INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ON QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG SELECTED FEDERAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Poor quality of life among students influences the psychological wellbeing, which could affect their academic performance and mental health issues. There has been paucity of studies on poor quality of life, these studies focus more on the levels of poor quality of life and it negative outcome. This study was therefore designed to investigate the relationship between psychological factors (locus of control, emotion regulation) and quality of life.

A cross sectional survey design with a multistage random sampling technique was adopted for the study. The participating universities were selected with simple random sampling technique while systemic random sampling technique was used to select study participants. The sample was made up of 486 new students of three federal universities (Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Federal University of Technology Akure and University of Ibadan) in the southwest of Nigeria. Pearson r correlation and independent t-test measure were used in the analysis at $p \leq 0.05$.

It was found that significant relationship exists between emotion regulation ($r=0.13$,) and quality of life. Locus of control significantly influenced quality of life ($t_{(486)}=-4.14$,) with the internals ($\bar{x}=43.042$) exhibiting higher quality of life than the externals ($\bar{x}=37.943$).

It was concluded that students' internal locus of control should be optimized and enhanced through building of a positive mindset that will give each student capacity for positively, students' capacity to regulate their emotions should be encouraged through lifestyles that enhance emotional intelligence of students and psychological clinic that would boost students' emotion regulation should be established.

***Keywords:** Quality of Life, Locus of Control, Emotion Regulation*

INTRODUCTION

Poor quality of life among the university students is the bane of poor academic achievement over the years. This is notable with increasing suicidal thoughts, propensity to abuse substance, intense and recurrent infectious diseases, depression, mental illness, poor assimilation, low retention, low self-esteem, poor and negative self-concept and low emotional intelligence. University students are those who have left the shore of secondary school training in search of further knowledge, possibly to bolster their future.

Transiting from secondary school to the university is a period of high change as far as adolescents are concerned (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007) and it is a salient period that is filled with series of life challenges in the life of the fresh university students, because they tend to have huge autonomy and have high obligations at this period. Being in the university environment to study may be a source of psychological development for such students that would optimize their quality of life and ultimately success in their studies. This is due to the fact that they tend to meet new people, get intimated with new friends as against the old friends in the secondary schools. Being in the university also could be a period for an increase in the level of stress (Leong, Bonz, & Zachar 1997), because students tend to face different kinds of responsibilities from one lecture to another, one assignment to another, to fellowship and other meetings. Trying to meet up with some of these salient key roles demands ardent level of adjustment on the part of the students.

Quality of life is the process by which people especially students are full of their entire life in relation to enjoyment and satisfaction and how they are able to manage different challenges they faced in life within the school enviroment (Linley, Maltby, Wood, Osborne, and Hurling, 2009), being able to contain the menace of perceived stress, hopelessness and depression at a reduced rate (Miglioretti, Mazzini, Oggioni, Testa, and Monaco, 2008), psychological wellbeing (Gonzalez, Casas, and Coenders, 2007), satisfaction with life, cheerfulness, hopefulness and self-confidence (Moore, 2006) being hopeful, happy and self-satisfied (Archer, Brathwaite, and Fraser, 2005). Quality of life does not simply mean lack of mental dysfunction, but, it implies the rate at which individuals have life within their control, they indulge in meaningful and priceless activities and

enjoy positive inter-personal relations with significant others and are always auspicious about one's past life (Wielenga-Boiten, Heijenbrok-Kal and Ribbers, 2015).

Locus of control pinpoints how individuals attribute determinants of events in their life, this could determine their level of satisfaction where ever they find themselves (Türker and İnel, 2012). There is both internal and external locus of control. For the internal locus of control, there is attribution of the cause of events to their own action. Such people belief that they are the cause of whatever action they take and they tend to be assertive. Internals believe that they are responsible for consequences that are bound to come; so they have the view that all that takes place around them are within their control. They usually have a good self-concept and self-esteem; they have a good feeling of worth. Students with internal locus of control have the tendency of having good quality of life, because things do not happen to them by chance, it is as a result of their action. Therefore, they tend to take actions on the basis of having had deep and articulate thought. Students with internal locus of control are likely to be more focused, achieved, auspicious and positive in all areas of life. They are not controlled by events or circumstances around and are often in charge of whatever comes their way. Conversely, students with external locus of control tend to attribute the cause of their actions to situations around them or simply the environmental factors. Thus they tend to showcase passivity, extreme submission and excessive aggression in order to let people know that they are not the cause of their actions, thereby having a sense of irresponsibility for the consequences of event and outcome of their own action; as a result it affects the adjustment pattern of the individual (Wallston, 2005). The externals are afraid of the future, cannot take decision on their own without recourse to external influence. Often, they believed their decisions must be censored by others and they are victims of ill advised.

Emotion regulation involves being able to control emotions and feelings that are personal (Gross 1998). To be specific, it involves the ability to experience and modify different forms and intensity of the states of internal emotions and the consequent impacts on the motivation, behaviour, physiology and attention process of an individual (Eisenberg and Moris, 2002). From the perspective of processes, emotion regulation involves being able to modify and influence how and when some emotions are communicated and the form of expression of the emotion (Gross, 1998), has been recognized a crucial indicator of wellbeing and mental health for years (Gross and John, 2003; Kring and Sloan, 2010). Lazarus (1991) is of the opinion that emotions are learned and they enhance the capacity of someone to quickly process information as fast as possible by design. Therefore, the process of adjustment helps one to show acceptable reactions to conditions so as to meet up with individual needs and objectives.

Emotion regulation could also be defined as the way one's emotions can be changed so as to adopt an emotional state that is acceptable (Thompson, 2010). In spite of different points of view in literature alluding to the ability of emotion and emotional regulation to be analyzed (Thomson, Schonert-Reichl and Oberle, 2015), it is noteworthy that the process of emotion regulation can be viewed from the standpoint of being different both in theory and in operation from the process of emotion generation (Gross and Barrett, 2014). On this premise, emotion regulation is perceived as the connection simple knowledge about emotion and emotional expression that is consciously carried out. Therefore, emotional regulation enhances emotional balance. This is notable as the body is able maintain some level of temperature internally, without recourse to what obtains in the external temperature, emotion regulation thus gives one the ability to have an acceptable internal emotional state based on the external emotiona- inducing factors stimulus (Cisler, Olatunji, Feldner and Forsyth, 2010).

This study was anchored on transactional coping theory (Folkman and Lazarus, 1985) on framework for coping asserts that stressful situation and what it produces can be reconciled

through the process of coping. Therefore coping is the effort made by the cognitive and the behavioural aspects of one's life to be able to reduce, allow, manage and master the relationship environment of the person in trouble. When people get involve in things that cause them stress, they tend to get involve in primary appraisal to be able to evaluate what they have to lose in the process. In the process of primary assessment, the features of the people's personalities in terms of how committed they are cum their beliefs and other situational indicators will help them to know what are the risks involved in the problems and how to possibly adjust (Lazarus and Folkman, 1985). Part of the strategies of emotion regulation is cognitive reappraisal, that is, being able to change one's thinking pattern and mental process of life's emotional events. The strategy could be used to reduce negative thoughts and feelings thus optimizing feelings that are positive and consequently having behaviours that are adaptive in nature (Gross and John, 2003).

Monteiro, Balogun and Oratile (2014) investigated the influence of age, gender and emotion regulation on strategies of coping among university students in Botswana. The sample of 128 students was drawn randomly for this study. In terms of classification on the basis of gender, it had 64 males and 64 females, implying 50% by per gender representation. The ages of the respondents were between 18 and 29 years old. The instruments for data collection were Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale and the Coping Strategy Inventory. It was found that male students were less involved in the application of wishful thinking and problem-focused disengagement strategies than their female counterparts, but no other obvious significant gender differences was seen in relation to coping strategies. It was also found that students who have advanced in age have the proclivity to apply cognitive restructuring, emotion coping and problem-solving strategies. Further, challenges in regulation of emotion had significant prediction on emotion and problem-focused arrangement, emotion and problem-focused disengagement and strategies of coping. It was found that inability to accept emotional response had positive relationship with solving of problem, changing the thinking pattern, emotional expression, avoidance of problem, social support and wishful thinking strategies of coping.

There has been substantial studies lying credence to the fact that locus of control is vital towards having a change in behaviour and ultimately optimizes favourable health condition. Researches in relation to Studies on consciousness with relations to ability and LOC aimed at positive and inverse outcomes among students in college. The finding indicated that students who had internal locus of control were able to significantly adjust to college with regard to achievement in academic and social areas of life (Njus and Brockway, 1999; Pugliese, 1994). However, students who had external LOC had high failure, illness and withdrawal tendency (Pugliese, 1994). Therefore, locus of control impacts status of health and lifestyles without regard to gender. Further, there have been substantial studies that indicated that positive correlation exists between locus of control and health status of students (Akinsola and Awofala, 2009).

This was guided by the following hypotheses:
1. Emotion regulation will have a positive relationship with quality of life among university students.
2. Internal locus of control will significantly influence the quality of life than the external locus of control quality of life among student.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Design
The quantitative study employed a Correlational design as data was collected within a specific period of time from a homogenous population with varying characteristics. The independent variables of the study are locus of control and emotion regulation. The dependent variable of the study is quality of life.

Settings

The study was carried out in the three selected Federal Universities (Federal University of Technology Akure, Federal University of Oye Ekiti and University of Ibadan) in southwestern Nigeria. This because of the homogeneity of the universities been established by the Federal Government, and they have a common goal and standards of establishing them. There are 6 federal universities in the Southwest Nigeria, two specialized Federal Universities and four general Universities. One specialized university (Federal University Technology) was selected through random sampling technique while two General University (University of Oye Ekiti and university of Ibadan) were also randomly selected through balloting in other to have a good representation of the Federal Universities.

Participants

A total of five hundred (500) participants were drawn from three (3) Federal Universities in the southwestern, Nigeria, participated in this study. Four hundred and ninety questionnaires were retrieved. A total number of 486 correctly filled participant's questionnaires were used for the analysis. Of the total number of participants, 148 (30.5%) were from Federal University of Oye Ekiti, 149 (30.7%) were from Federal University of Technology, Akure and 189 (38.9%) were from University of Ibadan, Ibadan. The mean age of the participants is approximately 18 year with a standard deviation of 1.83. 197(40.5%) were females while 289 (59.5%) were males. 268 (55.2%) of the participants age were above 18 year, while 218 (44.9%) were below 18 years. The most dominant in the reflected religious composition of the participants was the Christian religion which was 402(82.7%) of the total participants, 83(17.1%) were of the Islamic religion. 361 (74.3%) of the participants live with both parents, 88(18.1%) live with one of the parents and 37(7.6%) live with the relatives.

Sampling Technique

Adopting the Slovin (2010) sample size determination formula, a representative sample was obtained based on the expected total number of entry (100 and Direct) level students of the selected federal Universities. Random sampling technique was used to select 3 states (Ekiti, Ondo and Oyo) out of the six states in the southwest, Nigeria, through the balloting technique. The Federal Universities in the 3 selected States were used for the survey. The Universities includes Federal University of Oye Ekiti, Federal University of Technology, and University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Based on the report of the admission offices of the three selected universities, the population of the entry level students of the University of Oye Ekiti are 3000, Federal University of Technology Akure, are 3000 while the population of the University of Ibadan is 3508. Total sample size of 500 participants was randomly selected across the three selected Universities. Systemic random sampling technique was used to select the participants of the study for each of the university, this was used using the nth term of the selected eligible participants based on their room hostel number.

Instruments
Section A: Demographic Information
This section consists of items that measure socio-demographic characteristics of the participants of the study, which include age, gender, level, religion, faculty and family structure.

Section B: Internality, Powerful Others, and Chance Scales
The Internal, Powerful Others, and Chance Scales by Levenson's (1981) was adapted for this study to be used for the measurement of control. The domain for the internal measures orientation from the internal perspective, depicting the belief in one's ability to be in control; while the Powerful Others scale is responsible for assessing external orientation implying the belief that external forces are in charge of events that transpire in one's life and on a final note, the Chance scale is

responsible for external orientation implying the unpredictability and disorderliness of the nature of the world (Levenson, 1981). The subscale is three with 8 items of I.P. and C plus a 6 point Likert scale scoring format, having -3 strongly disagree to -1 slightly disagree and +3 strongly agree to +1slightly agree. The scale had 8 items in three subscales, making a total of 24 items. The sample of the participants who attend college was 152, the value of Kuder-Richardson reliabilities were 0.77, 0.64, and 0.78 that is indicating values of scales for internality, chance and powerful others (Levenson, 1981). The test-retest reliability coefficients of the scale are shown as 66, .62 and .73 for the internality, powerful others and chance scales respectively (Lee, 1995). In order to revalidate the scale, the reliability or Cronbach alpha after pilot test for this study was 0.811.

Section C: Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale (DERS)
The Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) by Gratz and Romer (2004) was used to measures emotion regulation. It is a 36 Item with 6 subscales namely; Non-acceptance (6 item), Goal (5 items), Impulse (6 items), Awareness (6 items), Strategies (8 items), and Clarity (5 items). The scale adopts a five- point Likert response format between *almost never* to *almost always*. The high score depict higher emotion regulation problem while low scores depict lower emotion regulation problem. A Cronbach alpha of 0.9 was obtained from the study which showed an internal consistency compared with the results Cronbach alpha of 0.868 obtained from the pilot study. Items with Corrected Item-Total Correlation values below 0.30 were rephrased to depict cultural relevance.

Section D: Quality of Life Inventory
The Quality of Life Inventory developed by Frisch (1994) was used to measures quality of life. It is a 10-item self-report instrument measuring satisfaction in 10 life domains, such as health, work/school, community, and friendships. For each domain, respondents rate their/ satisfaction in each domain on a 6-point scale ranging from -3 (very dissatisfied) to +3 (very satisfied). H1igh scores depict higher quality of life while low scores depict lower quality of life. Cronbach Alpha ranges from 0.81 to 0.92. Based on results obtained from the study, a Cronbach alpha of 0.868 was obtained from the scale compared to the Cronbach alpha of 0.889 from the Pilot study. All items had Corrected Item-Total Correlation values above 0.30.

Procedure
There were 500 copies of questionnaire made available for this study and administered to the students. It is notable that 491 copies of the questionnaire were recovered from the field, denoting that response rate was 98.2%. There was attrition in the process, as 5 copies of the questionnaire were unsuitable for analysis as a result of incomplete responses. Therefore, 486 copies of the questionnaire were made available for analysis. Data was collected only from the entry level students of three selected Federal Universities within the Southwest of Nigeria.

Data Analysis
The study made use of both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data. Pearson correlation analysis was used for hypothesis 1, while independent t-test was used for hypothesis 2.

RESULTS

Hypothesis one:

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between Emotion Regulation and Quality of Life among Undergraduate Students in Southwest Nigeria

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P value
Emotion Regulation	97.92	23.54			
			486	.133**	<.05
Quality of Life					
	39.96	11.09			

Table 1 showed that the Students' quality of life has a positive relationship with emotion regulation (r=0.133, p<.05). Therefore, the result indicated that the increase in students' quality of life will increase their emotion regulation.

Hypothesis two

Table 2: Summary of independent t-test table showing that the internal locus of control will significantly influence quality of life than external locus of control among entry level university students

Locus of control	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Internal Locus of Control	239	43.042	9.943			
External Locus of Control	247	37.943	11.778	484	-4.139	<.05

The result from Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in quality of life between internal locus of control and external locus of control among entry level students [t(484)= -4.139; p<.05]. The result indicates that external locus of control was reported to have a lower level of quality of life (x̄=37.943) while Internal locus of control was reported to have higher levels of quality of life (x̄=43.042) among university students.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It was Hypothesized that emotion regulation will have a positive relationship with quality of life among university students. The result showed that there was a significant positive relationship between emotion regulation and quality of life among University students. The hypothesis was confirmed. This assertion was corroborated by the study carried out by Garnefski, Kommer, Teerds, Legertee and Onstern (2002), who postulated that the link between array of emotion regulation methods have a level of interconnectivity with emotion management and therefore in order to maintain a sustained quality of life the crucial role played by emotion regulation cannot be left unnoticed. Also, this study was consistent with the study carried out by Pascual, Conejero and Etxebarria (2016), who asserted that stress had significant relationship with coping methods of individuals and ultimately there is variation in how male and female cope with strenuous situations around them.

Furthermore, another hypothesis states that Internal locus of control will significantly influence the quality of life than the external locus of control quality of life among student. The result of this study found that internal locus of control had significant influence on quality of life than external locus of control among the students. This study was consistent with the previous studies. According to Liu, Kurita, Uchiyama, Okawa, Liu, and Ma, (2000) who posit that external locus of was a major cause of behavioural problems which bedeviled the adolescents. Also, Roddenberry and Renk, (2010) were of the opinion that external locus of control contributed to the feelings of helplessness when people are passing through excruciating pain. *Hallis and Slone (1999) found*

that subjects with external locus of control will experience greater distress. According to Härkäpää, Järvikoski and Vakkari, (1996), with external locus of control, it will be difficult for people to get adjusted easily to life after a critical life event has taken place in one's life.

Conclusion

It was shown in the study that emotion regulation as a positive relationship with quality of life among students and this implies that the more the students are able to adapt their emotion to the university life situation the better there quality of life and it will enable them have proper satisfaction in the university environment. The study also gave insight into the influence of both internal and external locus of control on quality of life of the students. It therefore becomes salient in line with the outcome of the study that internal locus of control exerts a higher significance than external locus of control, judging from their mean values. This shows further that the personal quality or features of an individual will highly impact on their quality of life than the external factors.

Recommendations

This study has made significant contributions to the body of knowledge in diverse momentous ways. Therefore, the following recommendations are made subject to the findings:

1. That the students' internal locus of control should be optimized and enhanced through building of a positive mindset that will give each student capacity, thus enhancing their quality of life especially through mentoring by their lecturer.
2. That students' capacity to regulate their emotions should be encouraged through lifestyles that enhance emotional intelligence of students.
3. Psychological clinic that would boost students' emotion regulation should be established and given preference it deserves. The clinic would be a conduit towards providing the necessary professional service to the students.

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