

# **COMPARATIVE PERCEPTIONS ON THE PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ONSET OF UNREST AT UNIVERSITIES**

**By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

University students' unrest is a common problem all over the world but it is more serious in the developing countries. Most Universities find it a perennial crisis. There is no documentation of comparative perceptions on the physical signs of onset of unrest. The study purposed to investigate these perceptions from different respondents on the basis of physical indicators of mental status of University students at the onset of unrest. It was a survey research design which used mixed research methods. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used for data collection. The research population comprised Security officers and secretaries working in sampled public Universities in Kenya in the year 2016. Simple random sampling was used which gave a total sample size of 145 which was obtained from a target population of 177. Quantitative data collected was analyzed descriptively into frequency counts, percentages, means and inferentially into independent sample t-test analysis and rank order correlation. The main physical indicators of mental status of unrest are: Yelling emotional expressions, violent tendencies, hostile attitude manifestations and anger gestures, but in slightly varied order among different respondents. Generally, for all the main physical indicators of mental status of university students' at the onset of unrest, there is no statistically significant difference in influence of perceptions of security officers and secretaries on mental status of University students' at onset of unrest. Therefore, all public universities should adopt the use of the invented mental status examination tool to detect the onset of unrest with the aim of forestalling the unrest.

## **Introduction**

Mental status condition can be determined by carrying out mental status examination (MSE). With adequate competence, the MSE instrument can be used to identify reliable physical indicators of University students' at onset of unrest. This instrument can be useful in reflecting a "snapshot" of a person's psychological functioning at a given point in time. In 2015, Eversheds International (EI), in an international seminar for Campuses confirmed earlier research findings that University students' unrest is a common phenomenon all over the world (Goolam, 2010 & Rothman, 2015). These unrests among University students have negative impacts on the students, the institutions affected as well as other stake holders in the education system. Perceptions on the physical indicators

of mental status of university students at onset of unrest has not been studied in a comparative analysis format. This approach will in no doubt establish a reliable MSE tool that can be used as a common reference point by any concerned stakeholders.

## **Research Methodology**

In this study, mixed-research methods were used and this was adopted from Creswell (2014) who noted that mixed research methods are appropriate when collecting both qualitative and quantitative data with the intention of integrating the two forms of data. Kothari and Guarav (2016) also recommended that different methods should be used for adequate data collection where the data already available are not sufficient to arrive at the required solution.

Survey research design was used to collect data from the respondents which were mainly security officers and secretarial staffs of sampled public Universities. Quantitative data collected focused on data for numerical analysis. Wadsworth Cengage Learning (2013) noted that quantitative data offer the advantage that numbers have over words as a measure of some quality. This data provided useful statistics which was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means and inferential statistics especially comparing means using t-test distributions as in SPSS programme version 20.

Table 3.1 gives research population involved in the study.

**Table 3.1**

### ***Research Population***

Serial No.	Stratum / Section	Population Size	Sample Size
1	Security officers	55	48
2	Secretarial staffs	122	97
	Total	177	145

In total, from a research population of 177 of all the strata, a sample size of 145 was involved in the data collection process. This was far much above the threshold that is recommended by Kothari and Guarav (2016) who asserts that a minimum of 100 is suitable for a survey.

Quantitative data was collected using the structured questionnaires which were given to the respondents. The administered questionnaires were collected after having been completed by the respondents. These were then scored and analyzed.

Wadsworth Cengage Learning (2013) noted that the data processing phase of survey typically involves the classification (coding) of written-in answers and the transfers of all information to a computer. In view of this, quantitative data was scored in comparative analysis format. This approach helped make it easier for triangulation of the findings during the analysis stage.

### **Data presentation and interpretation**

The research question of this study stated that: Do security officers and secretaries differ in their perceptions on physical indicators of mental status of university students' at onset of unrest? To answer this question, a null hypothesis was formulated that: 'there was no significant difference between security officers and secretaries in their perception on the physical indicators among university students at the onset of unrest'. To test this hypothesis, the participants were asked to respond to the 47 items in the questionnaire used in data collection. Their responses were analyzed and the mean scores of each category of respondents subjected to t-test inferential statistics as is presented in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1*****Comparison of Perceptions on Main physical Indicators of Unrest***

Main Physical Indicators of unrest	Department of Work	Mean	Std. Deviation	F – Values	t - Values
Yelling emotional expressions	Security	4.26	.734	1.608	-.087
	Secretarial	4.28	.886		
Violent Tendencies	Security	4.52	.969	.332	2.357
	Secretarial	4.10	.894		
Hostile Attitude manifestations	Security	4.05	.882	.008	-1.125
	Secretarial	4.22	.711		
Anger Gestures	Security	3.98	.841	1.275	-1.181
	Secretarial	4.16	.803		
Forward and upward pointing Fist	Security	4.24	.906	.615	1.405
	Secretarial	4.00	.857		
Secretive behaviours	Security	4.24	1.031	.572	1.322
	Secretarial	3.99	.921		
Casual attire Dressing style	Security	4.55	.993	.400	4.047
	Secretarial	3.81	.873		
Tensed Face	Security	3.93	.513	11.005	-1.344
	Secretarial	4.10	.894		

*Note: R:  $|z| \geq 1.96$*

The data analyses show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive ‘yelling emotional expressions’ by University students at onset of unrest more or less the same way (means 4.26, 4.28). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave t(-.087) which is within the acceptable set range *R:  $|z| \geq 1.96$* . This finding affirms Badcock (2015) postulation that all researched psychological traits are influenced

by both genes and environment, which in this case is precisely the environment due to the different training environment of both the security officers and secretarial staffs. Since the t-test value is within the set range ( $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on 'yelling emotional expressions' by University student at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'violent tendencies' by University students at onset of unrest slightly different (means 4.52, 4.10). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(2.357)$  which is outside the acceptable set range  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . This finding fills the gap left by Jurgen, Marthias and Flovian (2008) who recommended that active research should be done to understand in depth the genetic and environmental bases of behavior and interaction. This difference could be attributed to different training environment. Since the t-test value is outside the set range ( $p = .05$ ), there is statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that there is violent tendency by University student at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is rejected and hence the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'hostile attitude manifestations' by University students at onset of unrest slightly different ways (means 4.05, 4.22). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(-1.125)$  which is within the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is within the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that 'hostile attitude manifestations' are normally displayed by University students' at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses (Table 4.1) show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'anger gestures' by University students at onset of unrest in slightly different ways (means 3.93, 4.16). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(-1.181)$  which is within the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is within the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that varied 'anger gestures' are normally displayed by University students' at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses (Table 4.1) show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'forward or upward pointing fist in group responses' by University students at onset of unrest as slightly different (means 4.24, 4.00). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(1.405)$  which is within the acceptable set range  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is within the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that there is normally forward or upward pointing fist display by University students in group responses at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses (Table 4.1) show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'secretive behaviours' of University students at onset of unrest in slightly different ways (means 4.24, 3.99). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(1.322)$  which is within the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is within the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that 'secretive behaviours' are normally displayed by University students' at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses (Table 4.1) show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'casual attire dressing style' by University students at onset of unrest in slightly different ways (means 4.55, 3.81). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(4.047)$  which is outside the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is outside the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that 'casual attire dressing style' are normally displayed by University students' at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is rejected and hence the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive differently the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

The data analyses (Table 4.1) show that security officers and secretarial staffs perceive 'tensed face emotional expressions' of University students at onset of unrest in slightly different ways (means 3.93, 4.10). When their perceptions on this variable as a main physical indicator of onset of unrest was subjected to t-test, it gave  $t(-1.344)$  which is within the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . Since the t-test value is within the set range (at  $p = .05$ ), there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of security officers and secretarial staffs on the fact that 'tensed face emotional expressions' are commonly displayed by University students' at onset of unrest. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The security officers and secretarial staffs perceive the variable as a main physical indicator at onset of unrest.

## **Conclusion**

Generally, for all the main physical indicators of mental status of university students' at the onset of unrest, there is no statistically significant difference in influence of perceptions of security officers and secretaries on mental status of University students' at onset of unrest. This is because the t-test analysis gave figures which are within the acceptable set range of  $R: |z| \geq 1.96$ . (at  $p = .05$ ). Therefore, all public universities should adopt the use of the invented mental status examination tool to detect the onset of unrest with the aim of forestalling the unrest.

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