AN INVESTIGATION INTO PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING KENYAN WOMEN'S PERFORMANCE IN INTERNATIONAL TRACK EVENTS

BY

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other University or other Institute of Learning.

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DATE 4 - 8 - 97
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DEDICATION

To my parents, brothers and sisters and specifically to my wife Margaret
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychosocial factors affecting the performance of Kenyan women athletes in international track events. The specific psychosocial variables considered were: the socialisation process, individual athletes' attitude towards competitive athletics, the level of motivation, self-perception and the peer-group influence.

A sample of sixty female athletes and twenty national coaches were selected on both stratified and snowball basis from all the national athletes and national coaches in Kenya. Both questionnaires and oral interviews were used in data collection from selected samples.

Data collected was analyzed using computer following the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. The coding system adopted was 01 for "Yes" items and 02 for "No" items. Two stages were followed in the data treatment: a descriptive analysis of the raw data was carried out and a chi-square test was then used to test the formulated hypotheses.
The study revealed that the psychosocial factors of socialisation process, individual athletes' attitude towards competitive athletics, the level of motivation, self-perception and peer-group influence had significant effect on the performance of Kenyan women athletes in international track events. The level of significance at which the hypotheses were rejected or accepted was $P<.05$.

From the study, it is recommended that:

(i) there is need to socialize girls into athletics and other sports during formative ages;

(ii) there is need for effective sex education programmes in Kenya to alleviate the problem of teenage pregnancies;

(iii) there is need to extend the residential training period for women athletes to at least two months prior to any international championships;

(iv) there is need for the Ministry of Culture and Social Services through the Department of Sports to device machinery for identifying, monitoring and following-up raw talent displayed by Kenyan girls right from the primary school level;

(v) there is need to create equal opportunities for women so as to have access to the institutionalized training and coaching opportunities;

(vi) there is need to adopt an athletics programme which will widen the scope of exposure of Kenyan women athletes to male competition;

(vii) there is need for off-seasons to be characterized by intermittent training modes in order to keep Kenyan female athletes' body in condition;

(viii) that athletics coaching and conditioning courses and clinics be accorded to all Kenyan individuals involved in coaching track events to young girls and women.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Amin and Moll (1972) postulated that the establishment of track and field athletics in Kenya dates back to the early 1950's. More specifically, they have indicated that the year 1951 shows the beginning of organised athletics in Kenya when Archie Evans, the sports officer based at Jeans School (Lower Kabete) initiated the formation of the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association (KAAA), and its affiliation to the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF). Under this body, athletics competitions involving schools and other institutions assumed international status (Erskine, 1954). In 1952, an inter-territorial triangular meeting with Uganda and Tanganyika (Tanzania) was organized (Amin and Moll, 1972). Ever since, these annual championships became the cornerstone of Kenya's athletics programmes.

From available records, it is evident that Kenyan male athletes have demonstrated remarkable achievements within the East African Region (Evans, 1953). Kenyan male athletes have also favourably demonstrated their sporting prowess against other super powers in international competitions. In the track events, they
have been rated as high as athletes from developed countries such as United States of America (USA), Great Britain, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), Germany Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) (Kubai, 1992). Despite this international recognition however, there exists a limited distribution of general success in track events among Kenyan female athletes.

According to Bhushan (1988), the world first took notice of Kenya at the Vancouver (Canada), Commonwealth Games of 1954 during which Nyandika Maiyoro narrowly missed a bronze medal in the 880 yards (800 metres). In the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, Kenya failed to participate due to the Mau Mau uprising. Kenya sent only a men's teams to the 1958 Cardiff (Wales) Commonwealth Games, the 1960 Rome (Italy) Olympics and the 1966 Kingston (Jamaica) Commonwealth Games. Women were not represented in all these (Bhushan, 1988; Ouko, 1989; Ouma, 1990).

Kenya entered the first female athletes in international athletics competitions in the 1965 First All Africa Games held in Brazaville, Congo. Those who were entered to represent the country were Alice Adala, Alice Bulungu, Rose Nyaguthii and Herina Malit. Out of the four, however, only Alice Adala won a bronze medal in the 200 metres (Bhushan, 1988; Ouko, 1989).
Since then, Kenyan women athletes have participated in several international competitions. In 1968 Mexico City Olympics Games, three women represented Kenya: Lydia Stephens, Tecla Chemabwai and Elizabeth Chesire (Ouma, 1990). The three, however, failed to win any medals.

In the 1970 Edinburgh (Scotland) Commonwealth Games, Kenyan women athletes once again failed to win a medal. Alice Adala, Tecla Chemabwai and Elizabeth Chelimo who represented Kenya at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 were also eliminated during the heats. In the second All Africa Games held in Lagos (Nigeria) in 1973, Tecla Chemabwai won a gold medal in 400 metres and the women's relay team of 4 x 400 metres won a bronze medal while Mary Wagaki won a silver medal in 10,000 metres (Bhushan, 1988).

Masika (1986), cites Sabina Chebichi as the first Kenyan woman athlete to claim honours after winning a bronze in the 800 metres during the 1974 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch (New Zealand) in 2:2.6 seconds. This was a historic break-through for Kenyan female athletes (Abmayr, 1983). During the 1978 Third All Africa Games, in Algiers (Algeria) Tecla Chemabwai won a gold medal in 800 metres, Anna Kiprop took a silver medal in 1,500 metres, and Rose Thompson won a bronze medal in the 200 metres. In the 1978 Edmonton (Canada) Commonwealth Games, Tecla Chemabwai won a silver medal in the 800 metres. However,
at the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane (Australia), Kenyan women athletes failed to win a single medal (Abmayr, 1983; Bhushan, 1988). Two boycotts in succession (1976 Montreal and 1980 Moscow Olympics) also kept Kenya out of the Olympic limelight for twelve years. She made a comeback during the 1984 Los Angeles (USA) Olympic Games, when Ruth Waithera was placed eighth in the 400 metres. Ruth Waithera, thus, became the first Kenyan woman to run in a final track event at the Olympics. Her time of 51.56 seconds was an African record which was not to be emulated in 1986 because Kenya boycotted the Edinburgh (Scotland) Commonwealth Games (Amin and Moll, 1972; Bhushan, 1988).

The 1987 Fourth All Africa Games held in Nairobi (Kenya) saw the emergence of Kenyan women athletes after a long time. The performance of Kenyan women athletes was quite impressive. They won seven gold, five silver and three bronze medals (Alex, 1987; Bhushan, 1988). Even then, in the 1987 Second World Athletics Championships in Rome (Italy), Rose Tata Muya was eliminated in the 400 metres hurdles while Francisca Chepkurui failed to make it to the finals in the 400 metres flat (Ouma, 1990). The duo of Florence Wanjiru and Mary Chemweno also failed in the preliminaries of the 800 metres. Similarly, in the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, Kenyan women athletes failed to achieve any significant performance. Only in the 1989 World Athletic Championships Grand Prix (Stockholm), was
Jane Ngotho placed in the fourth position in the 10,000 metres (Abmayr, 1983; Bhushan, 1988).

In the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland (New Zealand), Elizabeth Onyambu and Rose Tata Muya had a frustrating time (Bhushan, 1988). Although Onyambu reached the finals in the 200 metres, she finished last while Muya was not placed in the medal brackets in the 200 metres finals. On the other hand, Jane Ngotho was placed an encouraging fifth in the 10,000 metres. During the same year, Kenya entered a senior women’s team in the World Cross Country Championships held in London (England) for the first time. This maiden appearance for Kenya was yet another indelible mark in the world of athletics. Jane Ngotho settled for sixth place, Margaret Wairimu ninth, Margaret Kagiri eighty-fourth, Florence Wangechi ninetieth while Pauline Konga was one hundred and twenty-fifth (Bhushan, 1988).

In the Africa Athletics Championships held in the same year in Cairo (Egypt), Agneta Chelimo won a gold medal in the 5 km walk while Rose Tata Muya finished fourth in the 400 metres hurdles. Jane Ngotho and Margaret Ngotho were, however, not successful. Jane Ngotho relinquished the 10,000 metres title she had won the previous year in Lagos (Nigeria) (Aloo, 1990; Alex, 1990).

During the 1991 World Athletics Championships in Tokyo (Japan), Delillah Asiago and Jane Ngotho qualified for the
finals of the 10,000 metres, but did not achieve any medals. Nevertheless, Susan Sirma won a bronze medal in the 3,000 metres but only managed a seventh place in the 1,500 metres (Alex, 1991).

In the 1991 5th All Africa Games held in Cairo (Egypt), Susan Sirma won a gold medal in the 3,000 metres as Gladys Wamuyu took a bronze in the 400 metres hurdles. Isabella Mushila was eliminated in both 100 metres and 200 metres. Rose Tata Muya finished fourth in the 400 metres hurdles. Although no Kenyan woman athlete won a medal in the 1992 Barcelona (Spain) Olympics, Hellen Kimaiyo and Tecla Lorupe reached the finals in the 10,000 metres. Interestingly, Pascaline Wangui, the first Kenyan woman to participate in a marathon was placed a commendable twenty-ninth, while Susan Sirma finished fourth in the 1,500 metres (Alex, 1991).

Esther Kiplagat, Lydia Cheromei, Jane Ngotho and Pauline Konga represented Kenya in the 1993 World Cross Country Championship in Spain. However, their performances were not particularly impressive. Similarly, in the 1993 World Athletic Championships in Stuttgart (Germany), only Gladys Wamuyu and Esther Kiplagat reached the finals of the 800 metres and 3000 metres respectively. The two failed however, to win a medal in their respective events (Alex, 1991; 1992).

During the 1994 5th International Amateur Athletics
Championships, Lisbon (Portugal), Jackline Maranga was placed second in the 800 metres, Rose Cheruiyot fourth in the 1500 metres, Sally Barsosio third in the 3000 metres and Jebiwott Keitany third in 10,000 metres. During the Commonwealth Games held in Victoria (Canada) in the same year, Kenyan women athletes failed to achieve any significant performances (IAAF Nairobi, 1994).

Similarly, Kenyan women athletes did not achieve much during the 1995 World Athletics Championships in Gothenburg (Sweden) (Makori, 1996). However, they made a breakthrough in the 1995 New York Marathon where Tecla Lorup was placed third while Angeline Kanana took a commendable fifteenth position (IAAF Nairobi, 1995). Similar achievements were realised by Kenyan women athletes during the Senior Cross Country Championships held in Durham (England). Sally Barsosio was placed third, Margaret Ngotho fourth, Rose Cheruiyot eigth, Catherine Kirui eleventh, Hellen Kimaiyo seventeenth and Hellen Chepngeno twenty-seventh (IAAF Nairobi, 1995).

In the 1996 World Cross Country Championships in South Africa, Kenyan women athletes tied with those from Ethiopia even though, the Kenyan women athletes won the overall title (Makori, 1996). During the Olympic Games held in the same year in Atlanta (Georgia), Kenyan women athletes made yet another break-through in athletics: Pauline Konga took third position in the 5000 metres to win
a bronze medal. This was the first medal ever for Kenya in the women's Olympic participation. Naomi Mugo, on the other hand, qualified for the finals in the 1500 metres but failed to reach the medal bracket while Tecla Lorupe and Sally Barsosio participated in the 10,000 metres but were not placed in any commendable position (Makori, 1996; IAAF Nairobi, 1996).

From the foregoing, it is apparent that despite Kenyan women athletes' remarkable achievement since the Fourth All Africa Games held in Nairobi in 1987, they lack consistency, especially in international athletics. They star for a season or two and then fade into oblivion (Aloo, 1990; Ouko, 1989). Further evidence of this may be found in the disparity between male and female athletes' performances as summarised in Table 1.
### Table 1: A comparison of the years male and female athletes represented Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PERIOD OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION</th>
<th>TOTAL YEARS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MALE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Kogo</td>
<td>1969-1979</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Wakhurui</td>
<td>1987-1993</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Rono</td>
<td>1976-1983</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ngugi</td>
<td>1986-1994</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Sang</td>
<td>1966-1974</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Kariuki</td>
<td>1987-1994</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Boit</td>
<td>1964-1986</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kipchoge Keino</td>
<td>1964-1973</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson Kiprugut</td>
<td>1964-1975</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naftali Temu</td>
<td>1964-1973</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMALE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisca Chepkurui</td>
<td>1984-1988</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joice Chebii</td>
<td>1983-1986</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabina Chebichi</td>
<td>1974-1976</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Chemweno</td>
<td>1974-1978</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Bulungu</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Nyaguthii</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Chelimo</td>
<td>1972-1976</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia Stephens</td>
<td>1968-1972</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Chesire</td>
<td>1968-1972</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herina Malit</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The IAAF Regional Development Centre, Nairobi (1994).

According to Abmayr (1983) despite full consideration and encouragement, Kenyan women athletes' performances show extreme variations. A comparison of the number of years athletes represented Kenya also reveals the major disparities between male and female athletes (Table 1).

As seen in Table 1 above, male athletes tend to remain in the international arena a lot longer than the female athletes. A similar comparison between Kenyan and international women shows Kenyan women athletes lagging behind (Table 2).
Table 2: Comparison of the years female athletes represented their respective countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETITOR</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION</th>
<th>TOTAL YEARS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alice Bulungu</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Chebii</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1983-1986</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabina Chebichi</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1974-1976</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Nyaguthii</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herina Malit</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1965-1966</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Annum</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>1966-1974</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Szewinka</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1974-1978</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Decker</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1974-1990</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renate Stecher</td>
<td>East Germany</td>
<td>1974-1981</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tayana Kazankina</td>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>1974-1980</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From Table 2 above, it is apparent that women athletes from other countries last longer in athletics than Kenyan women. While this is a peculiar case in Kenya, it is also evident that Kenyan women's performance in track events is low compared to those from other countries.

These performances by Kenyan female athletes have not been explained. There is currently no documentation to either support or challenge the various explanations regarding the performances by Kenyan female athletes in international track events. As a result, no one really knows what happens to the Kenyan trained women athletes. There is also no explanation as to why majority of Kenyan female athletes retire at about sixteen years of age and what feelings they have towards competitive athletics upon retirement. Answers to these and other related questions...
can only be gathered through a research. The trend of inconsistent performances among majority of Kenyan women athletes in track events has sparked a need for an investigation in the area. This called for scholarly research into factors that deprive Kenya's female athletes' glory in the track events, that even with the modern sports infrastructure, track performances among Kenyan female athletes has never equalled or come close to the male's record. This study was, therefore, designed to establish the psychosocial factors that militate against achievement in track events.

1.2 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The psychosocial factors affecting women athletes has been a topic virtually ignored by most scholars. According to Greendorfer (1974) and Harris (1971) sex stereotyping, male research bias, prejudices, misconceptions, and the societal reward structure have been contributing factors to this negligence. A study by Harris (1971) found that societal prejudice and misconceptions about a girl's social role have served to curtail the participation of females in vigorous and competitive physical activities for a long time. Further, Harris postulates that traits vital for high level participation in sports include aggressiveness, tough-mindedness, dominance, self-confidence and the willingness to take the 'risk'. Emphasising on the risk aspect for a woman's participation in sports, Harris observed that:
"... the female athlete takes a risk when she out-performs her male opponent whether it be in athletics or any other predominantly male domain." (p. 2)

Arguments such as women are prone to injury in sport have also been used for a long time to restrict women's accessibility in various sports. Due to such reasoning, women have been restricted from participating in such sports as athletics, ice hockey, football and others which incorporate physical contact or collision (Weiss, 1969). Even then, outstanding female track and field athletes began to appear from 1930s. These included Zaharias and Walsh of United States, Blankerskoen of Holland who won four gold medals at the 1948 Olympic Games. Ragnhild Hveger of Denmark, held eight out of twelve recognized international records in 1950 (Bennett et al., 1983).

According to Harris (1971), little girls become aware of the socially acceptable feminine image by the society. Thus, majority choose to conform, hiding behind the claim that it is not 'ladylike' to participate in sports.

Recent research on women athletes also indicates varying attitudes towards sport participation. Some are concerned with the effects of participation on their feminine image while others see this participation as broadening their opportunities for social activities. Malumphy (1968) for instance, after studying the American national and intercollegiate athletes' teams concluded that sport participation makes women less attractive.
to their male counterparts, and that those who are highly skilled do not enjoy the challenge of testing their skills.

Wyrick (1971), contends that previously perceived sex-related differences hindered women's participation in various sports. While some of these differences are real, there are many others that are mythical and not real. Hence:

"Much of what we know and think about women is based on myths or inherited philosophy. There is abundant speculation about whether women are psychologically or socially assuming certain roles in our society." (Wyrick 1971:2)

Even then, sport has become a popular culture and the traditional exclusion of women from the sporting world is gradually declining. Commenting on this trend, Malumphy (1970) observes:

"Athletics for women has arrived. With its arrival,... comes a wonderful sense of satisfaction that we are finally beginning to meet the needs, individual differences and the interest of highly skilled women. Female competition does not need to be destruction of femininity . . ., or the psyche" (p. 19).

Sport consists of sequences of physical activities which must be well executed for the undertaking to terminate successfully. At each stage of the accomplishment, the participant strives to emerge the winner by excelling above others. According to Weiss (1969), women should not be excluded from such tasks. They should be prompted to train, prepare and practice so as to be ready to test their skills and physical prowess.
Socialisation process involves notions of expected behaviour. These are appropriate behaviours, norms and sanctions which govern an individual. The first agents in the socialisation process include the nuclear family, peer groups and family friends among others. Scholars such as Duguin (1977); Greendorfer, (1978); Loy et al. (1991) and Mcpherson and Kenyon (1978) have utilized the social learning theories approach to examine the impact of socialisation process on potential participation of women in athletics. The fundamental findings have been the marginalization of women from the core of sporting activities. Since children are active processors of the information contained in their social environment, it is likely that they perceive the prevailing patterns of sex differentiation and come to value more rigidly those activities or attitudes usually associated with their own gender (Inkles, 1968; Mischel, 1966; Rels and Jelsma, 1988).

The socially held attitude towards female versus male bodies significantly hinders more active participation of women in sports (Coakley, 1986). Upon growing to and beyond adolescence, males direct their attention to the productivity of their bodies while women strive to improve their looks. Traditionally, therefore, a more active role of the male's body is expected while passivity is apparently condoned in girls and women (Coakley, 1986; Figler, 1981).

The social roles of a woman or a man are ascribed
while others are achieved (Figler, 1981). Traditionally, a woman's achieved roles have been restricted to those of a wife or a mother (Felshin, 1972). In other cultures, most achieved roles among women seem to conflict with womanhood. This is the case in athletics as well. The situation may be aggravated by the notion that participation in sports leads to the development of man-like characteristics or she could be looking for such characteristics like those of weightlifters. Besides, the same woman could be in pursuit of an appropriate self-perception explicated by Huelster, (1966) and Scott, (1968).

The attitude toward sports may also serve as a hinderance among female athletes' participation in track athletics (Snyder and Spreitzer 1978). After conducting large scale studies among the western societies, Snyder and Spreitzer found that the strongest notion is that active sport involvement among females would take them out of their homes, their modesty might be compromised, while their emotional control might be jeopardized, and the overall propriety could be endangered.

Given the assertive, dominant and aggressive nature of sports, it is likely that role conflict could exist between the roles of a woman and that of an athlete (Figler, 1981; Coakley, 1986). For some women, womanliness may best be achieved through conspicuous femininity and
attractiveness to themselves (Coakley, 1986). Figler (1981) has observed that when the role of a woman and that of an athlete are perceived as being in conflict, two things are likely to happen:

(i) Either due to anxiety so created the individual withdraws her role as an athlete, or;

(ii) She retains her woman athlete's role but may feel obliged to display some stereotyped femininity to counterbalance the masculine tone of her athlete's body.

Bem (1974) reveals that androgyny is the integration of both masculinity and femininity within a single individual. An androgynous female athlete seems to care about social gender role labels yet maintains many of the attitudes associated with femininity. Thus, female athletes are found to be androgynous and fit better in the second category than non athletes (Figler, 1981; Coakley, 1986).

The self-perception of the female athlete is greatly influenced by sociological and psychological factors affecting her (Harris, 1971). The girl's social structure begins to orient her away from sporting world. She then begins to grow into the socially preconceived feminine model unless she is otherwise influenced by her significant others (Mischel, 1966; Harris, 1971).

Apparently, the self-image of a woman is changing from feministic oriented attitudes such as having a
pleasing appearance and behaviour to self-oriented attitudes, such as good health, self-reliance and good accomplishment (Kelly, 1981; Figler, 1981). Although sports participation helps to improve a woman's self-perception (Ziegler, 1972), this does not seem to be consistent with the trend the Kenyan female athletes are taking in track and field athletics. The fact that there is low performance in track events among Kenyan women athletes raises a concern.

Weiss (1969) contends that for a woman to embark on an athletic career successfully, she must sacrifice both time and other interests. Such interests may include security, family and a home which appeals to the woman more strongly than to the man. As a consequence, she is prone to end her athletic career sooner than the man (Harris, 1971; Felshin, 1972).

Hudson (1976), points out that in instances where female participation in athletics is low, both social and psychological factors should be thoroughly investigated before genetic causation is accepted. To Hudson (1976), the existing records of women in athletics seem to support his contention. He further asserts that an unknown amount of performances in sports among females is socially and psychologically induced.

Spears (1973) postulates that the role of sportswomen in mythology is subjected to speculation and wonders
whether these highly skilled women have been accorded a place in mythology because of their athletic prowess and whether sport is a function of gender or the human condition. Such mythical sportswomen prompt scholarly inquiries about the place of women in athletics. This study was designed to establish the psychosocial factors affecting the performance of Kenyan female athletes in track events. The key psychosocial factors identified were the socialisation process, the individual athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics, the level of motivation, self-perception and the influence of peer-group.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kenya has a history of thirty six years of participation in high level international athletic competitions. In the recent years, however, there has been considerable concern about Kenyan women athletes' participation in sports. Despite support and encouragement, their performances in track events shows great variations.

Kenya has as many talented women athletes as other countries. However, for various reasons these women lag far behind and perform low in track events as compared to women athletes from other countries. Records exist which attest to their low performances in track events.
Similarly, the number of women athletes in track events levels off markedly with increasing age. Local feelings of resentment exist particularly in the case of young girls of marriageable ages, from fourteen to seventeen years (Abmayr, 1983). Rural and traditional attitudes towards a woman athlete predominate and exert a great secular tension among female athletes in Kenya. It is important, therefore, to investigate reasons why Kenyan female athletes do not last long in the athletics careers. It is also important to identify specific psychosocial factors through which their performances can be improved to compare favourably with the males' records.

This study investigated those psychosocial factors responsible for the low performance in track events among Kenyan female athletes in international competitions. The study addressed itself to the following factors:

(a) The socialisation process;
(b) Individual athlete's attitudes towards competitive athletics;
(c) The level of motivation;
(d) Self-perception and performance in athletics;
(e) Peer group influence and athletic performance.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The main hypotheses of this study was that there is no significant relationship between psychosocial factors
and performance in track events among Kenyan women athletes. From this major hypotheses, it was further hypothesized that:

(i) There is no significant relationship between the socialisation process and performance in track events;

(ii) There is no significant relationship between attitudes towards competitive sports and performance in track sports;

(iii) There is no significant relationship between self-perception and performance in track events;

(iv) There is no significant relationship between an athlete's peer group and performance in track events;

(v) There is no significant relationship between the level of motivation and performance in track events.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Kenyan female athletes' low performances in athletic careers, especially at international competitions, require a more rigorous study beyond the generalized opinions expressed in newspapers and sports magazines. The few studies that have been done in Kenya (Abmayr, 1983; Boit,
1989; Kelly, 1981 and Likimani, 1991), have not significantly addressed themselves to the psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan female athletes in track events.

The present study, therefore, was designed to investigate the psychosocial factors affecting Kenya female athletes in track athletics. It was hoped that the findings of this study would create an awareness of female performance level in track events. The findings of this study would also benefit:

(i) The athletes, coaches and the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association in their effort to improve Kenya's athletics performance in international competitions;

(ii) Future researchers, who could use this study as a basis for other advanced research work in an effort to retain more Kenyan female athletes in athletics careers;

(iii) The International Amateur Athletics Federation Centre for English speaking Countries in Africa (which has been accorded to Kenya) could apply the knowledge gained to improve women athletics programmes in Kenya, Africa and elsewhere;

(iv) The administrators in devising athletics course contents for the proposed institute of sports to equip women coaches and other
administrators with relevant administrative models in this aspect of track sports. Furthermore, the study would act as a useful guide to institutes of learning which possess the talent in athletics awaiting proper development.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher was guided by the following assumptions:

(a) That the Kenya Amateur Athletic Association has established a fair mode of selection where:
   (i) Kenya is represented by the best women athletes;
   (ii) Coaches assigned to the National team for International Competitions are selected on merit and are among the trained coaches in both track and field sports;

(b) That despite coaches assigned to the national teams being changed from time to time, their comments on the team's performance during their terms of office would be relevant and valid.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted bearing in mind the following limitations:
(a) Only the psychosocial factors affecting the female athletes were addressed;
(b) There is inadequate related local research and literature in this area of study. Availability of such literature would have offered more support and insight into the study.

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

**Achieved Roles:** These are roles that are assigned to an individual based on an individual's recognized effort and ability.

**Androgyny:** This is an integration of both masculinity and femininity within a single individual (Bem, 1977).

**Ascribed Social Roles:** These are roles that people are born into.

**Athlete:** A Competitor who takes part in track events.

**Athletics:** This refers to track events only.

**Drop-out:** This refers to when an athlete ceases to participate in competitive athletics.

**Elite female athlete:** This refers to an athlete who has represented Kenya in any international athletic championship such as Olympic games, Commonwealth games, or All Africa games.

**Expost Facto Research:** It is a systematically empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control
of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 379).

**Femininity:** A term that describes those qualities desirable in both sexes, but found in greater abundance in women (Cox, 1985).

**Old woman:** A woman who has attained 30 years of age

**Off-season:** A time when an athlete stops both mental and physical training.

**Performance:** In this study, performance refers to athletics achievement inside the medal bracket, i.e. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals.

**Psychosocial Factors:** This refers to both attitude towards competitive sports, levels of motivation, self-perception, peer group influence and established socially accepted practice and traditions of a society (Procter, 1978).

**Role:** A set of norms that defines how people in a given social position ought to behave (Myer, 1988).

**Sport:** This is play that involves physical exertion, formal competition, and an explicit set of rules (Schatzman, 1978).

**Socialisation Process:** A means by which society communicates to an individual the kind of person she is expected to be. It includes the dispositions which enable a person to perform in accordance with the expectations of others as she moves from position to position in the social
order (Goslin, 1969).

**Societal Expectations:** This refers to the belief of a society that a woman should be modest, shy, fragile, gentle, conventional, restrained and that all her ascribed roles should be confined to the home.

**Systematic follow-up:** This refers to a method adopted so that a female who has exhibited an athletic talent is monitored right from tender age to her full achievement.

**Tender Age:** This refers to formative ages between 10 and 14

**Track Events:** These refer to all races- sprints, hurdles, relays, middle and long distance races.

**Training:** This refers to a time when both mental and physical preparation occurs in an individual. It also includes physical and psychological preparations of an athlete prior to an international athletic competition.

**Young girls:** This refers to those females between ages 15 and 18.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section involves a review of literature on psychological factors affecting female athletes in track events. The second section deals with studies of the social factors affecting female athletes in track events.

2.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

According to Coakley (1986), American sports women drop or avoid sports if their femininity definition conflicts with their athletic roles. Women athletes experience an inner conflict emanating from desires to fulfil self-expectation. Participation in athletics, therefore, intensifies the experience of a conflict in both ascribed and achieved roles among the female athletics (Kane and Horner, 1972). Like Coakley, the works of Espenshade (1960), Fleishman (1960), Scott and Wilson (1945) also concluded that the American women fear athletics because of its threat to their femininity. This is due to the strain, aggressiveness and achievement orientation found in athletics (Bennet and Cohen, 1959; Methany, 1965). However, these attributes are vital for
competitive athletics. If women maintain their athletic career, it is likely that they might emphasize stereotyped feminine characteristics in their behaviour and play down the seriousness of the sport identity (Harris, 1972).

In another study, Harris (1977) found that the biggest problem faced by American female athletes is the question of being understood. Harris (1977) cites Martha Rockwell, a cross country participant who said "Nobody likes a girl with biceps .... Most people do not understand us or what we are doing" (p. 2). John Pannel, a pole vaulter, also remarked "if a woman is grunting, groaning, sweating ... how can she be feminine?" (p. 3). Similarly, Bennett and Cohen (1959) argue that a woman athlete who is aggressive and achievement oriented is likely to experience cognitive dissonance, anxiety and self-doubt. Such women athletes are likely to experience a role conflict. They experience an inner conflict emanating from desires to fulfil societal expectations and self expectations. Such role conflict may compel an athlete to reduce her athletic prowess. Thus, the female psyche is perceived as weak, inefficient and nervous by sport psychologists (Methany, 1965; Pastore, 1989).

Allen and Ziegler (1972), on the other hand, contend that core, central and peripheral attitude of women who have deep feelings of personal inadequacy lowers their performance in athletics. Persistent feelings of self-doubt
and functional opposition leads most females to abandon their athletics careers so as to be in harmony with their self-structure and self-acceptability (Buchend, 1919; Allen and Ziegler, 1972).

Greendorfer (1947, 1976, 1977) and Richard and Hall, (1974) postulate that motivational dispositions play a great role in determining the degree of primary athletics involvement. If the influence is negative, it may compel an individual athlete to drop her athletics career but if positive, it may improve an individual's athletic prowess (Greendorfer, 1977). However, successful performance in athletics motivates an athlete to continue with her participation (Mead, 1949). This notion is however, inconsistent with Sherrif's (1972) assertion that a female involvement in athletics is soul shattering and the performance level lowers with increasing age. As a consequence, therefore, the performance will cease (Tyler, 1973).

Mixed messages about the merits and demerits of women participation in athletics prevail. Bem (1975); Cratty (1968) and Tyler (1973) postulate that females will have low to moderate attraction to sports. If the tendency is moderate, they will continue with their athletics involvement but if low, they will abandon their career altogether (Tyler, 1973). From a physiological point of view Coakley and Peter (1981); Feltz, (1978) and Lemy
found that finely conditioned bodies whether males' or females' are defined as attractive. This viewpoint differs with Mathes' (1978) assertion that sport involvement among women leads to the development of unattractiveness, conspicuous and bulging muscles. Most females, therefore, will drop out from their athletics participation for fear of undermining their femininity. Furthermore, Mathes (1978) argues that when female athletes jeopardize their social acceptability and popularity, they will allot it very low priority or abandon it altogether. According to Bucher (1975), a female athlete's prowess declines upon reaching puberty. Although such a decline is associated with normal developmental patterns, the messages received about the relationship between being an athlete and remaining a woman is a critical factor (Brown, 1985; Griffin, 1985).

Johnson et al. (1966) decry the lack of adequate information on the effect of peer group influence on a female's athletic performance. In a comparative approach, Abmayr (1983) points out that most female athletes retire early due to peer group influence as opposed to the supposed athletics effects on their body image. Similarly, Kelly (1981) established a low relationship between self-image, peer group influence and participation in physical activities among the Kenyan secondary school girls. However, Kelly's work like Abmayr's fails to give an
in-depth examination of self-perception and peer group influence as variables affecting the girls' participation in athletics. Besides, the study only confined itself to secondary school girls and to general physical activities as opposed to athletics or any other area. The works of Spencer (1984) and Masika (1993) also show that peer group influence and low self-image are factors responsible for early retirement from track events among female athletes of Kenya. However, this is only mentioned in passing.

A survey on sports infrastructures reveals that most African governments have taken giant strides in the improvement of athletics. According to Onanunga (1986), this effort should stir African women to participate in athletics and liberate them from self-imposed shackles and belittling opinions of themselves. However, this may compel few women volunteers to participate in athletics. Some of the reasons they give for not participating in athletics include the dislike of athletics, sports attire, negative effects of athletics on one's body and having to go for a hair-do. Similarly, Boit (1989) found that Kenyan women do not exhibit the mental drive to excel, a requirement necessary for successful performance in athletics. However, Boit (1989) does not identify specific psychological factors which prevent Kenyan women athletes from reaching their highest potential in track events.
2.3 SOCIAL FACTORS

The socialisation process is a means through which society communicates to an individual, the kind of person she is expected to be. Among American societies, female athletes only require family approval to participate in athletics Greendorfer, (1974); Lever, (1978); Malumphy, (1970) and Mischel, (1966). To get this approval, however, there ought to have been a history of the family's participation in sports. Thus, according to Malumphy (1970), girls will receive conditioned permission from parents to participate in athletics.

In another study, Coakley (1986), argues that such factors as social roles, acceptance by significant others and societal acceptability are all contributing factors for a female's active involvement in athletics. Tattersfield (1971); Allport, Vernon and Lindzeg (1960) and Maccoby (1966) also established that women athletes who are inclined to achieve in tasks such as athletics, defy social conventions and social cultural roles. Because of this belief, females in America become absorbed in non-athletic context and their performance in running, jumping and throwing levels off from ages sixteen (Bird, 1968; Serward, 1946). Besides, women are concerned about meeting societal and family demands (Woodman, 1972). As women, they must meet these societal and family expectations. Thus, Horrocks (1969) observes that:
"A future without a marriage or a child is a hell reserved for the unattractive, non competent... and miserable exceptions" (p. 445)

In certain societies, however, women participation in specific sports such as dance, gymnastics and athletics is acknowledged. Fuert (1965) argues that the Greek women indulge fully in gymnastics and dance. Even then, Felshin (1972), observes that there is no approval offered to a successful woman athlete whether in gymnastics, dance or athletics. Similarly, Felshin (1972) found that there is no approval offered to a successful woman athlete. Broverman et al. (1970); Gerber (1974); Harris (1971) and Horner and Mead (1949), for example, agree that in the 1930 Olympic Games, the social definition prescribed and limited the range of athletics performance among the women. Unacceptable sports included hammer throw, high hurdles among others. Most females shrink from competitive sports because it strikes them as a caricature of the male domain. Thus, the stigma and social sanctions labelled on the serious female athletes in sports may affect female participation in track and field events (Snyder and Spreitzer, 1978). Like in all other countries, therefore, girls in Kenya receive conditioned permission from parents to participate in competitive sports.

Social values such as home-making and tending of the farm also affect a female's involvement in athletics. These ascribed roles leave a woman with little room to
concentrate in her athletics participation. Emphasising the social values and societal expectations on women, Felshin (1972) observed that:

"Although a societal culture may not acknowledge a woman athlete, movement forms reflect culture. Society sanctions particular sports as appropriate for women. If a woman has to enhance her feminine characteristics, she should take part in those physical activities approved by the society" (p. 259).

Similarly, Weisstein (1971) argues that women are culturally characterized as "inconsistent, emotionally unstable, lacking in super ego, weak, nurturant and only suited to the home and family" (p. 21). This attitude may influence a female's performances in athletics (Fuerst, 1965). Most females become absorbed in non-athletic contexts and their performance in track events decrease (Seward, 1946; Fuerst, 1965; Bird, 1968). The bulk of them opt for a marriage life and abandon their athletic careers (Horrocks, 1966). To many women, therefore, marriage spells the end to a sporting career as few husbands have the tolerance to allow their wives to neglect their domestic duties and continue with sports. Writing on the importance of marriage in the African societies, Boit (1989), observes that:

"Marriage is a devastating problem among the African female athletes. This prevents them from realising their potential in competitive athletics" (p. 208).
Accordingly, Horrocks (1966) asserts that:

"Most societies encourage women to get married. A future without a marriage or a child is a hell reserved for the unattractive, noncompetent, socially inferior and ... miserable exceptions" (p. 445).

Female athletes encounter resistance from members of their families. This forces them to abandon their athletics careers. (Sherif, et al., 1944; Woodman, 1972; Coackley, 1989). However, Snyder and Spreitzer (1973) contend that the initial stimulus into athletics involvement is received from a home-environment that value sports. If sports participation is reinforced by parents, it continues to later years of an individual athlete (Greendorfer, 1974). If the parents disapprove the aggressive and achievement orientation associated with sports, it affects the participation of their daughter (Greendorfer, 1974; Pudelkiewiz, 1970, 1971; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1973) and, therefore, her attitude towards athletics will be low (Wohl and Pudelkiewiz, 1972; Zoble, 1973; Ziegler, 1972). Thus, a child's early encouragement into sport is the key to active involvement into athletics at her later years.

Myths, misconceptions and superstitions have also hindered female athletes' entry into sports such as running, jumping, throwing and others (Harris, 1972; Wells, 1977). In track events, a woman's performance is influenced by her immediate cultural environment (Foreman, 1972; Garman, 1969). In other studies, Garman et al.
(1969) Gendel (1969) and Harres, (1966) contend that it is difficult to single out any one social factor as the main drawback to the women's participation in athletics competitions. They recommend the generation of more information through research that will help the womenfolk to accept active life in present day sedentary and automated world. This recommendation is especially important considering that despite the fact that many of the old taboos and beliefs have been dispelled, there are still many common misconceptions associated with women's participation in athletics. For example, most female athletes in America have conflicting views towards their athletics careers and the social roles. When female athletes receive messages which imply that participation in athletics jeopardizes their social and psychological acceptability or popularity, they will allot it very low priority or abandon it altogether (Coakley and Peters, 1981; Feltz, 1978; and Lemy, 1977).

Religious influence has also had untold effect on women's involvement in sports. In Arabian cultures, women's participation in athletics is minimal (Mead, 1949; Broverman, et al., 1970; Harris, 1974; Simri, 1972; Reitmayer, 1973; Bennett, 1988). In countries such as Japan, Taiwan and Israel, the traditional culture limits the range of athletic events among the women. Inappropriate events for women include, high hurdles,
short and long distance races (Gerber, 1974; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1978, Abmayr, 1983). In Africa, Onanunga (1986) observed that religious influence has had an effect on women participation in sports, especially athletics. The doctrines of Islamic religion which has a wider geographical spread in North Africa than Christianity emphasize two main teachings. One has to do with marriage, a practice that sentences a sizeable number of Muslim girls to childhood marriages. The other, relates to the mode of dressing for women in accordance to the Holy Quran. The emphasis on the mode of dress for women is to cover the whole body such that only the face is exposed to view (Bennett, et al., 1983). This style of dress coupled with negative attitude towards competitive athletics has had untold impact on women's participation in athletics in Northern Africa and the general retardation to the implementation of the concept of 'Sport for All and Women' (Onanunga, 1986).

Bennett, et al. (1983) found that the whole continent of Africa awaits to be conquered by women's sports. Sports is limited to the school system in most of the African countries, where a smaller number of girls attend. However, Bennett, et al. (1983) fail to specify the factors responsible for the meagre number of females in the athletic profession. In another study, Were (1985) cites a conference of scholars from different parts of Africa
where attention was on the roles of women in development at local, national and international levels. The overall picture that emerged underscores the centrality of women in their developmental contributions. Like Bennett et al., (1983), however, Were's work lacks an in-depth treatment of women and their participation in sports and fails to show cause why there is a smaller number of females in sports even at school level.

In a study of women and sport in Nigeria, Onanunga (1986) observed that an African woman plays several interwoven roles in her family. She is a maid, a wife, a mother, a farmer and at the same time a bread winner. Such social obligations leave her little room for formal sports such as athletics on her schedule. As a wife, immediately after marriage, she must start raising a family. Whatever her athletic potential when at school or college, once she gets married, she abandons her athletic career and other physical exercises in general (Boit, 1989).

Onanunga (1986) adds that the continent of Africa is predominantly a traditional society. The bounding chain of interpersonal relationships continue to retain a strong grip on the women as they go through home, school and the society. Their lukewarm attitude to sports is, therefore, a reflection of the nature of the traditional cultural features that influences the African society. However,
such traditional attitude towards competitive athletics bars an alarming number of females from active track events participation. Thus:

"The cultural force in Africa is quite rigid on women. The reality is that the participation of women in athletics may defame the family's name and indeed, soil it" (p. 62).

Onanunga (1986) asserts further that an appropriate environment for an African woman is at home so as to help the family with chores and on the farm. In Nigeria, for example, she observes that most women view athletics as secondary and subordinate to the attraction of a husband. Marriage is, therefore, what counts, - an obsession which goes deeper than the level of athletics involvement. Boit (1989) has observed that, like in Nigeria, social roles, social-cultural beliefs and the general societal expectations of a woman have taken a better grip on the Kenyan social system. Such demands spell the end of sports careers for most Kenyan females. Thus, most of the time, women are worrying about their personal appearances particularly when they change into sports attires and the supposed masculinizing effect of exercises on their figures. They languish on the back of outdated and unscientific views of the delicate nature of a woman's body.

Masika (1993) argues that until early 1993, Lydia Cheromei was the junior world champion in 10,000 metres, 3,000 metres and world Cross Country. He further points
out that she dropped from all these events and attributes it to miscalculation between her social obligation and athletic participation together with the general lack of advice. According to Father Colm, the Principal of St. Patrick's, Iten, secondary school:

"if Kenya hoped to improve and retain more talented women on track events, they should advise the girls not to indulge in early marriages" (p. 28).

After the athlete's mother was interviewed, she pleaded in a defeatist manner saying:

"You newspaper people should help us end this misuse of our daughters. She is worn out now and she always returns home in the dead of the night unaccompanied." (p. 28)

It is likely that in Kenya, such parental attitude towards athletics negatively influences a great number of both potential and active female athletes. Even then, none of the aforementioned sports enthusiasts has explicitly examined the social factors affecting the women performance in track events.

In effect, Onanunga's work (1986) points to the fact that the extent to which the African woman is bound by her traditional cultural environment cannot be changed in a short term. An investigation into psychosocial factors affecting the African women is, thus, an absolute necessity. In the same vein, Boit (p. 281) asserts that there is a dire need to establish specific social factors affecting Kenyan female athletes in track events. This
will help Kenyan girls have a longer and more purposeful participation in athletics. It will also facilitate the tapping of the available potential talent (Amin and Moll, 1972). Moreover, their physical qualifications certainly allow for similar world class performance to that of other women.

Amin and Moll (1972) claimed the existence of untapped talent of potential athletes in Kenya. They further point out that Kenyan women's performance in athletics is lagging behind and that there is "massive early dropout from the track events among Kenyan women" (p. 76). These findings are consistent with Abmayr's (1983) assertion that most of the potential female athletes in Kenya drop out early even before their athletic potential is fully realised. He further argues that the statistical total of women athletes in track events decreases with advancing age. Even then, none of these sports enthusiasts has suggested an investigation into the factors responsible for the early retirement of women athletes from track events.

The vast majority of Kenya is rural with deep-rooted traditional values and cultural norms (Kelly, 1981; Boit, 1989). Though the legal marriage age for girls is sixteen, tradition and culture of the majority of Kenyans puts pressures on girls to be married soon after attaining puberty (Boit, 1989). Traditional attitudes that predominate and underscore female roles include care of the family and confinement to the home. A plump girl is
admired as 'healthy' and potentially strong for child-bearing and working in the homestead (Kelly, 1981). Hence, there is deep suspicion of and resentment against young girls who show interest in running. Athletics, which encompasses running, takes them away from their traditional roles; and running makes them slim and 'unhealthy' (Kelly, 1981; Abmayr, 1983; Boit, 1989). Such heavy traditional and cultural demands place tremendous widespread stress on Kenyan female athletes (Boit, 1989). Thus, it is the subjective feeling of the present researcher that in Kenya, such attitudes towards sports influence a sizeable number of potential female athletes away from the sporting career. This is further evidenced in Daily Nation (1988) which cites Mary Chemweno, a housewife, who combines her household duties and training schedules lamenting that:

"It is a great sacrifice to look after the children, tend the farm, and at the same time do well on the track. These have taken some of the edge off my bursts." (p. 14)

During the fourth (4th) All Africa Games held in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1987, she, however, won a bronze medal in 800 metres.

Abmayr (1983) points out that social factors are the greatest hindrance to better performances in track and field athletics by female athletes in Kenya. Abmayr (1983) further attested that the bulk of Kenyan female athletes retire early especially after seventeen years of age. Their performances levels vary markedly after this age. He adds that figures and data exist which provide clear prognosis of low performance by Kenya women athletes.
In 1974, Sabina Chebichi ran 800 metres in 2:02.6 min. After that, she disappeared just as suddenly as she had emerged in 1972. In 1980, Mary Chemweno at twenty (20) years of age set two African records in 800 metres at 1:59.94 min. and in 1,500 metres at 4:08.76 min. In 1981, Justina Chepchirchir set two African record runs in 3,000 metres at 9:11.74 min. and 15:53.6 min. in 5,000 metres. These three talented women runners have not lasted long in their athletic careers (Abmayr, 1981, 1983).

Similar concerns have also been expressed by Likimani (1991). She postulates that the reputation of Kenya women athletics performances is very high both locally and internationally. However, most of these women do not last long in their profession as exemplified by 1968 Olympic Games where the trio of Lydia Stephens, Tecla Chemabwai and Elizabeth Chesire represented Kenya. By the 1972 Olympic Games, only Tecla Chemabwai had remained among the three reputed athletes. The three women had put in every effort but were eliminated during the preliminaries. Without getting further to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, the present researcher keeps wondering what had happened to the likes of Lydia Stephens and Elizabeth Chesire. While their retirement from athletics may have been socially induced, Likimani does not explicitly account for the disappearance of such renown Kenyan athletes from track events.

From a similar point of view, Abmayr (1984), Amin and Moll (1972), Spencer, (1984) and Wanjohi (1984) agree that the performance of Kenyan female athletes in the track
events lags far behind that of their male counterparts. However, none of these writers have suggested the factors responsible for such performances nor early retirement from sports.

Most Kenyan girls get married soon after high school. Some of them through encouragement from parents. According to Alex (1987), Kenyan women succumb to the seemingly inevitable social barrier found in their athletics path. The majority, therefore, including the talented ones, will follow the way of early pregnancies, marriages and, thus, an end to their athletics. Boit (1989) decries that until the fundamental issues of social attitudes and cultural practices are addressed, any form of encouragement for women to participate on an international level will be fruitless. However, this is only mentioned in passing.

African culture has given the female athletes a stereotyped self-perception. This has hindered the development of self-confidence and aggression - two factors critical for success in competitive athletics. Outlining some of the problems that have retarded the development of African women athletes, Ogun (1987) argues that social-cultural problems and rapid procreation forces a bulk of female athletes to retire early from track events. Such social factors are only mentioned in passing. Okoth (1987), emphasising on early pregnancy as a factor leading to early retirement from the track sport also observed that:
"Most women take the psychosocial obligations and athletics as parallel issues and that is why most of them are not able to represent us in various athletic meets" (p. 71).

Similarly, Vogt (1983), postulates that African sportswomen have not yet started to achieve outstanding international levels of athletic performances. During early pregnancy, an African woman may not engage in such crazy and injurious activities as athletics because it might induce a miscarriage and/or difficulties during child-bearing (Onanunga, 1986).

At an individual level, therefore, teenage pregnancies and marriage are devastating problems among the Kenyan female athletes. According to Boit (1989), girls who succumb to these social demands experience an abrupt end to their athletic careers. But then, such postulates have not been subjected to empirical test.

What is clear from the above submissions is that social-cultural beliefs and psychological factors may affect an individual athlete's performance. However, such convictions require empirical investigation to establish the extent to which such psychological factors affect Kenyan women performance in athletics. Considering that none of the studies cited have been done in Kenya, the psychological parameters involved are very useful to the present study in evaluating the socialisation process and an individual athlete's attitudes towards competitive athletics career.
2.4: Conclusion

The aforementioned studies lack in-depth examination of women and their participation in sports. However, the studies elicit an interest investigating further the mentioned variables, that is attitude towards competitive athletics and the societal expectation of a woman, in Kenyan context and other related psychosocial factors to establish their relationship to low performance in track events. Thus, the aforementioned studies are imperative to the present study in formulating a model to determine the psychosocial factors affecting the Kenyan female athlete's performance in track events. Additionally, it is apparent that the Kenyan women's performances in track events last only for a short time. As evidenced in Table 2, this is a peculiar case in Kenya. No study has been carried out in Kenya to establish factors that militate against Kenyan women's participation in track events. This study, therefore, set out to investigate the psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan female performances in international track event and suggest possible solutions so as to retain a greater pool of women in athletics.

In investigating the psychosocial factors affecting the performance of Kenyan female athletes in track events, the study identified factors such as socialisation process, attitude toward competitive athletics, self-perception,
levels of motivation and peer group influence to assist the Kenya coaches to sustain a greater number of females in the mainstream of athletics careers. Because these postulates have not been subjected to any empirical test, there is an urgent need to establish the psychosocial factors affecting the female Kenya athletes in track events.
3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the description of the procedures involved in carrying out this study. It covers the research design, the target population and the sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.1 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The location of the study was determined by an external force. The researcher had no control over the venues. These were venues for the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association's National Championships and residential training areas. The venues visited during the National Championships were, Kisumu, Embu, Thika, Eldoret, Chuka, Kisii, Nakuru, Nyahururu, Nyeri, Nairobi and Kericho.

3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was designed to investigate psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan women athletes in international track events. The study investigated the existence of any association between the female athletes' performance in track events and the following variables:
(a) The socialisation process of Kenya female athletes,
(b) The attitudes of female athletes towards competitive athletics,
(c) The level of motivation among the athletes,
(d) The self-perception,
(e) The peer group influence.

These factors were studied without introducing any control group using the Expost Facto Research Design (Englehart, 1972; Wiersma, 1985). Expost Facto Research design is a non-experimental method which does not allow the researcher to manipulate the variables under investigation. Since the variables under this research design occur in the setting, usually a natural setting, the research only attempted to establish the cause-effect relationship occurring between the independent and dependent variables.

This design has been applied to research in which causal inferences are based on reasoning retrospectively from effects to causes. The effects exist and circumstances or conditions surrounding it seem to be a logical place to look for the cause (Babie, 1975; Wiersma, 1985).

Under this research design, data was collected and the researcher established any effect relationship that may
exist and explained how the effects were operating. Inferences about the relationship between variables under study could, thus, be synthesized and the interpretation enhanced (Englehart, 1972; Kerlinger, 1975; Wiersma, 1985).

The study had the working hypotheses of testing the existing conditions (low performance) and the relationship (psychosocial causes).

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

The target population in this study consisted of athletics coaches and female track athletes.

In the study, athletics coaches with a minimum of level 'C' Kenya Amateur Athletics Association Certificates were considered. Also considered were coaches who had been selected on one occasion or another by the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association to train athletes for the All Africa Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games.

The elite female athletes considered for this study were those who participated the Barcelona Olympic Games (Spain) in 1992, the World Athletics Championships, the World Cross Country Championships and the National Athletic Trials to select Kenya's representatives in the Commonwealth Games in Victoria (Canada) 1993. Considered also were those who participated in the 1994 5th International Amateur Athletics World Junior Championships,
Lisbon (Portugal), the 1995 World Championships in Gothenberg (Sweden) and the 1996 World Cross Country Championships in South Africa.

3.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The study combined both stratified and snowball sampling methods to define the representative sample to be studied. These methods provided the researcher with a random sample in that no prior knowledge of who the sixty female athletes would be or the next coaches to be named to succeed the preceding respondents. According to Wiersma (1985), stratified random sampling method ensures that all the sub-populations (strata) are represented in the sample.

(i) The Athletes

Out of a total number of one hundred and twenty (N=120) Kenya women athletes, sixty (n = 60) were sampled ranging in age from sixteen to thirty six. These were those athletes who had represented Kenya in track events at various international competitions. Stratified random sampling was used to select the sixty female athletes who participated in the study.

(ii) Coaches

Only the head coach was initially identified. The coaches were selected through the snowball sampling
method where the subsequent respondents were named by those interviewed during the exercise starting with the national head coach.

Out of the forty (N=40) Kenyan coaches Officially recognised by the KAAA, twenty (n=20) were sampled. These included fifteen male coaches and five female coaches. The Coaches who participated in this study included those selected by the Kenya Amateur Athletic Association (KAAA) to train athletes for International Competitions between 1987 and 1996 and those who had received International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) training in 1987. The researcher paid special attention to those coaches assigned to train track events. A sample of twenty (n= 20) coaches responded to the questionnaire and oral interview. Therefore, the total sample in this study was 80.

3.5 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Two instruments were used in this study. These were questionnaires and oral interviews.

(i) QUESTIONNAIRE

A direct contact questionnaire was the major tool for data collection in this study. The questionnaire was administered to the athletes and coaches in the sampled areas.
Direct contact questionnaire was found suitable as it made it possible to establish rapport with the respondents, explain the purpose of the study, clarify points and answers and encourage the respondents to answer all the questions (Clark and Clark, 1984). This approach also avoided wastage of time and minimized the loss of questionnaires either due to poor addressing or the respondents simply forgetting to mail.

Both closed and open ended questionnaires were used for coaches and athletes. The administration of a direct contact questionnaire established a rapport between the researcher, coaches and the athletes for easier collection of the data.

Two categories of questionnaires were used in this study:

(a) THE ATHLETES QUESTIONNAIRE (APPENDIX C)

This category had two sections. While section one was answered by all respondents in track events, section two was limited to athletes in sprints, middle and long distances.

Section one mainly covered the historical background of the athlete in relation to tapping and development of talent during the youth. It also sought to establish the ages, educational level and levels at which the athletes first participated in elite athletics.
Section two covered the athlete's present participation in elite athletics and the psychosocial factors affecting their performances in track events.

The respondents were then asked to give any other psychosocial factors affecting their performance in track events. Consent was then sought from the respondents to later participate in oral interviews at their most convenient time and venue.

(b) THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COACHES (APPENDIX D)

The key responses which were required in this questionnaire included:

(i) Their athletics inclination and level of performance in the early athletics career. That is, previous performance and participation in athletic events.

(ii) Level of training as a coach and areas of specialisation.

(iii) Opinion on the athletes' attitude towards athletics during training sessions and/or actual competitions.

(iv) Motivation effect on the performance of track events.

(v) Socialisation process and its relationship to the performance in track events as a result of parental influence.
(vi) Identification of the psychosocial factors in contributing to low performance in track events by female Kenya athletes.

(vii) Suggestion of any other psychosocial factor(s) affecting the female Kenya athletes in track events.

(II) INTERVIEWS

Oral interviews were conducted for auxiliary information. This involved two types of groups, namely, athletes and coaches. According to Ross (1974), the basis of the interview is the reliance on another person's verbal response for the information about herself or her knowledge.

The interviews were open-ended (i.e. not structured). This allowed the interviewee to respond favourably to the questions posed.

During the interviews, the researcher asked the respondents to respond to specific questions and recorded the responses for possible inclusion in the study.

(i) Athletes:

This mainly dealt with athletes' attitudes towards competitive athletics. The researcher also attempted to establish the opinion of the athletes towards the current trend of female athletes performances in track events and
what they thought was the cause to be associated with early drop out while their male counterparts stay longer in athletics careers.

(ii) Coaches:

Target respondents were coaches who prepared teams for national and international competitions including coaches who coached the 1988, Seoul Olympic Games, the 1990 Commonwealth Games, the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, the 1993 World Athletics Championships, the 1993 World Cross Country Championships and the 1994 Commonwealth Games (Victoria, Canada). Also considered were those who trained the Kenya National team for the 1995 World Athletic championships, and the 1996 world cross country championships. The interviews dwelt mainly on the psychosocial factors affecting the Kenya female athletes during their participation in international competitions.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

Before the actual study, a pilot study was carried out with a sample of twenty respondents. Fifteen athletes were drawn from Kenyatta University female athletes and five coaches from Meru District. This sample was drawn from venues which were not in the study sample. The pilot study group was selected from athletes and coaches who had similar characteristics with those to be studied by the
researcher. The main purpose of piloting was to ensure the validity of the questionnaire items and their suitability to the study, the wording of the questions and the consistency in the questions, and that they would elicit the kind of information the researcher wanted. More significantly, the piloting assisted in providing the necessary confidence in the responses to the questionnaire items (Njororai, 1990). After piloting, the data collection instruments were adjusted accordingly.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Specifically, the researcher visited all the 1993 Annual Athletics Championships for the various institutions which led to the selection and preparation of the Kenyan team to represent the country in the 1993 World Athletics Championships, the 1994 World Cross Country Championships, the 1994 Africa Amateur Athletics Conference/Engen International meet, the 1994 Commonwealth Games, the 1995 World Athletic Championships, and the 1996 World Cross country Championships.

During the national championships, the researcher administered the questionnaires and the oral interviews to a large number of respondents at one time. Administering the questionnaires and conducting interviews at the championships reduced chances of loss of the questionnaires
in the post and increased the number of respondents.

Various residential training venues were also visited. These were Kigari Teachers' Training College (Embu), where the national cross country team was training in preparation for the World Cross Country Championships in Budapest (Hungary), Kenya Science Teachers College, where the Kenya team was training in readiness for the Junior Championships to Lisbon (Portugal) and Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani (Nairobi), where the Kenya national team was training in preparation for the Commonwealth Games in Victoria (Canada). Other venues visited were Kigari Teachers' Training College, where Kenya team was training for the 1995 World Athletic Championships in Gothenburg (Sweden), and the 1996 World Cross Country Championships in South Africa. In all these venues, the questionnaire was administered and oral interviews conducted to those not done during the championships.

Where the administration of group questionnaires and interviews was not possible, individual questionnaires and oral interviews were conducted. The administration of both the questionnaires and oral interviews was done with the consent of the coach. All respondents filled the questionnaires and extended their cooperation during the interviews.

Anonymity required for the respondents was guaranteed. Furthermore, all the respondents were asked not to write or
give their names in the study. This helped to remove any fears that respondents might have in answering the questionnaires or taking part in the interviews.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The data obtained from the field were coded for analysis by computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme (Norusis, 1983). The coding system adopted was 01 for "Yes" items and 02 for "No" items to include responses from coaches and athletes in this study. The coding system guaranteed the identification and interpretation of the responses measuring the variables under study.

Given the nominal nature of the data in this study, the statistical technique used to test the hypotheses was the Chi-square ($x^2$) test for independence. The Chi-square test involves testing for the differences between the frequencies obtained (Hinkle, Wiersma and jurs, 1979; Oppenheim, 1983).

The study also sought to determine if the variables involved were independent of each other. Thus, the Chi-square was applied as it involved the test of statistical
hypotheses that there was an element of statistical independence in the variables under consideration.

According to Babbie (1975), Chi-Square is a frequently used test of significance in social sciences. The test was, therefore, used to establish the relationship between the psychosocial factors affecting the performance of Kenyan female athletes in track events, that is, the socialization process, attitudes towards competitive athletics, levels of motivation, self-perception and peer group influence.

The Chi-square test was used to establish that the relationship between the specific variables was not just due to chance. The Chi-square formulae used was:

\[ X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} \]

Where: \( n_{ij} \) equals the observed frequency in each cell
\( E(n_{ij}) \) equals the expected frequency. The level of significance at which the hypotheses was accepted or rejected was at \( P < 0.05 \).
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.0.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the description of the raw data. It also concerns itself with the statistical analysis of the raw data in line with the hypotheses for this study.

The results from the questionnaires and the interviews concerning psychosocial factors affecting athletes' performance reflect a distinct division between athletes' and coaches' expectations and current status. For clarity, responses from the athletes and the coaches are presented separately. In each of the category of respondents, results are presented to show the distinction between the expectations and the status.

4.0.1 DESCRIPTION OF RAW DATA AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

4.1.1 THE RESPONDENTS

A total of 60 female athletes in track events and 20 coaches comprised the population sample in this study. The age of female athletes ranged from 15 to 36 while their educational level ranged from primary to university. All the selected athletes and coaches took part in the study.
4.1.2 FEMALE ATHLETES

4.1.2.1 SOCIALISATION PROCESS

Out of the 60 Kenyan female athletes interviewed, 57 (95%) indicated that 'parents and siblings serve as models'. On the other hand, 25 (42%) of the athletes felt that 'social life is too involving'. It would thus appear that the greater the socialisation into athletics at an early age, the better the expected performance. In both of these cases, however, three (5%) and 35 (58%) did not favour any of these social factors studied respectively (Table 3).

Further analysis of the findings revealed a significant relationship between the socialisation process and the performance in track events ($X^2 = 6.64; df = 6; P = 0.01$). Since $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected.
Table 3: Responses on Socialisation Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Social life is too involving</th>
<th>Socialisation process is important for athletic performance</th>
<th>Parents, brothers and sisters were athletes</th>
<th>Parents, siblings serve as models</th>
<th>Community / society encourages athletics for women</th>
<th>Participation in athletics for women</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>female athletes had opportunities when young</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41.98</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( X^2 = 6.64'; \text{ df} = 6; \text{ p} = 0.01 \)

Key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies  
E.F.: Expected Frequencies  
\( X^2 = \sum \frac{(r_{ij} - E(r_{ij}))^2}{E(r_{ij})} = 6.64' \)
Similarly, all 60 respondents (100%) confirmed in the oral interviews that a woman's social expectation adversely affects her performance in track events. Of the sixty athletes interviewed, however, five (8%) stated that traditional demands lure the majority of women away from active participation in track events. On the other hand, 12 (20%) of those interviewed were of the opinion that both ascribed and achieved roles conflict, hence, disadvantaging the achieved athletics' roles in a woman. 18 (30%) of the athletes interviewed also showed that due to the existing conflict between the ascribed and achieved roles, a female athlete's performance in track events is reduced. On the other hand, five (8%) of the total athletes interviewed attributed this to lack of required concentration especially during serious competitions. Moreover, another 20 (34%) of the athletes interviewed felt that there is need for societal/communal support.

4.1.2.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS

All 60 respondent female athletes (100%) felt that athletics for girls and women is important. Chi-square analysis of the athletes' responses showed a significant relationship between an individual athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics and the performance in track events ($X^2 = 523.42; \text{df} = 11; P = 0.009$). The null hypothesis was, thus, rejected at $P < 0.05$. 63
From the statistical analysis, it is evident that an individual athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics impacts upon the performance in international track events. Positive attitude towards competitive athletics would improve an individual's expected performance and vice versa.
Table 4: Response on Attitude Towards Competitive Athletics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Athletics is very important</th>
<th>Athletics help most people to become active</th>
<th>I enjoy Athletics</th>
<th>Athletics is relevant</th>
<th>More time space and money is needed for athletics</th>
<th>Those in good health do not need</th>
<th>I would rather spectate than be athlete</th>
<th>Athletics should be emphasised right from primary level</th>
<th>Athletics for girls and women</th>
<th>Athletics is crucial for a nation</th>
<th>Athletics is too demanding</th>
<th>Female athletes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>O.F</td>
<td>O.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>O.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
<td>E.F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35.64</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46.14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(X^2 = 523.42^*; \text{ d f } = 11; p = 0.009\)

Key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies
E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[X^2 = \sum \frac{[n_{ij} - E(n_{ij})]^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 523.42^*\]
Of the 60 oral interviews carried out, 56 (94%) of the respondent athletes indicated that the attitude of women in Kenya towards competitive athletics hinders the development of their ability in competitive track events while four (6%) felt that this has no effect. 36 (60%) of the respondent athletes, on the other hand, felt that the social attitude and practice coupled with the low expectation of women from the general society are additional but fundamental problems experienced by the female athletes in Kenya. Conversely, 24 (40%) indicated that social attitude and practice are not problems experienced by Kenyan female athletes.

4.1.2.3 THE LEVEL OF MOTIVATION

Out of the 60 female athletes interviewed, 58 (97%) felt that motivation would lure more females into track events. Only two (3%) of the respondent female athletes indicated that motivation accorded to the Kenyan female athletes is adequate. Chi-square analysis of the athletes' responses also indicated a significant relationship between the level of motivation and the Kenya female athletes' performance in track events ($X^2 = 114.48; df = 6; P = 0.007$). Since $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected (Table 5).
Table 5: Responses on the level of Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>I feel Motivation would lure participation help in performance of other sports</th>
<th>I am happy to participate in athletics</th>
<th>Community members motivate females in athletics</th>
<th>motivation level among female Kenya athletes is Adequate</th>
<th>Lack of motivation leads to early dropout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.F. 44</td>
<td>E.F. 0.71</td>
<td>O.F. 55</td>
<td>E.F. 1.66</td>
<td>O.F. 0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.F. 4.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>E.F. 56</td>
<td>E.F. 3.03</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O.F. 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E.F. 9.75</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>E.F. 50</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>E.F. 5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.F. 13</td>
<td>E.F. 3.03</td>
<td>O.F. 2</td>
<td>E.F. 1.17</td>
<td>O.F. 10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E.F. 31</td>
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<td>E.F. 0.8</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>E.F. 9</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( x^2 = 11.48 \); \( df = 6 \); \( p = 0.007 \)

Key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies
E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[
X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 11.48
\]
Similarly, 50 (83%) female athletes confirmed in the oral interviews that extrinsic rewards coupled with parental encouragement would make the female athletes perceive track events competitions as valuable. The other 10 (17%) felt that extrinsic rewards or parental encouragement were not significant for an individual's notable performance in track events. All the 60 (100%) female athletes, on other hand, showed that if parents were themselves active participants in athletics, they would serve as models and, therefore, reinforce their daughters' longer lifespan in competitive track events.

Based on the statistics and interviews, it is apparent that motivation is one of the factors affecting the performance of female Kenya athletes in international track competitions. This shows that the greater the motivation either prior to or during the championship, the better the expected performance.

4.1.2.4 SELF-PERCEPTION

From Table 6, it is evident that all 60 (100%) female athletes indicated that participation in athletics helps in the maintenance of an individual's figure and physique. On the other hand, two (3%) indicated that a good body shape is acquired through diet (Table 6).

Further, chi-square analysis of the respondent athletes' responses showed a significant relationship between self-perception and the athlete's performance in track events ($X^2 = 242.02; df = 6; P = 0.009$). Based on the athletes' responses,
(P < 0.0009), the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, from the statistical analysis, it was apparent that an individual's positive self-perception would improve the expected performance in track events.
Table 6: Responses on self-perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Athletics maintains better figure and physique</th>
<th>Active involvement in athletics creates confidence</th>
<th>Athletics makes Women masculine</th>
<th>Good figure is through diet only</th>
<th>Athletics makes one stiff and sore</th>
<th>Athletics do not contribute to the health of female</th>
<th>Psychological inclination influence an athlete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>O.F 22.77</td>
<td>O.F 19.55</td>
<td>O.F 1.88</td>
<td>O.F 0.02</td>
<td>O.F 1.29</td>
<td>O.F 6.99</td>
<td>O.F 12.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>14.39</td>
<td>18.94</td>
<td>17.11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(X^2 = 242.02\); df=6; p=0.009

key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies
E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 242.02\]
When orally interviewed, 26 (77%) of the athletes felt that due to the long held societal beliefs, an individual athlete must deal not only with the force of the societal opinion which discourages her from serious involvement in athletics but also with her own self doubt. On the other hand, 14 (23%) athletes indicated that this factor is not absolute. The results also revealed that though most female athletes, (51, (85%)) perceived themselves positively in their competitive roles, 9 (15%) of the respondents described themselves as less active and negative but more dynamic than non-athletes. 45 (75%) of the athletes also felt that their self-concept did not measure up with their ideal self, while only 15 (25%) showed that their self-concept is not in harmony with their ideal self.

4.1.2.5 PEER GROUP INFLUENCE

Of the 60 Kenyan female athletes interviewed, 57 (95%) indicated that encouragement from peers is a critical factor for a female's continued participation in track events. Three (5%) of the respondent female athletes however, felt that encouragement from peer-group is not significant (Table 7).

Chi-square analysis of their responses indicated a significant relationship between the peer group influence and the performance in track events ($X^2 = 2.63; df = 2; P = 0.009$). As the results shows, peer group influence affects the performance of an athletes in track events. The greater the encouragement from peers, the better the performance.
### Table 7: Responses on Peer Group Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Peer group influence affects a females’ performance in track</th>
<th>A Female athletes’ Choice of sport is dependent on her peer group</th>
<th>Encouragement of friends is critical for a females’ participation in athletics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Observed Frequencies (O.F.)</td>
<td>Expected Frequencies (E.F.)</td>
<td>Observed Frequencies (O.F.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.3000</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.3190</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.2794</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
(x^2 = 2.63; df = 2; p = 0.009)
\]

**Key**:  
O.F.: Observed Frequencies  
E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[
x^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}} = 2.63
\]
Of the 60 female athletes interviewed, 42 (70%) confirmed that they felt encouraged to continue with their athletics career if approved by their peer group. On the other hand, 18 (30%) of the female respondent athletes indicated that they felt more insecure and uncomfortable when friends failed to appreciate their athletics profession.

The results from the questionnaire and the oral interviews concerning psychosocial factors affecting athletes' performance in track events, reflect a distinct division between athletes' expectations and current status. The status factors attributed by the sixty Kenyan female athletes for poor performance leading to early drop-out include:

(a) lack of proper training modes and non-committed coaching personnel (47%);
(b) lack of encouragement from parents and the community in general (95%);
(c) lack of early exposure into athletics (88%);
(d) lack of continued exposure into competitive and active talent (85%);
(e) lack of adequate training of most coaches assigned to women's athletics teams (18%);
(f) Untrained female athletes are often included in the international female athletes' contingents on the eve of the athletic championships (58%);
During the off-seasons, a female's body loses form. This tempts most athletes to gradually withdraw from active participation in athletics (65%);

Early marriages and the need to meet societal expectations (50%);

Cultural obligation and national customs are barriers hindering most Kenyan women athletes from effective athletic performance (68%).

4.2.0 THE COACHES

4.2.1.1 SOCIALISATION PROCESS

As shown in Table 8, 16 (80%) Kenyan national coaches in track events indicated that parental upbringing directly relates to an individual's participation and performance in track events. Only four (20%) felt that socialisation process is not absolute for notable performance in track events.

Chi-square analysis of the coaches' responses revealed a significant relationship between socialisation process and the female athletes' performance in track events ($X^2 = 1.92; df = 2; P = 0.006$). The null hypothesis was rejected ($P < 0.05$). From these results, it was observed that socialisation process affects the female athletes' performances in track events. The greater the socialisation into athletics at a tender age, the better the expected performance.
### Table 8: Responses on Socialisation Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Parents are happy to see their daughters in athletics</th>
<th>Most parents feel that participation in athletics is relevant to their daughters.</th>
<th>Parental upbringing relate to an individual's performance in athletics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Yes</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(x^2 = 1.92'; df=2; p=0.006)$

Key: O.F: Observed Frequencies  
E.F: Expected Frequencies

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 1.92'$$
Oral interviews were conducted to elicit auxiliary information from national coaches. All 20 (100%) coaches interviewed confirmed that a child should be introduced to athletics between ages 10 and 14. While the identification of talent in specific track events between ages ten and fourteen was crucial, 11 (55%) of the coaches interviewed felt that parental role of identifying and consistent support to young girls with an athletic orientation is equally important. In the same vein nine (45%) of the coaches interviewed indicated that most of the present female athletes in Kenya have had parental support all through.

4.2.1.2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS

From the responses, all the 20 (100%) Kenyan national coaches indicated that most female athletes in Kenya like to participate in track events. On the other hand, while six (30%) of the coaches felt that most female athletes in Kenya are committed to their athletics careers, 14 (70%) indicated that female athletes in Kenya lack commitment. Chi-square analysis of the coaches' responses also revealed that there was a significant relationship between an athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics and performance in track events ($X^2 = 26.28$; df = 3; $P = 0.0006$). The null hypothesis was rejected since $P < 0.05$.

The results indicated that an individual athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics could affect her performance. Thus, the better the attitude of an individual, the higher the expected performance.
## Table 9: Responses on Attitude Towards Competitive Athletics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Active involvement during training enhances performance in track</th>
<th>Most females like tracks events</th>
<th>Most females feel committed to keep up with athletics</th>
<th>Most females participate in athletics because they like it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.F.</td>
<td>E.F.</td>
<td>O.F.</td>
<td>E.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 26.28^* \\
\]

(x2 = 26.28*; df = 3; p = 0.0006)

Key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies  
E.F.: Expected Frequencies

77
Oral interviews of coaches revealed that although competitive athletics create an opportunity to socialise and interact with men and women of other countries and cultures (three (15%)), the general attitude of Kenyan women towards competitive athletics is low (10, (50%)). Further, seven (35%) of the coaches felt that this is because participation in competitive athletics is believed to make female body's masculine, stronger, and therefore, not feminine.

4.2.1.3 MOTIVATION LEVEL

Table 10 shows a summary of the responses from the coaches, on the level of motivation versus performance in track events. 19 (95%) of the coaches felt that female athletes are physically involved during training. Similarly, 19 (95%) of the coaches felt that the performance of Kenyan women in track events is low due to lack of adequate motivation. On the other hand, one (5%) coach indicated that Kenyan female athletes are not physically involved during training sessions while another one (5%) felt that low performances of Kenyan female athletes in track events is not due to inadequate motivation.

Moreover, Chi-square analysis of the respondent coaches' responses indicated that there was a significant relationship between the level of motivation and performance in track events. ($X^2 = 44.08; df = 2; P = 0.009$). $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that motivation of female athletes would improve their performances in track events.
Table 10: **Responses on Motivation Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>During training all athletes are involved.</th>
<th>General trend of low performance in athletics among female athletes is due to inadequate motivation</th>
<th>There are sufficient opportunities for Kenya female athletes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.F.</td>
<td>E.F.</td>
<td>O.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Yes</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[(x^2=44.08'; df =2; p=0.009).\]

Key:
- **O.F.**: Observed Frequencies
- **E.F.**: Expected Frequencies

\[X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 44.08'.\]
Of the 20 coaches interviewed, 12 (58%) showed that appreciable performance in track events is due to substantial and constant intrinsic motivation. Only eight (42%) coaches indicated that extrinsic rewards are other motivational bases for consistent performance in athletics.

4.2.1.4 SELF-PERCEPTION

Responses on the effects of self-perception among the Kenyan national coaches showed that 16 (80%) favoured the notion that self-perception is a psychological factor that affects Kenyan women's performance in track events. Only four (16%) of the coaches indicated that self-perception does not contribute to low performance in track events (Table 11).

Further, chi-square analysis of the coaches' responses revealed a significant relationship between self-perception and performance in track events ($X^2 = 6.55$; df = 2; $P = 0.009$). Because $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected. Based on the statistics, it would appear that a positive perception of an athlete results to a better performance in track events.
Table 11: Responses on Self- Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Athletic participation has great importance to a woman's body</th>
<th>Self- Perception does not contribute to low performance in track events.</th>
<th>A particular psychological factors affects the performance in track events among females.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>O.F. 9 E.F. 0.01</td>
<td>O.F. 3 E.F. 3.89</td>
<td>O.F. 16 E.F. 5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4 1.71</td>
<td>17 11.58</td>
<td>3 2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>7 3.53</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 1.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of yes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>45%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 6.55 \) \( df = 2; p = 0.009 \)

Key: O.F.: Observed Frequencies
     E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[
X^2 = \sum \frac{(n_{ij} - E(n_{ij}))^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 6.55
\]
Oral interviews of the coaches also noted that an individual athlete's self-perception affects her performance in track events. Of the 20 national coaches interviewed, 14 (70%) indicated that if a female athlete begins to view herself negatively and masculine because of her involvement in athletics, she will gradually withdraw from serious athletics competitions. Only six (30%) felt that self-perception affects an individual's performance in track events.

4.2.1.5 PEER GROUP INFLUENCE

18 (90%) of the coaches felt that a female's choice of athletics is dependent on the interest of her peer group. This showed that the greater the encouragement from peer group, the better the expected performance. Similarly, 14 (70%) of the coaches indicated that peer group influence is a critical factor contributing to low performance in track events among the Kenyan women athletes (Table 12).

Chi-square analysis of the results showed a significantly higher extent of agreement to the effects of peer group influence on the Kenyan women's performance in track events by the coaches ($X^2 = 3.14; \text{df} = 1; P = 0.04$). Since the $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected.
## Table 12: Responses on Peer Group Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>A female's choice of athletics relates directly to the interest of her group.</th>
<th>Peer group influence is a critical factor contributing to low performance in track events among Kenya women.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.F.</td>
<td>E.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| % of Yes         | 90%                              | 70%                              |

\( X^2 = 3.14 \) \( d f = 1; \ p = 0.04 \)

**Key:**
- O.F.: Observed Frequencies
- E.F.: Expected Frequencies

\[ X^2 = \sum \frac{[n_{ij} - E(n_{ij})]^2}{E(n_{ij})} = 3.14 \]
Oral interviews of the coaches confirmed that the performance in track events is dependent on peer group influence. 13 (65%) of the coaches showed that consistent approval by an athlete's friends significantly contributes to her appreciable performance in track events. However, seven (35%) of the coaches felt that if such assent lacks, few women will drop their athletics careers.

The coaches' opinion of whether a woman's social role conflicts with that of her being an athlete was divided. 10 (50%) of the respondent coaches concurred while the other 10 (50%) felt that with proper programming, the conflict between an athlete's ascribed and achieved roles would be minimized.

The status factors attributed by the 20 coaches for low performance leading to early drop out include:

(a) lack of adequate residential training opportunities (40%)
(b) lack of encouragement from parents and the community in general (50%)
(c) lack of early exposure into athletics (90%)
(d) lack of proper training modes and non-committed coaches (30%)
(e) Due to lack of honesty among sports administrators, untrained athletes are often included in the female athletes' contingent bound for overseas championships at the eleventh hour (85%)
The off-season set for the female athletes lacks a clear definition. During this season, therefore, an athlete's body loses form, thus, influencing even those serious in athletics away from competitive athletics (20%).

Lack of systematic follow-up for both raw talent and those exhibiting signs of attrition from competitive track athletics (80%).

Most potential female athletes of Kenya are not exposed, particularly during national and international athletic championships (10%).

Most coaches selected to handle women's athletics teams are not competent (15%).

There are specific barriers hindering Kenyan women athletes from effective athletic performance. These are: cultural obligations and national customs (85%).

A Kenyan woman's social obligation of tending the farm, home and other related chores is not in harmony with her athletic commitments (20%).

Those who get married and give birth while still in active athletics, spare little energy for any appreciable performance in competitive athletics (30%).

There exists a conflict between the ascribed social roles and the achieved athletic roles among the female athletes of Kenya (40%).
5.0.0 INTRODUCTION

The study set out to investigate psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan athletes' performance in track events in international competitions. This chapter presents the summary of the findings of the relationship between the athletes' performance and psychosocial variables of socialisation process, attitude of an athlete towards competitive athletics, level of motivation, self-perception and the peer group influence.

5.1.0 DISCUSSION

The study has shown that adequate residential training prior to international athletics competitions has a decisive function both psychologically and socially to an individual athlete. This is because sufficient training prepares an athlete both mentally and socially. Such psychological and social benefits enables an athlete to concentrate during actual championships, feel secure and generally at ease among others. An athlete, therefore, feels psychologically ready for any serious track events competition. At the same time, prolonged residential training enhances an individual female's social skill. Such an opportunity prepares an athlete to socialise and interact with men and women of other countries and cultures during international championships. For instance, Bennett and
Cohen (1959) postulated that inadequately trained female athletes are easily distracted by spectators during competitions compared to well trained athletes. Consequently, therefore, both athletes and coaches in the present study, showed that residential training period allocated for Kenyan women athletes is inadequate.

The present study found socialisation process to have a significant relationship with performance in track events among the Kenyan female athletes. Specifically, the study revealed that a child needs to be introduced into social systems in which they have an opportunity to engage in athletics and receive positive compliments regardless of their motor talent. Thus, as indicated by Synder and Spreitzer (1979), in this kind of a healthy and harmonious environment athletics becomes a salient feature in their lifestyle. By incorporating athletics into a child’s rearing practices, competitive athletics is not a risk nor extra-ordinary but normal and secure in their social roles as females.

The study also showed that the initial stimulus for females becoming interested in athletics comes from a home environment which considers sports as an important factor in life. Female athletes in track events acknowledged that their families first initiated their interest and worth of participating in athletics. Similarly, Onanunga (1986) argue that parents who are active athletes themselves serve as models and, thus,
reinforce their daughters' participation in competitive track events.

Further, the study indicated that social learning has direct implication on a woman's performance in athletics. A female's interest and consistent participation in athletics is dependent upon innate attitude towards competitive track events. The female athletes representing Kenya at international levels in track events had enjoyed athletics when they were young and, were good athletes. It was observed that the parents of such female athletes had played a critical role in exposing them to athletics during childhood and that they placed some value and importance on being good in athletics. Though majority of female athletes studied had parental support, a significant minority also revealed that they lacked parental support and encouragement in their athletics endeavour during the formative years. Instead, parental support only came in after achieving a degree of success. The explanation of this findings may be based on the fact that majority of Kenyan parents have not been athletes. It is possible, therefore, that most female athletes of Kenya lack adequate parental support and encouragement throughout their athletic careers. Those who have proved their athletic prowess internationally only perform for a short period of time. This contributes to poor performance leading to early drop out prior to achieving full potential in track events. Therefore, for female athletes to succeed, in Kenya, as urged
by Onanunga (1986), the parents should come out and support them right from their formative years.

From the study, it was also evident that societal prejudice and misconceptions about a woman's social role serve to curtail their participation in competitive track events. They are discouraged through low expectation which prevent most of them from pursuing their athletics careers. It was further noted that the status of women in Kenyan society hinders the development of their ability in competitive track athletics. This is mainly because the social practices and the low expectation of women from the general society in relation to their performance in athletics are the fundamental problems experienced by the female athletes of Kenya (Table 3). For instance, the study indicated that a plump girl is regarded as healthy while slimness resulting from athletics participation is termed as unhealthy. Similarly, traditional demands such as tending the farm, the home and the rearing of children adversely affects their performance in track events. Such traditional demands, therefore, lure the majority of women away from active track events participation. Due to these long held traditional beliefs and expectations of a woman, an individual female athlete finds herself in a dilemma. Her participation in competitive athletics stigmatizes her socially hence unsuitable for home-making. This in turn has an adverse psychological effect.

Due to the existing conflict between the ascribed social role (expectation) and the achieved athletic role (status), the
performance in track events among the female athletes of Kenya gradually reduces. For example, they have to combine their household duties, the training and championships schedules. This causes low concentration especially during international competitions. Eventually, it leads to low performance in track events.

From the study, it was observed that Kenyan women athletes have mixed attitudes towards competitive track athletics. While some perceive athletics as valuable and a worthwhile venture, others often feel that it promotes masculinity in their bodies, aggressiveness and makes them look less attractive compared to their non-athletic counterparts. Due to such an attitude, a significant number of Kenyan women athletes seem to have accepted the notion that participation in athletics for women carries with it a social and psychological stigma. Since most women may not desire to be socially and psychologically stigmatized, they end up internalizing a belief that athletics is a male domain, hence, a low attitude towards competitive track events. Bowing to such submissions and social inclinations, therefore, the majority of women have opted to terminate their athletic careers before realizing their fullest potential.

The present study has also revealed a positive relationship between the level of motivation and low performance in track events. Both the national coaches and the international female athletes who took part in the study have shown that female athletes in Kenya receive insufficient motivation. This lowers
their performance in track events. A notable performance in track events is determined by the feedback an individual athlete receives relative to her efforts and accomplishments. An individual female athlete would feel motivated if the rewards are positive. However, if the rewards are negative, the career would be abandoned before the realization of her full potential and if maintained, the performance would be low. Responses from both athletes and coaches revealed that Kenyan female athletes are not adequately motivated so as to realize their fullest potential in athletics. In the absence of such rewards, the world of track events will continue to lose even the high achievement oriented females to other sectors of social life.

The need to achieve a specific athletic standard is conceptualized as a positive motive when reinforced by certain situational forces. This impels individual athletes who possess such drive to display competitive behavioural patterns. The Kenyan female athletes who took part in the present study acknowledged that positive motivation would lure more females to prolonged and meaningful performance in track events. Though some are happy to be in track events, the motivation to maintain a high participation is low. Due to this low motivation, the general trend of performance in track events is equally low. Some experience early drop out before the realization of their abilities.

The study has also revealed a lack of exposure to competitive track events among Kenyan female athletes. It was
evident from the opinions of both the athletes and the coaches, that Kenyan female athletes lack exposure prior to the actual athletic championships. In turn the respondents observed that early exposition to competitive athletics, frequent overseas trips, exposition to both local and international athletic meets, extrinsic rewards and encouragement from community members among others would be the basis of motivation. Exposition to both local and regular international championships is thus, not only a critical attribute to successful and prolonged participation in track events but also a component which would boost an athletes' motivational base.

The national female athletes have also expressed the prevalence of consistent tension between the competitors and the officials. This promotes favouritism especially during the final selection of the national team. The friction between the female athletes and the officials is partly due to fear of intimidation by the same officials and partly the fear that the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association (KAAA) may drop their names from those to represent the country in a given championship.

Traditionally, the consequence of athletics participation for women has been viewed negatively. From the present study, however, female athletes seem to deal with both the force of societal opinion which discourages them from serious athletics involvement and with their own self-doubts. This means that an individual female athlete should possess an inner strength and
confidence so as to deal successfully with these dual roles. Experience of such role conflict seems to have great impact on the female athlete, thus, curtailing her athletic career. Furthermore, though female athletes do not seem to suffer negative consequences related to their total self-concept, they become aware that they are deviating from the ideal or typical female role model. This becomes apparent especially when they reflect upon their specifically achieved roles in track events. It is possible that participation in competitive track events could jeopardize the females' self-concept, socialization and her general popularity. This, coupled with deep feelings of personal inadequacy among some women has led to low performance and early drop out.

The present study has noted a significant relationship between the peer group influence and performance in track events among the Kenyan female athletes. Peer groups reinforces the early practices and eventual participation in competitive track events. Such influence acts as an intervening variable in the maintenance of an athletics career. Furthermore, such reference groups serve as the original stimulus in providing the very impetus required for good performance in track events. Similarly, both the coaches and the female athletes, have all shown that through observation of those an athlete associates with, it is possible to predict the level at which an individual athlete can perform. However, although the standard level of athletic performance is set with reference to those one
associates with, an individual's aspirations would not necessarily be lowered even if the comparison offered is lower than her own level of performance. If the peer group of a female athlete consists of male athletes, both the aspiration and performance level in track events would be positively influenced. The female athletes are also made to believe in validity of their participation in track events and, therefore, have deep and effective commitment to their athletic careers. If the peer groups' influence is negative, their performance in track events would be low leading to eventual termination of their participation. Thus, Kenyan female athletes view their peer groups as both role models and sources of aspirations.

Throughout the competitive track season, Kenyan women athletes have been known to train for the forthcoming championships assisted by selected or voluntary national coaches. After the targeted championships, however, regular training ceases for most of the national athletes. This, coupled with the lack of systematic follow-up and the fact that physical fitness regresses, lures most women into un-athletic lifestyles. This means that even those who had exhibited admirable athletic talent during the competitive track season and the actual athletic championships, loose form for good performance in subsequent athletic seasons. It takes greater effort to regain former form and ability.

Early marriages is a significant factor contributing to low performance and eventual early drop out from track events among
the female athletes in Kenya. Few husbands allow their wives to participate in competitive athletics at the expense of their domestic duties. Such practices spell the end of their sporting careers. To prepare an athlete to achieve her highest potential in track events, needs long-term programming which takes years of participation and hard work.

The study further revealed the coaches' opinion that those women who get married and remain in active athletics, find it difficult to spare sufficient energy for any appreciable competitive athletics. However, the national coaches indicated that marriage of a female athlete at the age of eighteen, and with proper planning, boosts her performance in track events. Consequently, the coaches felt that even after marriage, there should be constant support from both the woman's husband and the significant others such as parents, in-laws, friends and peers.
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. The recommendations include those for further research and suggestions on how Kenyan female athletes could be retained longer in track events.

6.1.0 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study set out to investigate the psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan women's performance in international track events. The variables considered were the socialisation process, the individual athlete's attitude towards competitive athletics, the level of motivation, self-perception, and peer group influence.

6.1.1 SOCIALISATION PROCESS

The initial stimulus for females becoming interested in athletics comes from a home environment which values sports. Parents who were active athletes themselves served as models, hence, reinforcing their daughters' participation in competitive athletics. However, although most of the female athletes studied had parental support, a minority showed that they lacked parental support and encouragement in their athletic efforts especially during the formative years.
6.1.2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS

Kenyan women athletes have mixed attitudes towards competitive track events. Though some regard athletics as valuable and purposeful, others feel that active involvement in competitive athletics may induce masculinity. Hence making them look less feminine and unattractive. Such an attitude affects their actual performance in track events.

6.1.3 LEVEL OF MOTIVATION

Kenyan female athletes receive insufficient motivation. Any notable achievement in track events is dependent upon the feedback an athlete receives relative to her accomplishments. Since Kenyan female athletes lack exposition to competitive athletics, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and frequent overseas trips, among others, the world of track events loses potential female athletes to other sectors of social life.

6.1.4 SELF-PERCEPTION

Though all the athletes believed that athletics promoted good figures, many of them also had the conflicting impression that athletics induces masculine characteristics. This conflict could jeopardize their self-concept leading to poor performance in track events.
6.1.5 PEER GROUP INFLUENCE

Peer group reinforces early practices and eventual involvement in competitive track events among female athletes. It is possible to predict the level at which an individual athlete will perform by observing those she associates with. A female athlete's aspiration and performance level in track events could be positively influenced particularly, if the peer group comprised male athletes.

6.2.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

(a) Socialisation process, attitude towards competitive athletics, level of motivation, self-perception and peer group influence had a significant relationship with performance in track events among Kenyan female athletes.

(b) Other psychosocial factors affecting the performance in track events among female Kenyan athletes are role conflict between ascribed and achieved roles, early marriages, lack of adequate residential training prior to international competition, lack of encouragement from parents and community, and the inability to harmonize between the self-perception and the societal expectation.

(c) The study noted an association between low performance in track events among female athletes of Kenya and their low status in the society. Societal attitudes,
practices, and low expectation of a woman are other social problems affecting the female athlete of Kenya.

(d) Other devastating psychosocial problems encountered by Kenyan women athletes are teenage pregnancies together with early marriages. Such marriages and pregnancies spell the end of a sporting career. This is further aggravated by the fact that few husbands have the tolerance to allow their wives to abandon their household duties for athletic participation. This coupled with low societal expectations subverts the Kenyan female athletes' ability to exhibit mental drive so as to excel in track events. Similarly, lack of mental drive to success, which is a prerequisite for any desirable outcome in athletics, leads to inconsistent performance in track events among most Kenyan female athletes.

(e) At primary school age, Kenyan girls are generally enthusiastic about competitive athletics. By the time they reach high school level, however, the stereo-typical prejudices begin to take their toll. Disappearance and inconsistent performance in track events becomes the norm.

(f) In the Kenyan athletic training programme, there is a general lack of serious training modes, commitment and adherence to training programmes.
On the other hand, failure to offer specialized incentives such as monetary benefits and international exposure especially for potential and talented women athletes results in low performance leading to early drop-out from participation in track events.

The study has noted that it would be erroneous to assume that restrictive social prejudices and influences are social problems experienced by Kenyan women athletes only. Other studies have shown that such social barriers prevail even in industrialized countries. Since Kenyan women are socially and psychologically robust, they are capable of training and performing to the standards of female athletes in other countries.

6.3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the following:

(a) Parents should socialize young girls into athletics and other sports and support them right from their formative years;

(b) An effective sex education programme be introduced to alleviate unexpected or unwanted pregnancies among the young girls of Kenya;

(c) Programming of seminars to educate parents and community on the benefits of encouraging female participation in track events;

(d) Both, military and police institutions, of Kenya should
recruit a large number of women just like the men. In such institutions, there exists an elaborate coaching and conditioning opportunities. Such women, therefore, would be accessible to these institutional training and coaching opportunities;

(e) Residential training period be extended for Kenyan women athletic teams preparing for an international championship;

(f) The off-season following competitive athletic period be characterized by interminent training bouts so as to keep an athlete's body in good form awaiting serious training regimes;

(g) It is further recommended that investigations be carried out in the following areas:

(i) Psychosocial factors affecting female athletes of Kenya in field events in international competitions;

(ii) Effects of marital status on female athletes' performance in track events;

(iii) Role conflicts between ascribed and achieved roles amongst male athletes;

(iv) The psychological consequences of athletic participation among the female athletes of Kenya;

(v) Identification of factors that would motivate female athletes of Kenya in order to have longer lifespans and purposeful participation in athletics.
REFERENCES


Griffin, A. (1984): What is a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Profession Like This? Quest. 19:96


LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Kenyatta University,
P.E.& SPORTS DEPARTMENT,
P.O.BOX 43844,
NAIROBI.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University, conducting a study on the psychosocial factors affecting the Kenya female performance in track events. The study is a partial requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Physical Education at Kenyatta University.

The purpose of this letter is to seek your assistance in completing the attached Questionnaire. The findings will greatly assist towards the improvement of athletics performance of Kenyan women at both National and International Competitions such as the All Africa Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games.

Answering all the questions would be greatly appreciated. All Answers will be treated with strict confidence.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation

Yours Faithfully,

MBAABU SALESIO MURITHI
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

A. ATHLETES

1. From your practical experience, what do you think of the household duties and the performance of women Kenya athletes especially at the International Meetings?

2. What other related social factors do you think affect the female Kenya athletes?

3. What would be your comment regarding a woman's social (social expectations) and that of being an athlete?

4. Some sport authorities (writers) advance a notion that a woman athlete experiences a role conflict. What is your opinion?

5. Do you think early socialisation into sport of young girls of Kenya has anything to do with active participation into sport at higher levels? If yes, what would be your advice to our parents and the community at large?

6. There is a popular notion that women athletes are slimmer than non athletes. What is your opinion?

7. Do you think such a message (above) would influence a sizeable number of female athletes of Kenya away from active sport participation? - If yes, in which ways?

8. What would be your viewpoint on the fact that active sport participation improves the bodily outlook of an athlete?


   (i) In which ways do you think such talents may be tapped for further development.

   (ii) Why do you think our women athletes lag far behind in athletic (particularly if you compare to their male counterparts)?

   (iii) Why do you think majority drop out early especially during the International Meetings?

10. From your practical viewpoint, at what age do you think majority retire from active athletic career?

11. What is your general view on the performance of our women athletes especially in the track events?
12. Psychological factors found in an individual athletes are said to affect positively or negatively the performance. What is your view?

13. Some sports scholars advance an idea that active sport involvement necessitates an easier childbirth in a woman. Others advocate the contrary. From your practical point of view, which of these school of thought do you think is viable?

14. What recommendation would you make as far as the coaching of the Kenya women athletic team is concerned?

15. Given a choice which category of a coach would you recommend, a male or a female?

16. What other important information do you think would be useful to help promote our female athletic programmes here in Kenya.

B. COACHES

1. What would be your comment about the early socialisation into sports among the girls of Kenya?

2. From your practical point of view, do you think a woman's social role may conflict with that of being an athlete? If yes please comment further.

3. Do you think sport participation among women;
   (i) Improves their social acceptability?
   (ii) Improves their bodily outlook?

4. What would be your comment about the early marriages among our female athletes and their performance in athletics?

5. According to some local sports writers, majority of Kenyan women lack a staying power in their athletic career. They star for a season or two and then disappear suddenly as they had emerged. What factors would you attribute to this unexciting trend?

6. What recommendations would you make in order to help sustain more sportswomen in the mainstream of active athletic career especially at the International Levels.

7. What other information do you think is important to help develop our women athletes' athletic programme?
APPENDIX C

ATHLETES QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION ONE

To be completed by all the athletes.

Please tick (✓) against the appropriate response

1. What is your age range?

- 10-15
- 15-20
- 20-25
- 25-30
- 30 and above

2. Are you presently a student?

- Yes
- No

3. What is your highest level of education achievement?

- Primary
- Secondary
- College
- University

4. What level did you first participate in athletic competition?

- School level
- Locational level
- District level
- Provincial level
- National level

SECTION TWO

This section should be completed by athletes in sprints, middle and long distances.

5. Are you presently participating in athletics?

- Yes
- No
6. At what level are you participating?

National  
International

7. If not participating, please give reason(s)

I did not feel like continuing
I lack moral support
No answer

8. Do you think athletics is a very important sport to you?

Yes
No

9. Sports helps most people to be alert and vigorous (please tick)

Yes
No

10. Do you think you can maintain a better figure or physique by engaging in sports?

Yes
No

11. Do you enjoy participating in vigorous sports and other forms of physical activities?

Yes
No

12. Do you think being actively involved in sports will help you to become confident and at ease in your social life?

Yes
No

13. Do you think more time, space and money should be provided for athletic programmes in Kenya?

Yes
No
14. I dislike vigorous sports and other physical activities because I always become stiff and sore afterwards.

Yes
No

15. I think any woman who is in good health does not need sports participation

Yes
No

16. I would rather spectate an athletic event(s) than participate in such event(s).

Yes
No

17. I think athletic programmes are unnecessary for people who prefer to concentrate on mental and intellectual achievements.

Yes
No
Not sure

18. I think athletics should be emphasized right from primary school and be continued through secondary school for every female in Kenya.

Yes
No

19. More females would participate in athletics and sports if they had the skill to enjoy and gain satisfaction from them.

Yes
No

20. I think Government should provide more opportunities for participation in sports both at school, community and National Levels.

Yes
No

21. Do you think a nation declines spiritually and morally when it declines athletically.

Yes
No
22. Vigorous Physical activities and exercises make women too muscular.

Yes
No
No answer

23. I believe most Kenyan women and girls do not need athletics and other Physical activities because their traditional way of living enables them to become fit rapidly.

Yes
No
Not sure

24. I think a good physique or figure can be maintained by diet control without physical activity.

Yes
No

25. My social life makes me too busy to participate in sports and other physical activities.

Yes
No

26. Athletics has too many rules and regulations and the coaches and other official are often too strict.

Yes
No

27. Athletics is relevant to the females needs and experience.

Yes
No

28. Athletics does not contribute to the health of all females.

Yes
No

29. Athletic participation help the female in performing other sports

Yes
No
30. At what age did you retire from athletics participation?

15
20
25
30
35
40

31. In your opinion, do you think your parental upbringing has any relationship with your present participation in athletics?

Yes
No

32. Are your parents happy to see you participate in competitive athletics?

Yes
No

33. Are you always happy to participate in competitive athletics?

Yes
No
No answer

34. In your opinion, which of the following do you think is liked by most female Kenyan athletes?

Track and Field events
Track Events (100m-Marathon and Cross Country)
Field events

35. In your own point of view which of the following agent(s) do you think influence an individual towards or away from sports

Family
School
Peer group

36. Which of the following stages do you think primary socialisation into sport occurs

Childhood only
Childhood and adolescence
Not sure
37. Have your parents, brother(s) and sister(s) alike ever competed in athletics or other sporting competitions within and outside the District?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

38. Would you agree that active participation in sporting activities is dependent very much on parental influence?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

39. Do you think an individual's choice of sport type may directly relate to the interests of those she associate with?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]
Not sure [ ]

40. Do you think psychological and societal factors influence persons into specific type of sport involvement?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

41. Athletics programmes at both Local and National Levels cannot succeed if members of the community do not encourage and support women to participate in athletics.

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

42. Athletic programmes demand too much work from both athletes and coaches.

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

43. How would you rate athletics as a sport of interest in Kenya?

Low [ ]
Moderate [ ]
High [ ]

44. Do you think the time/period allocated for your training is enough to enable you compete effectively?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]
45. In your own opinion, which of the following socialisation agent(s) draws greater numbers of the youth into sport?

- The family and peer group
- Mass media
- No answer

46. In your own opinion, do you think parents and siblings may encourage and serve as models for drawing children into sports?

- Yes
- No

47. Do you think encouragement of parents and friends is needed in order for more females to participate in competitive athletics?

- Yes
- No

48. Do you think that the community around you encourage (approve) athletic activities for girls?

- Yes
- No

49. Do you think women who are fine athletes in Kenya today had opportunities for sport open to them when they were youngsters?

- Yes
- No

50. What reason can you attribute for:

(a) Kenya female participation in track events

- They like athletics
- They want to exploit their talents
- No answer

(b) Most Kenya female athletes early drop out from track events.

- Early marriages
- To meet societal expectations
- All the above
- No answer
51. In your own opinion, which of the following do you think has contributed to an early drop out from track events among the Kenya female athletes?

- Low attitude towards athletes
- Socialisation Process
- All the above
- No answer

52. Do you think there could be other psychosocial factors affecting the female Kenya athletes in track events?

- Yes
- No

53. Suggest how these causes to early drop out from track event can be rectified.

(a) Educate athletes on the importance of athletics
(b) Discourage early marriage and sexual practices
(c) All the above

54. How did you acquire your interest and early experience in sport activities?

(a) From Home
(b) From School

55. Would you like to participate in an oral interview on elite performance of our female athletes?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, please suggest the most convenient time and venue for you.

Time

Venue

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION
APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COACHES

Please do not write your name on the Questionnaire.

1. Were you an athlete before you trained to be a coach?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]

2. If the answer in 1 above is Yes, Which event(s) did you take part in and at what level?
   (a) Events
      Track Events [ ]
      Field Events [ ]
      No answer [ ]
   (b) Level
      District [ ]
      Provincial [ ]
      National [ ]
      International [ ]

3. What was your area of interest among the track and field events in school?
   (a) Track Events
      Sprints [ ]
      Middle Distance [ ]
      Long Distance [ ]
      Marathon and Cross Country [ ]
   (b) Field Events
      Throws [ ]
      Jumps [ ]

4. Where did you attend your highest level of coaching course?
   In Kenya [ ]
   Outside Kenya [ ]
5. Which of the following theory areas were taught in this course?

- Human Physiology
- Human Anatomy
- Physiology of Exercise
- Psychology of Sports
- Sociology of Sports
- Biomechanics/Kinesiology

6. Do you think athletic sport should be done by - - -
   (Tick if Yes)
   - Young people
   - Adult
   - Aged

7. During training sessions, do you ensure that all athletes are fully involved?
   - Yes
   - No

8. If the answer is No to question 7 above, do you think such a passive participation in the training programme affects their ultimate performance in track events?
   - Yes
   - No

9. Do you think the time/period you allocate for the training of your athletes enable them to compete effectively?
   - Yes
   - No

10. In your opinion, which of the following do you think is liked by most female Kenya athletes?

    - Athletics (track and field events)
    - Track events (100 metres-marathon and cross country)
    - Field events (think and jumps)
11. How do you assess the general trend of female Kenya athletes' participation in athletics?
   - very low
   - Average
   - Above average
   - very high

12. Do you think the parents of your athletes like to see their daughters participate in athletics?
   - Yes
   - No

13. From your practical experience, do you think the female athletes of Kenya feel strongly to keep up their athletic career?
   - Yes
   - No

14. In your opinion, do any particular obstacle(s) exist for women athletes in Kenya?
   - Yes
   - No

15. If the answer is Yes in question 17 above, what barriers/obstacles have you in mind?
   - Cultural barriers
   - National Customs/Ethics

16. Do you think the parental upbringing of Kenyan female athletes have any relationship with their performance in track events?
   - Yes
   - No

17. In your own opinion, do you think your parental upbringing has any relationship with your present participation in athletics?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

18. Do you think an individual's choice of sports type may directly relate to the interests of those he/she associates with?
   - Yes
   - No
19. What significance and importance do athletics (track events) have in the sports coaching of women as opposed to other types of sports?

- Great importance
- Moderate importance
- Little importance
- No answer (does not apply).

20. In your own opinion, are there sufficient opportunities for the top women athletes in Kenya to take part in both National and International Competitions?

- Yes
- No
- No answer

21. In your own opinion, which of the following factors do you think have contributed to an early dropout from track events among the Kenya female athletes?

- Low feelings toward competitive athletics
- Parental upbringing
- All the above
- No answer

22. What reason can you attribute for:

a) Kenya female participation in track events?

- They like athletics
- Want to exploit their talents
- No answer

b) Most Kenya Female athletes drop out early from track events because:

- Early Marriages
- To meet the societal expectations
- All the above
- No answer

23. Do you think there could be other psychosocial factors affecting the female Kenya athletes in track events?

- Yes
- No
24. Do you think the Kenya Government should put a lot of emphasis on sports for women as is currently being done?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

25. Would you like to participate in an oral interview on elite performance of our female athletes?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

If yes, please suggest the most convenient venue and time for you

Venue ___________________________

Time ___________________________