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SOCIAL SUPPORT AND RESILIENCE AS PREDICTORS OF QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated social support and resilience as predictors of quality of life among undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprises of 29,976 regular undergraduate students in the University as at the 2024-2025 academic sessions. The sample of the study was 397 undergraduate students selected through multi-stage sampling technique. Three instruments were used for data collection: Multi -Dimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), Resilience Scale (RS), and World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF). Simple regression analysis and multiple regression analysis were used as method of data analysis to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis. Results revealed that that Social Support and Resilience have a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Also, there is a significant relationship between social support, resilience and quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. It was recommended among others that counsellors and academic advisers should be proactive in giving personal, emotional, economic and academic support, noting significantly the different needs of male and female students. They could admonish both sexes on resilience and the need to be strong in challenging situations especially when social support and family climate are not desired proportion.

Keywords: social support, resilience, quality of life, undergraduate students

Introduction

As the world grapples with challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and mental health concerns, understanding the predictors of quality of life among undergraduate students has become very essential. University education provides opportunities for professionals as well as intellectual development. The university period of education is very critical to the development and success of the lives of students as it prepares them for a quality future. The university period is a critical phase that presents numerous challenges and opportunities for growth. University students face various stressors, including academic pressure and expectations, financial constraints and debt, social adjustments and relationships, emotional demands and mental health concerns, balancing academic and personal responsibilities, navigating campus resources and support services, exploring identity, autonomy, and independence, and preparing for future careers and responsibilities (Taylor & Stanton, 2020). They may include inadequate accommodation and poor housing conditions limited access to health care services, financial stress and difficulties affording basic needs (Okeke & Ezike, 2022). It can equally be limited access to internet and digital literacy, high levels of stress, anxiety and depression or societal expectations, cultural pressures, political and economic uncertainty (Okoye et al, 2021). These challenges can impact undergraduate students' quality of life (QOL), making it essential to prioritize quality of life during this period.

Quality of life refers to the overall well-being and satisfaction with life experienced by individuals pursuing one activity or the other. For Oladele and Adeyinka (2020) quality of life is a comprehensive concept that includes an individual's overall well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. Ferrans et al (2020) defines quality of life as a subjective experience that encompasses an individual's perception of their position in life, including their health, relationships, and personal growth. Quality of life in the context of this study is defined as living a life that is rich in purpose, joy, and fulfillment, with the resources and support to pursue one's passions and goals, and to navigate life's challenges with resilience and hope. This definition emphasizes the importance of purpose and meaning, joy and happiness, fulfillment and satisfaction, resilience and hope. It thus captures the essence of quality of life especially as it concerns undergraduate students. When it is not present then there is poor quality of life (Umennadi, 2024).

Some social determinants have been identified as critical factors affecting quality of life (Withey, & Andrews 2022). These determinants include: poverty and economic instability, lack of access to health care and health services, social isolation and loneliness, discrimination and social injustice and finally environmental pollution and poor living conditions. As social determinants, they can equally lead to poor health outcomes, and decreased overall well-being, ultimately contributing to poor quality of life which can hinder undergraduate students' progress in life.

One of the major effects of poor quality of life among students is a decreased academic performance and motivation. It can also lead to increased stress, anxiety and depression, social isolation and decreased social connections (Parker, 2021). Jenkins (2021) noted that poor quality of life among undergraduate can lead to increased symptoms of mental health disorders (depression and anxiety), decreased self-esteem, poor coping mechanisms and increased substance abuse. It could equally lead to decreased help-seeking behaviours and support networks. Umennadi, (2024) emphasized the importance of addressing poor quality of life in order to promote overall well-being and success. While informing strategies for supporting undergraduates' mental health, academic success, and career development; Dwyer (2022) highlighted the need for comprehensive support services and quality of life improvements to foster a positive university experience. There are other various factors that seems to predict quality of life among undergraduate students in the university. These factors include social support, resilience, emotional intelligence, family climate among others. But this study will focus on social support and resilience.

Social support is an important protective factor against various negative outcomes, particularly for undergraduate students in universities in pursuit of quality life. Waite (2018) defined social support as the assistance and resources provided by others, such as family, friends, and community, that help individual scope with stress, adversity and challenges. This could be provided through formal channels, such as counseling or social services, or informally, through social networks and relationships. Cherry (2023) defined social support as the emotional, informational, and tangible assistance provided by others, such as family members, friends, and colleagues that can help individuals cope with stress, adversity, and challenges, and promote their physical and mental well-being. The definitions above highlighted the idea that social support is about receiving assistance, guidance, and comfort from people around us, whether it is emotional, practical, or financial. The undergraduate students in the universities experience significant life challenges that ultimately require support of significant others such as family, friends, teachers and colleagues. This thus requires various types of social support to meet the critical need of students. Hence Umennadi (2024) stated that having a strong social support network can help individuals cope with stress, build resilience, and improve their mental and physical health.

Resilience involves the ability to absorb and manage difficult experiences, learn from them, and emerge stronger and more resourceful Michalos and Kahlke (2018) sees resilience as the capacity to absorb and recover from disruptions and to adapt and transform in response to changing circumstances. Kenny and Harte (2019) defined resilience as the ability to withstand, recover, and adapt in the face of adversity, trauma, or stress. For Folke et al (2019), resilience is the dynamic process of adaptation and transformation in response to adversity. It is the capacity of individuals,

communities, organizations, or systems to withstand, adapt, and recover from adversity, trauma, or stress. Resilience thus, is not the absence of challenges, but the ability to navigate and adapt in the face of uncertainty, risk and adversity.

A good number of researchers has attempted to understanding what predicts students' good quality of life as it has remained a very critical issue to stakeholders in education and general well-being of the nation. Ogunmakin et al (2020) conducted a study on social support and quality of life among older adults with chronic illnesses and the findings shows that social support significantly predicts quality of life among older adults with chronic illnesses. Jafaru1 et al (2019) investigated on Predictors of perceived social support, family quality of life, and resilience in pregnancy in Kebi state, the findings indicated that social support, family climate, and resilience are strong predictors of quality of life.

However, the researchers noticed at the end of the research work with respect to various empirical studies among other variables that none of the above studies explored, empirically determine the predictive value of social support, resilience, and quality of life of students in undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. It is an attempt to fill the gap in knowledge that led to the conception of this research to study social support and resilience as predictor of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State

Statement of the Problem

Quality of life deals with living a life that is rich in purpose, joy, and fulfillment with the resources and support to pursue one's passion and goals, and to navigate life's challenges with resilience and hope. For students, it involves them making necessary changes to cope with educational demands, social dynamics and the overall expectations of university education environment. The hope of government, parents, and university administrators is that students who join the university will be successfully engaged to acquire knowledge, skills, abilities and to complete their studies within a stipulated period and thus be ushered into the world of work. However, this is most often not the case as some students in higher institutions seem to be confronted with negative quality of life issues such as poor academic performance, stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem among others. This is a great source of worry. The enablers of these challenges could be as a result of overcrowded lecture halls, time management problem, financial and psychosocial problems.

Addressing poor quality of life which is a source of worry early enough through seeking support and developing effective coping strategies is very critical in mitigating these negative effects, thus fostering a more positive and successful undergraduate with holistic quality of life. A number of studies have tried to explore and ascertain some psychological variables that precipitated decline in quality of life. However, to the best

knowledge of the researchers, not much studies have been carried out by scholars on the predictive value of social support, resilience and quality of life. Hence, the study sought to examine the predictive value of social support and resilience, on quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the predictive value of social support on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of resilience on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?
3. What is the predictive value of social support and resilience on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Social support will not significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
2. Resilience will not significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
3. Social support and resilience will significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Methods

The study adopted a correlational research design. The rationale for adopting this design is to ascertain the predictive values of social support and resilience on quality of life among undergraduate students in public universities in Anambra state. The study was conducted in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The population of the study comprises of 29,976 regular undergraduate students in the fourteen (14) faculties in the University as at the 2024-2025 academic sessions (source: Director of Academic Planning, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka). The sample of the study was 397 undergraduate students selected multi-stage sampling techniques. First, simple random sampling technique was used in selecting three (3) faculties from the 14 faculties in the university, which include faculties of social sciences, education and engineering. Proportionate random sampling technique was used to draw students from the six faculties. Year three students of these three faculties formed the respondents for this study. A total of 397 respondents (230 males, 167 females) where used for the study. Three instruments were used for data collection include; Multi -Dimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), Resilience Scale (RS) and World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF). The first instrument - Multi-Dimensional Scale of

Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) was developed by Zimet et al (1988). The researcher adapted the instrument to suit the present study. The second was Resilience Scale (RS) developed by Wagner & Young (1993). The instrument was adapted by the researcher. The third instrument which is World Health Organisation Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF) was developed by World Health Organisation - BREEF (2018) and adapted by the researcher. The questionnaire contains 15 items which will solicit information on quality of life of respondents. The items will be placed on a 4-point scale of An Extreme Amount (AEA), Very Much (VM), A Little (AL) and Not At All (NAA). The range of the scores will be weighted as 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The face validity of the instrument was established by three experts; two experts from Educational foundation and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

The reliability of the instruments was not established because the instruments were already standardized with psychometric properties established and used by scholars in different geographical locations. The Resilience Scale has been used in Nigeria by Scholars such as Obikeze, et al. (2023) where the reliability index using Cronbach alpha was 0.88. The social support scale has been determined by scholars in Nigeria. For instance, Oyenihi et al. (2019) conducted a study on social support and obtained a cronbach alpha of 0.85. Also, World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire has also been used in Nigeria by Umennadi, (2024) where the reliability index using Cronbach alpha was 0.90. The researchers administered the questionnaire directly to the respondents with the help of three research assistants. The data collected were analyzed thus: simple regression analysis was used to answer research question one and two and test hypothesis one and two, while multiple regression analysis was used to answer research question three and test hypothesis three at 0.05 level of significance. The statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 25 was used for data analysis.

Results

Research Question One: What is the predictive value of social support on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis with Social Support as Predictor of Quality of Life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State (n=396)

Predictor	**Unstandardized B**	**SE**	**Standardized** β	***Remark***
(Constant)	1.19	0.16		
social support scores	0.58	0.06	0.59	Strong positive predictive value
R =0.59				
R^2 = 0.34				
Adjusted R^2 = 0.34				

The summary of simple regression analysis shown in Table 1 with social support as predictor of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State yielded a B value of 0.58 and beta weighting (β) = 0.59. The β value shows that a unit increment in social support leads to 0.58-unit increment in quality of life. The model $R^2 = 0.34$ implies that 34% of the variance in quality of life of the undergraduates is explained by social Support. These results indicate that social support has a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Research Question Two: What is the predictive value of resilience on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis with Resilience as Predictor of Quality of Life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State (n=396)

Predictor	**Unstandardized B**	**SE**	**Standardized β**	***Remark***
(Constant)	1.38	0.20		
Resilience scores	0.48	0.06	0.44	Moderate positive predictive value
R = 0.44				
$R^2 = 0.19$				
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.19$				

Table 2 showcases the summary of the simple regression analysis using resilience as a predictor of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State yielded a B value of 0.48 and beta weighting (β) = 0.44. The beta weighting (β) value of 0.44 indicates that a unit increment in resilience among the students results in a 0.44-unit increment in their quality of life. This reveals a moderate predictive value, which implies that students' resilience has moderate predictive value for their quality of life. More so, the model $R^2 = 0.19$ suggests that students' resilience scores accounted for 19% of the variance in their quality of life while 81% could be explained by other factors.

Research Question Three: What is the predictive value of social support, resilience, and family climate on quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State?

Table 3: The Multiple Regression with Social Support, Resilience, and Family Climate as Predictors of Quality of Life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State (n=396)

Predictors	***R***	***R^2***	**Adj. R**	**Remark**
Social-support Resilience Family climate	0.66	0.44	0.44	Strong Predictive value

Table 3 showcased the result of multiple regression analysis with social support, resilience, and family climate scores as predictors of quality-of-life scores of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The multiple regression model R = 0.66 and R^2 = 0.44 were obtained. The R^2reveals that jointly, the three predictors explained 44% of the variance in the quality of life of undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. These values signify that social support, resilience and family climate collectively have strong predictive value for quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: Social support will not significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Simple Regression with Social Support Scores as Predictor of Quality of Life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Predictor	**B**	**SE**	**B**	***T***	***p*-value**	**Remark**
(Constant)	1.19	0.16		8.75	0.000	
Social Support Scores	0.58	0.06	0.59	13.92	0.000	Significant

Table 4 shows that social support is a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, $\beta = 0.59$, $t = 13.92$, $p < 0.05$. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: Resilience will not significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Table 5: Test of Significance of Simple Regression with Resilience Scores as Predictor of Quality of Life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Predictor	B	SE	B	*T*	*p*-value	Remark
(Constant)	1.38	0.20		7.28	0.000	
Resilience Scores	0.58	0.06	0.44	9.65	0.000	Significant

The results showcased in Table 5 reveal that resilience is a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, $\beta = 0.44$, $t = 9.65$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Three: Social support, resilience, and family climate will not jointly and significantly predict quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Table 6: Test of Significance of Multiple Regression with Social Support, Resilience, and Family Climate as Joint Predictors of Quality of Life Among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State

Predictors	*R*	R^2	Adj. R^2	*F*	*p*-value	Remark
Social Support, Resilience, Family Climate	0.66	0.44	0.44	92.02	0.000	Significant

As indicated in the table above, social support, resilience, and family climate are significant joint predictors of the quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, $F(3, 392) = 92.02$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Summary of the Findings

Based on the data presented and analysis above, the following findings were made:

1. Results indicate that social support has a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. More so, there is a significant relationship between social support and quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
2. Resilience is revealed to have a moderate predictive value, which implies that students' resilience has moderate predictive value for their quality of life. More so, there is a significant relationship between resilience and quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
3. Results showed that Social Support and Resilience have a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. More so, there is a significant

relationship between social support, resilience and quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Conclusion

The study investigated social support, resilience, and family climate as predictors of quality of life among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that social support has a strong positive predictive value for quality of life of undergraduates; resilience has a strong predictive value for quality of life of undergraduates; and family climate has a strong positive predictive value for quality of life of undergraduates. The study further concluded that social support, resilience, and family climate jointly have a strong positive predictive effect on quality of life of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Recommendations

Drawing from the findings, the following recommendations are outlined:

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe University management should prioritize creating a supportive environment that promotes quality of life and well-being.
2. Counsellors should design and implement programmes that teach students about emotional management, stress and trauma coping strategy, social support management, and resilience edification to enhance higher quality of life.
3. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka management should initiate structured programmes that involve families in the academic journey of undergraduates in form of family orientation and workshops. This would help parents understand the economic, psychological, academic and emotional challenges confronting their wards.
4. Academic advisers should be proactive in giving personal, emotional, economic and academic support, noting significantly the different needs of male and female students.
5. Caregivers should create emotional support programs, such as gender-specific counselling or peer support groups to motivate undergraduates on social support maximization for higher quality of life and academic success.

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