of **73** for "normal" and **85** for "abnormal" populations. The standard deviation for normal is approximately **14**, whereas, it is **15** for patients populations"³⁰.

Crumbaugh³¹ developed the Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG) test, an attitude scale designed to measure the *strength* of the motivation to find meaning and purpose in life. The SONG was constructed to complement the PIL. Crumbaugh³² postulated that, according to the theory of Logotherapy, if an individual has found meaning and purpose in life he would have little motivation to search for more; whereas if he has not, he would be highly motivated to fulfill this need.

Crumbaugh is of the view that a consistently negative correlation between the SONG and the PIL would provide evidence for the complementary nature of the SONG. If it is true that the SONG truly complements the PIL, then, at least two independent factors should emerge³³ i.e., a *Purpose in Life* factor and a *Seeking*

²⁷ See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking ...*, p. 901.

²⁸ See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking ...*.

²⁹ See: *ibidem*.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 902.

³¹ See: J. Crumbaugh, *Manual of Instructions for the Seeking of Seeking of Noetic Goals Test*, Psychometric Affiliates, Munster 1977.

³² See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking ...*.

³³ In our research, the new factor loading with a cut-off correlation of (**0,4**) there emerged at least two independent factors one on the *purpose in life* with 14 original PIL items aligning together

of *Noetic Goals Factor*. On the other hand, if the SONG is merely an attitude scale scored in the reverse direction to the PIL, then one large general factor of negative and positive loadings should account for a sizeable proportion of the variability³⁴. To determine the reliability of the SONG the odd-even method. The resultant Pearson-moment relationship was 0,71+0,04, Spearman-Brown corrected to 0,83³⁵.

2.2.3. The Demographic Survey Entry Form

The DSEF was an instrument that contained eleven independent variables among which *access to university, gender, age, university, faculty, part time job, tribe by linguistic clusters, province, residence, family socio economic status and religious affinity*. For the purposes of this research we will limit ourselves to *access to university*.

3. THE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE

The research sample in which we conducted our research complices of first year Kenyan university students from five universities namely: four public universities: University of Nairobi (UoN); Kenyatta University (KU); Egerton University (EU); JomoKenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and one private university: Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). We chose the four public universities to collect enough information on the two modes of transition and access namely: students on government sponsorship through the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) and the *Self Sponsored Programmes* (SSP) students as discussed before. Since the university population in the five selected universities and in deed of the entire Kenyan universities is very big, we opted for a sampling method of 250 students from each university which was done at random across the faculties through collaborators from each university. After the data collection, we proceeded on with data analysis. We used the SPSS for statistical calculations in relation to the hypotheses used in the research. An alpha level of ($p < .05$) significance is used in all statistical tests. Throughout the statistical analysis we used the sample size of 1173 after eliminating the questionnaires with more than half of the questions not responded to.

The following summery descriptive statistics table, on the independent variable *Access to University* shows the frequencies of the three modes of access to Kenyan universities.

to form the factor (we have called it a PIL sub-scale for the Kenyan sample) and a second factor on motivation for meaning with 7 SONG items aligning together to form an independent factor (that we have called SONG sub-scale for the Kenyan sample). Both factors have achieved a good internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha above ($> .07$). With such results we can verify the complementary nature of the Instruments PIL and SONG even with the Kenyan sample ($n=1173$).

³⁴ See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking ...*, p. 902.

³⁵ See: J. Crumbaugh, *The Seeking ...*.

Table 1. Frequency table Access to University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Government sponsored (JAB)	406	34,6	34,6	34,6
	Self sponsored programmes (SSP)	513	43,7	43,7	78,3
	Private University	254	21,7	21,7	100,0
	Total	1173	100,0	100,0	

As far as the independent variable *Access to University* is concerned, the result findings show that those who access through self sponsored programmes had the highest frequency of 513 which constitutes 43,7% of the total sample. Those who access through government sponsorship had a frequency of 406 constituting 34,6% and those through private university scored a frequency of 254 which is 21,7%. The low frequency of access through private university is due to the fact that we considered only one private university. Since the two modes of access to university namely, through *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) and *Self Sponsored Programmes* (SSP) are both in public universities, we gave a higher priority to the public universities.

In relation to the three modes of access to the Kenyan universities, given that the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) students are assured of a direct access to the university through government sponsorship we hypothesize that they will have a significantly higher score for PIL than the *Self Sponsored Programmes* (SSP) students and the *Private University* (PU) students. We also hypothesize that the JAB students will have a significantly lower score of the SONG in comparison with the SSP and PU students.

On the following table we present the ANOVA to determine the levels of significance in relation to our sample's responses to total PIL and SONG and then with *factors 1* and *2*.

Table 2. ANOVA on Access to University

	df	F	Sig.
PIL	2	4,872	,008
SONG	2	5,025	,007
Factor 1. Purpose/meaning	2	7,438	,001
Factor 2. Motivation for a future directed purpose/meaning	2	5,638	,004

Since the ANOVA shows statistically significant differences in PIL, SONG, *factor's 1* and *2* we did a Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) to have a multiple comparisons showing the mean differences between the modes of access to the university, the standard error and levels of significance. In the table below these differences are indicated in *italics* which we will use throughout this hypotheses testing.

Table 3. Post Hoc Tests (Tukey HSD) on Access to University

Dependent Variable	(I)Access to University	(J) Access to University	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
PIL	Government sponsored (JAB)	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	3,11295*	1,27348	,039
		Private University	4,37597*	1,53373	,012
	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	Government sponsored (JAB)	-3,11295*	1,27348	,039
		Private University	1,26302	1,47089	,666
	Private University	Government sponsored (JAB)	-4,37597*	1,53373	,012
		Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	-1,26302	1,47089	,666
SONG	Government sponsored (JAB)	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	-3,50965*	1,23885	,013
		Private University	-,07793	1,49201	,998
	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	Government sponsored (JAB)	-3,50965*	1,47089	,013
		Private University	3,43172*	1,43088	,044
	Private University	Government sponsored (JAB)	-,07793	1,49201	,998
		Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	3,43172*	1,43088	,044
Factor 1	Government sponsored (JAB)	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	1,74027	,90155	,131
		Private University	4,18401*	1,08579	,000
	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	Government sponsored (JAB)	1,74027	,90155	,131
		Private University	2,44375*	1,04130	,050
	Private University	Government sponsored (JAB)	4,18401*	1,08579	,000
		Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	2,44375*	1,04130	,050
Factor 2	Government sponsored (JAB)	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	-1,79283*	,53745	,003
		Private University	-,77912	,64729	,451
	Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	Government sponsored (JAB)	-1,79283*	,53745	,003
		Private University	1,01371	,62076	,232
	Private University	Government sponsored (JAB)	-,77912	,64729	,451
		Self-sponsored programs (SSP)	1,01371	,62076	,232

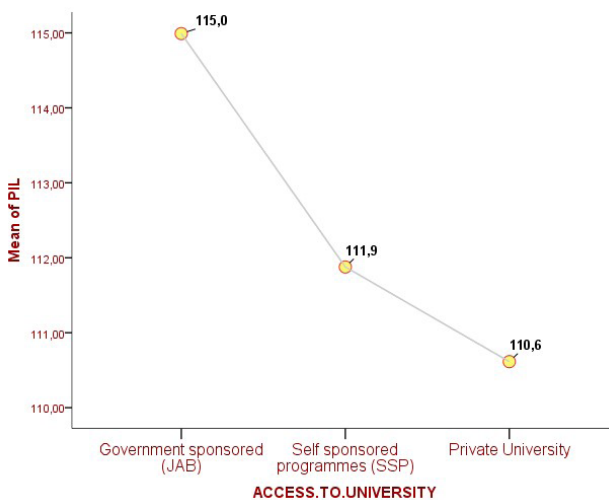
The Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) has shown significant differences between JAB students and the SSP students ($p = 0,039$) and PU students ($p = 0,012$) in PIL. The difference between them is statistically significant because it is below the threshold ($P < ,05$).

The second part of the first hypothesis was comparing JAB students with SSP students and PU students in relation to SONG. The presumption was that *“we also hypothesize that the JAB students will have a significantly lower score of the SONG in comparison with the SSP and PU students”*. Between the JAB students and SSP students there is a statistically significant difference because ($p = 0,013$) which is lower than ($p < ,05$). There is no significant difference between JAB students and PU students since ($p = 0,998$) which is greater than the threshold level of significance ($p < ,05$). We observe as well a significant difference between SSP students and PU students because ($p = 0,044$).

The result findings in relation to factor 1 which we have called Purpose/Meaning³⁶ in Life, show a significant difference between the JAB students and PU students ($p = 0,000$) which is very low in comparison with threshold p - level ($p < ,05$).

The factor 2 which we have called Motivation for a future directed Purpose/Meaning³⁷ in life shows a statistically significant difference between JAB students and SSP students because their ($p = 0,003$) which much lower than ($p < ,05$).

Graph 1. Mean PIL on Access to University

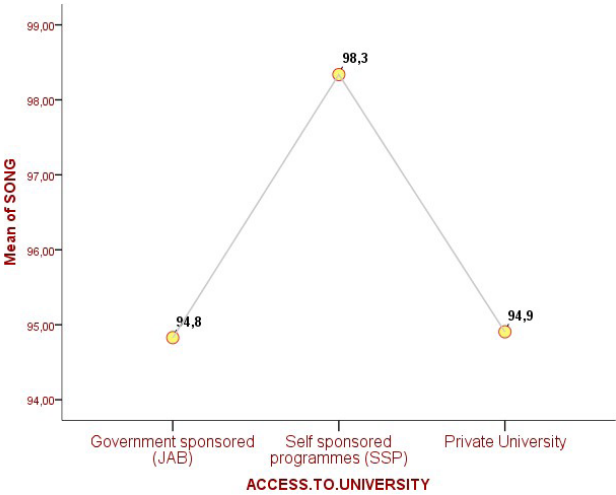


The above graph shows the mean scores in the three modes of access to Kenyan universities for total PIL.

³⁶ From here onwards, whenever we refer to *factor 1*, we will not repeat its title. We will simply refer to it as *factor 1*.

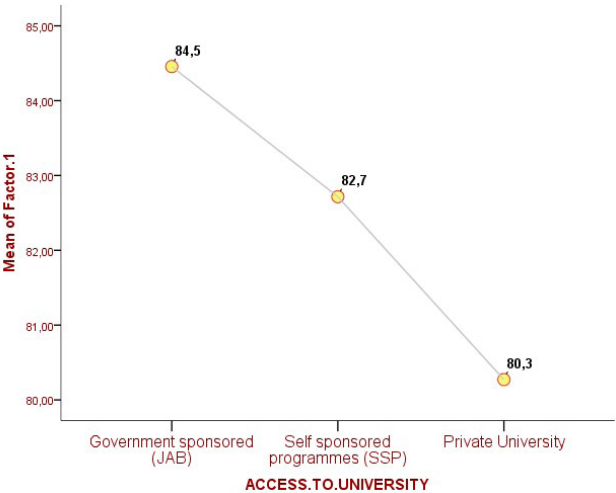
³⁷ We will follow the same methodology in relation to *factor 2*.

Graph 2. Mean SONG on Access to University



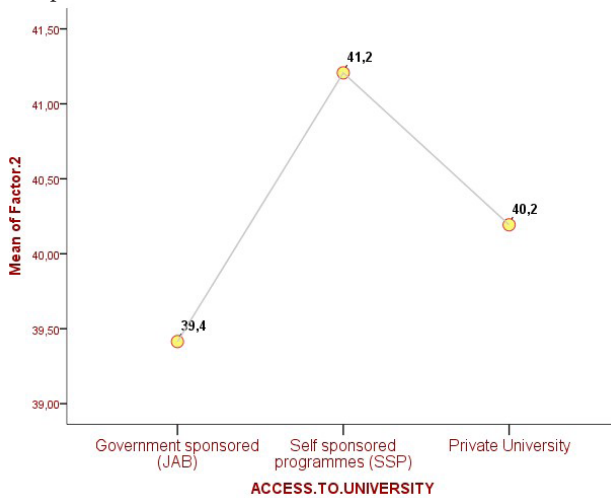
The graph above shows the mean scores in the three modes of access to Kenyan universities for total SONG.

Graph 3. Mean of Factor 1



In the graph above we present the mean scores of the three modes of access to Kenyan universities for *factor 1 (Purpose/meaning)* in life.

Graph 4. Mean of factor 2



The graph above shows the mean scores of the three modes of access to Kenyan universities in *factor 2* (*Motivation for a future directed purpose/meaning*) in life.

The Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) shows significant differences between the JAB students and SSP students at the level of (0,039) and PU students at the level of (0,012). This confirms the first part of our hypothesis because it shows that the government sponsored students have a higher perception of purpose/meaning in life in their response to total PIL score. There is also a statistically significant difference between JAB students and SSP students in total SONG at the level (0,013) which is lower than the threshold ($p < 0,05$), but not with the PU students which partially verifies the 1b hypothesis where we had predicted a significantly lower score of JABs from SSPs and PUs.

JAB students are those directly selected by the *Joint Admission Board* (JAB) to join Kenyan public universities (government owned) because not only have they achieved the minimum required grade (C+) for joining university but have as well met the *cut-off* point set by the government each year. Such a procedure on the part of the government creates two categories of students who access Kenyan public universities, the higher performers and average level performers. While to meet the minimum entry grade is an achievement for Kenyan university students, to be a JAB student is even more prestigious because it is a sign of excellence, a worthwhile goal achieved at this level of cognitive development. No wonder then the JAB students have achieved a higher score in PIL as we foresaw in our hypothesis because they regard themselves as successful rendering life more meaningful to them.

In asserting the above, Frankl describes a meaningful life as a life lived doing meaningful things; may it be through achieving an important goal/task in life,

engaging in a mission that is other-centered, while of course joy and fulfillment comes to the person as a by-product among other ways³⁸.

The result findings in relation to *factor 1*, show a significant difference between the JAB students and PU students ($p = 0,000$) in the direction of the hypothesis. The *factor 2* shows a statistically significant difference between JAB students and SSP students because their ($p = 0,003$) at ($p < ,05$). Basing ourselves on the mean scores and taking in consideration that this sub-scale of SONG extracted 7 SONG items we can confirm the 1b part of the first hypothesis which stated that *the JAB students will have a significantly lower score of the SONG in comparison with SSP students but not with PU students*.

In Path Analysis we observed a negative Regression Weight (-2, 14) which explains that JAB students are higher perceivers of purpose in life in comparison to SSP students and PU students.

4. APPLICATIVE SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

As we have seen in hypothesis one, between the JAB and SSP students there are significant differences both in total PIL and SONG scores. The JABs have higher scores. The two modes of access have created categories which at times create social groupings based on the mode of access to the university in both social and academic life. This may reduce the spirit of academic sharing in group works which is an important aspect in especially the promotion of *postformal stage* of cognitive development.

The SSP students may develop an inferiority complex in relation to JAB students simply based on the mode of access and especially if there are bully students from the JAB. The SSP students follow the same courses with the JAB students except they have to meet their whole tuition while the JABs are sponsored by the government. This may provoke anger and hostility which may lead to violent strikes and there have been a number of them in some Kenyan public universities. The two modes of access while from a positive perspective have increased access to the tertiary level of education, could have a negative repercussion in the collaborative aspect in realizing the *Vision 2030* because the divisions are already caused at the university.

Since the JAB intake is based not on the minimum grade required for university entry but on *cut-off* point set by the government corresponding to the number of accommodations available in public universities, the government should embark on increasing the infrastructure so that more hostels are built to accommodate the increasing numbers of qualified secondary school graduates.

While the government gives loans to SSP students from low economic backgrounds, such an affirmative action should be extended to such a time that the

³⁸ See: V. E. Frankl, *The doctor ...*; V. E. Frankl, *The will to meaning. Foundations and applications of logotherapy*, Meridian, Penguin, New York 1988; V. E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning ...*

graduates get a job to begin repaying the loan and not fixing standards which must be followed regardless of whether there are jobs or not. The government therefore ought to increase job opportunities especially respecting the three pillars of the *Vision 2030*.

While a vast literature exists about transition and access to Kenyan higher education, no literature exists on researches done in Kenya on *perceptions of meaning/purpose* in life in relation to *transition and access to Kenyan universities*. Our research aimed at addressing *transition and access* in logotherapeutic interpretive approach, using validly standardized tests on the measurement of perceptions of purpose/meaning in life PIL and SONG, in the view of helping people discover their degree of *existential vacuum*, in order to assume full responsibility for their lives and hence live meaningful lives. Living meaningful lives is a health promotion factor in that it prevents from avoidable psychosomatic disorders that are as a result of accumulated stress. *Boredom* and *existential frustration* are key elements of living meaningless lives and in this particular aspect, logotherapy offers us helpful means of living meaningful lives by being responsible.

Such an approach to transition and access to Kenyan universities would have a twofold effects namely: the promotion of health at a *bio-psycho-social* level to the students by living responsibly from the very first year and not succumbing to social pressure of wasting time, which is supposed to be invested in studies in preparation for tomorrow's career. There could be a tendency among some students to think that there is a lot of time and therefore not invest quality time to learning. This would affect the student's performance and indeed the quality of graduates at the end of their degree program; a promotion of the *Vision 2030* by consciously preparing the required workforce and knowhow through the different specializations undertaken by the university students. It would help the students study with aims, goals, visions that go-beyond their personal, family interests to national interests that benefit Kenyans in the envisaged economic-developmental plan of *Vision 2030*.

PERCEPTIONS OF PURPOSE/MEANING IN LIFE IN RELATION TO TRANSITION AND ACCESS TO KENYAN UNIVERSITIES. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AMONG FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Summary

We investigated the perception of meaning/purpose in life in relation to transition and access to Kenyan universities in a sample of 1173 first year students, in the three modes of access namely: Joint Admission Board students (JAB), Self-Sponsored Programs students (SSP) and the Private University students (PU). The *Purpose-in-Life Test* (PIL) and The *Seeking of Noetic Goals Test* (SONG) were used to measure Viktor Frankl's concept of *Will to Meaning* and existential vacuum in which four interpretable dimensions of satisfaction with life were extracted with 2 factors loading on the PIL and two on the SONG with the Kenyan sample. The JABs attained a higher score than SSPs and PUs and inversely a lower score in SONG than the other two. This result supports assertion that

SONG is a complementary scale to PIL contributing two factors that deal with purpose in life and two motivations for meaning in life. The two instruments proved their cross-cultural reliability and validity with the Kenyan sample.

Keywords: Perceptions of purpose/meaning in life, University, access, research

PERCEPCJA CELU/SENSU ŻYCIA W ODNIESIENIU
DO WSTĘPU NA UNIwersYTETY W KENII.
BADANIA EMPIRYCZNE WŚRÓD STUDENTÓW PIERWSZEGO ROKU

Abstrakt

Artykuł przedstawia wyniki badań przeprowadzonych wśród 1173 studentów pierwszego roku czterech państwowych i jednego prywatnego uniwersytetu w Kenii. Celem badań była analiza poziomu percepcji sensu życia w okresie rozpoczęcia studiów uniwersyteckich (I rok), z uwzględnieniem trzech trybów dostępu obecnych w Kenii: studenci wspierani przez program państwowy (JAB), studenci częściowo finansujący swoje studia (SSP) oraz studenci uczelni prywatnych (PU). W badaniach użyto dwóch testów (PIL i SONG), mierzących percepcję egzystencjalną i sens/znaczenie życia, mających swoje podłoże teoretyczne w teorii V. E. Frankla. Studenci z programu JAB wykazali wyższy poziom percepcji celu/sensu życia od studentów objętych pozostałymi dwoma programami. Wynik ten został otrzymany przy użyciu obu zastosowanych testów, które tym samym okazały się komplementarne; użyte po raz pierwszy w Kenii potwierdziły również swoją wiarygodność transkulturową.

Nota o Autorach: O. dr Kagwe Cosmas Muiruri OFM – doktor psychologii. W swoich badaniach zajmuje się logoterapią i analizą egzystencjalną V. E. Frankla.

Ks. prof. dr Zbigniew Formella SDB – doktor nauk humanistycznych, profesor nadzwyczajny na *Università Pontificia Salesiana* w Rzymie, kierownik Katedry Psychologii Wychowawczej. Członek Towarzystwa Naukowego Franciszka Salezego. W badaniach naukowych zajmuje się problematyką młodzieżową i wychowawczą, z tego zakresu posiada kilkadziesiąt publikacji.

Słowa kluczowe: percepcja sensu życia, uniwersytet, wstęp, poszukiwania naukowe