PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS PREDICTING ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT OF FIRST YEAR UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study was designed to determine the extent to which emotional intelligence, social support, self-esteem and coping strategies predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates in Rivers State, Nigeria. Correlation design was adopted for the study. Seven research questions and seven corresponding hypotheses guided the conduct of the study at 0.05 alpha levels. A sample of 382 first year university undergraduates of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, 2015/2016 academic session was chosen for the study through simple and proportional stratified random sampling techniques. Five instruments namely; Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Coping Strategies Inventory and Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire - Academic subscale were used for data collection. Simple and multiple regression analyses were used for data analysis. All data were subjected to analysis using statistical package for social science (SPSS). Results showed among others that; emotional intelligence, social support, self-esteem and coping strategies taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Based on the findings, it was recommended amongst others that; university authorities should introduce personality programmes that will provide training in emotional skills that will help university undergraduates in their overall adjustment to the new university environment.*

KEYWORDS: Psychosocial, University, Undergraduates, Academic, Adjustment, Rivers State

INTRODUCTION

Though a lot of young men and women may be interested in university education unfortunately, many of them are not adequately prepared for the psychosocial realities of higher education. Year one university students are often faced with the adjustment challenges such as living apart from family and close friends, adjusting to the academic regimen, assuming responsibility for the tasks of daily living, as well as developing a new array of social relationship with coursemates, lecturers, and other significant members of the university community.

However, adjustment is a continuous process by which a person varies his/her behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself/herself and his/her environment (Aggarwal in Salami, 2011). It implies changes in our thinking and way of life to the demands of the situation. Weiten and Lloyd (2006) defined adjustment as the psychological processes through which people manage or cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life. According to Denga in Kinanee (2010), adjustment is the harmony, congruence or a goodness-of-fit between an individual and standards against he/she is adjudged.

Baker in Salami (2011) stated that there are basically four sub-scales of adjustment which include academic, social, personal – emotional as well as institutional attachment adjustment.

Academic adjustment refers to how well students deal with educational demands, such as motivation to complete academic requirement, academic effort and satisfaction with academic environment. Social adjustment refers to how well the students involve in social activities and the satisfaction with various aspects of college experience. Institutional attachment describes a student's satisfaction with the college experience in general and with the college he/she is attending in particular. Personal-emotional adjustment refers to how satisfied a student feels psychologically and physically.

The researchers' personal experience has shown that most year one students are bound to move away from home to attend higher institution of learning which may reduce contact and social support from peers, friends, family members and significant others. Also, the new university environment in which the students find themselves with new kinds of procedures and new people is capable of creating emotional and psychological problems. The first few weeks on campus could be a most lonely period. The students would need to establish new relationships which may not be achieved overnight. Living with roommates in hostels or halls of residence in the university can be very challenging problems especially when roommates are of different ethnic/cultural or religious backgrounds with different values. Learning packages and teaching methodologies, independent lifestyles, obeying university rules and regulations could also present special problems to new university students.

Salami (2011) has identified the relationship between parental support, self-esteem, stress and adjustment among first year college of education students in Ekiti State. Other previous research showed self-esteem, social support (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007; Hickman, Bartholomae, & Mckenry, 2009) and emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006; Palmer, Walls, Burgess, & Stough, 2008) as better predictors of adjustment. Perceived stress has also been shown to predict low level of adjustment to college (Friedlander, et al., 2007; Wintre & Yaffe, 2006). However, the extent to which emotional intelligence, self-esteem, social support and coping strategies taken jointly and separately predict adjustment of first year university students in Rivers State remains unclear.

Goleman (2006) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. Emotional intelligence competencies include self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness and relationship-management.

Gurung (2006) defined social support as the experience of being valued, respected, cared for, and loved by others. According to Dusselier, Dunn, Wang, Shelley and Whalen (2008), social support is known to help individuals to reduce the amount of stress experienced and to cope better in dealing with stressful life situations.

Coping has been viewed as a personal-internal (that is, intrapersonal) resource that may be mobilized in an effort to decrease, modify, or diffuse the impact of stress-generating life events and/or crisis situations (Lazarus & Folkman, in McNulty, 2014). According to Lazarus and Folkman, coping strategies have been dichotomized into problem-focused coping strategies, or making attempts to actively alter a problematic situation, and emotion-focused coping strategies, or managing emotional responses to a problematic situation. McNulty (2014) explained that the ways people cope depend on the resources that are available to them.

Rosenberg in Lee (2013) explained that self-esteem is commonly characterized as a positive or negative overall evaluation of the self. According to him, self-esteem is defined as how much

value people place on themselves. It is an evaluative part about self-knowledge. Self-esteem represents the perception and evaluation of the self rather than reflecting some objective reality (Baumeister, Campbell, Kruegar, & Vohs, 2006).

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Adeyemo (2006) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment of students transitioning from primary school to secondary school. Participants in the study were 200 fresh secondary school students randomly selected from five secondary schools in Ibadan City, Nigeria. The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire designed by Schutte, et al. (1998) was used to assess the emotional intelligence of the subjects. To assess the adjustment of the participants, section J of Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) by Akinboye (1977) was used. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to analyze the data. Results showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment.

Abdullah, Elias, Uli and Mahyuddin (2010) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (El) and university adjustment and academic achievement of 250 first year students attending various undergraduate programs at a Malaysian public university. The participants were randomly selected for the study. The study was correlational design and data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings showed that there is significant and positive relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their overall university adjustment, academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment, students' attachment, and academic achievement. Results also indicated that throughout a period of one semester, students overall adjustment and academic achievement were found to be significantly predicted by their emotional intelligence.

Omranian, Hoseinchari, Sepasian and Asaadi (2015) conducted a research to predict adolescents' adjustment based on emotional intelligence. 250 high-school students were selected randomly using cluster sampling. The instruments of the study included the Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and the Adjustment Inventory. Multiple regression analysis showed that emotional intelligence was able to significantly and positively predict the emotional, social and academic adjustment of the adolescents. Moreover, t-test analysis showed that there were significant differences in social adjustment between girls and boys.

Bang and Sim (2015) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence, stress coping, and adjustment to college life in nursing students using 227 associate nursing students in Korea. Self-report questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed by frequencies, independent t-test, ANOVA, Pearson's correlation coefficient, multiple regression using SPSS. No significant correlation was found between emotional intelligence and adjustment to college life in nursing students.

In a related study, Jung and Chung (2012) investigated the effect of self-esteem, emotional intelligence and social support on college adjustment in first year students in nursing. 270 first year nursing students were randomly selected for the study. Self-report questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics, t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression with SPSS were used for analyses of data. A positive correlation was found between college adjustment and emotional intelligence.

Ogoemeka (2013) conducted a study of emotional intelligence and life adjustment for Nigerian secondary school students in Ondo and Oyo States in south-west, using a sample of 1070 students drawn through cluster random sampling technique. The researcher collected data from the respondents by means of questionnaires– Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII) and Life Adjustment Inventory (LAI). Means, standard deviation and factor analysis were used to analyze data. Results indicated that significant differences were found between students in Ondo and Oyo States concerning emotional intelligence (EI) and life adjustment (LA). More so, senior secondary school students in Ondo did not show significant differences in emotional intelligence.

Ikechukwu (2014) studied emotional intelligence and learning styles as predictors of students' academic achievement. The participants in the study were 1269 (males = 627, females = 642) students drawn from public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria, using multi-stage sampling technique. Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), Visual, Aural, Read/Write and Kinesthetic (VARK) questionnaire, and Mathematics and English Achievement Test (MEAT) were used for collection of data. Simple and multiple regression were used for data analysis. Results showed that emotional intelligence significantly predicted academic achievement of students.

In another study, Salami (2011) examined the contribution of psychological and social factors to the prediction of adjustment to college. A total of 250 first year students from colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria, completed measures of self-esteem, emotional intelligence, stress, social support and adjustment. The participants were randomly selected for the study. Regression analysis revealed that emotional intelligence predicted adjustment among first year college of education students.

Nakhaei, Hadavi, Talebpour, Farahani and Esmaeel (2013) conducted a study aimed at investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and its dimensions with organizational entrepreneurship using 273 managers and experts of ministry of sports and youths. The subjects were drawn through simple random sampling technique. Shering's Emotional Intelligence and Margaret Hill's Organizational Entrepreneur questionnaires were used for data collection. Correlation analysis indicated that individual skills (self-awareness, self-management) are suitable predictors for organizational entrepreneurship.

A study by Otlu (2010) investigated the role of gender, acculturative stress, coping skills, cultural distance, and perceived social support in predicting college adjustment scores of international students who attend universities in Ankara. The sample of the study consisted of 170 (135 males, 135 females) volunteered international students from one private and four state universities in Ankara. A Personal Data Sheet developed by the researcher, Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students, Brief COPE, Cultural Distance Scale, and the Multidimensional Scale for Perceived Social Support were used for data collection. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived social support did not predict college adjustment scores of international students.

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Ward and Kennedy (2007) found a relationship between coping styles and adjustment. The researcher randomly drew a sample of 113 British citizens living in Singapore participated in the study. 61 of them were male and 52 of them were female. 83% of the participants reported themselves as sojourners and 15% of them as temporary residents, the other data were missing. Questionnaires for the study were sent via mail and participants responded accordingly. Data were analyzed using analysis of variance with an f-vale of 3.86 at .05 levels of significance. At the end of the study avoidant coping style (that encompassed behavioural disengagement, dermal, venturing of emotions, the ability to see the potentially positive aspects of change, and mental disengagement) resulted in poorer psychological health while using humour and active coping style facilitated psychological health.

Pooley, Cohen, O'Connor, and Taylor (2012) studied 512 participants who had experienced a traumatic stressful event in northwest Australia. Respondents were selected via purposive sampling method. Stress Inventory and COPE Inventory were used for data collection. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used for data analysis. Results revealed that individuals who engaged in emotion-focused coping had lower self-efficacy levels. Aycock (2011) studied coping styles, social support and depression in male and female college students using 654 participants drawn through convenience sampling technique. Social support questionnaire, Coping Inventory for Stressful Situation and Center for Epidemiologic studies – Depression Scale were used for data collection. Hierarchical regression and ANCOVA were used for data analysis. Results indicated that females made more use of coping styles (emotion focused and problem focused) than males.

Otlu (2010) investigated the role of gender, acculturative stress, coping skills, cultural distance, and perceived social support in predicting college adjustment scores of international students who attend universities in Ankara. The sample of the study consisted of 170 (135 males and 135 females), volunteered international students from one private and four stage universities. A personal data sheet developed by the researcher, Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students, Brief Cope, Cultural Distance Scale, and the Multidimensional Scale for Perceived Social Support was used to collect data. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze data. Results revealed that positive coping skills predicted college adjustment scores of international students. Park and Fenster (2006) studied stress related growth as predictors of recurrence and correlates with psychological adjustment in which 94 college students were selected through stratified random sampling technique. Participants completed measures of personal resources and adjustment. Six months later, they completed a second set of measures that also included questions about their most stressful experience in the past six months as well as cognitive processing, coping, and growth related to the stressor. Multiple regression analysis showed that specific coping processes (resources, appraisals, and coping activities) predicted adjustment of students.

Friedlander, Reid,Shupak and Cribbie (2007) conducted a study on joint effects of stress, social support and self-esteem on adjustment to university, using a sample of 115 first year undergraduate students drawn through purposive sampling. Data were obtained from the sample using Stress Inventory, Perceived Social Support Inventory, Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale and Adjustment Inventory. Results showed that increased global, academic, and social self-esteem predicted decreased depression and increased academic and social adjustment.

Ndukaihe, Anyaegbunam and Adetula (2014) investigated levels of study and self esteem as predictors of fear of academic success among undergraduate students. A total of 256

undergraduates was randomly selected for the study. Index of Self-Esteem (ISE) and Fear of Success Scale (FOSS) were used to collect information from the participants. A correlational design was adopted for the study. The results of regression analysis revealed that self-esteem was negatively related to fear of academic success.

Jung and Chung (2012) investigated the effects of self-esteem, emotional intelligence and social support on college adjustment in first year students in nursing. 270 first year nursing students were randomly selected for the study. Self report questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics, t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression with statistical package for social science (SPSS) were used for analysis of data. A positive correlation was found between college adjustment and self-esteem.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational design by multiple prediction design was used for the study. Kpolovie (2010) explained that multiple prediction design is a high order correlation research design that extends the least-square association principle to the study of relationship between one dependent variable and two or more independent variables. The population of this study consisted of 2,064 year one students of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, admitted into the various departments/faculties of the institution in 2015/2016 academic session (Office of the Registrar, IAUE, 2016).

A sample of 382 year one students of the institution (2015/2016 session) was selected for the study via simple and proportional stratified random sampling techniques. Five instruments were used in this study, namely; Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg in Salami, 2011), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet and Parley (1988), Coping Strategies Inventory by Tobin (2001), Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory (MEII) by Mangal and Mangal (2004), Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) by Baker and Siryk (1989). All the five instruments had earlier been validated by their originators/authors. However, to ensure validity of the instruments in the present study since they were adapted, the instruments were presented to the researcher's supervisor who ensured their face validity while two other experts in Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling vetted the items to ensure their content validity. All the corrections were incorporated before the final draft was made.

The reliability of the five instruments was established by their originators. However, for the purpose of the present study, the reliability of the five instruments was determined by the researcher through the test-retest method. The initial and the (second) retest scores were then correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The stability coefficients obtained for the four (4) sections of Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory were as follows: Intrapersonal awareness = 0.84; Interpersonal – awareness = 0.80; Intrapersonal management = 0.81, Interpersonal management= 0.79. The overall reliability of the MEII was 0.81. The stability coefficient obtained for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was 0.78. The reliability coefficient obtained for Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) was 0.80. The reliability coefficients obtained for problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping were 0.77 and 0.74 respectively. However, their overall reliability was 0.75. Finally, the reliability coefficient obtained for Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire (SACQ) (academic adjustment sub section) was 0.82. All the reliability coefficients obtained were high

enough to justify the use of the instruments for the present study. Simple and multiple regression statistics were used for data analyses at 0.05 level of significance. All data were subjected to analysis using statistical package for social science (SPSS) 17.0.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Research Question 1: To what extent do emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) taken together predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management) taken together do not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year University undergraduates.

Table 4.1: Multiple Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Competencies (Self-Management, Self-Awareness, Social-Awareness, Relationship-Management) and Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

R = 0.780
R^2 = 0.608
Adjustment R^2 = 0.114
Std. Error of Estimate = 10.993

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Sq.	F	P-Val	Result
Regression	40.883	4	40.883			
Residual	45920.803	377	120.844			
Total	45961.686	381				
				2.338	0.001	Sig.

Table 4.1 shows that R = 0.78, p<0.05. This means that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. The result is that emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management) taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. The Table (4.1) also shows that R^2 = 0.608 indicating that emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) taken together accounted for 60.8% of the variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Furthermore, Table 4.1 shows that F-ratio of F (4, 377) = 2.338, p<0.05. Hence, hypothesis one was rejected. This implies that emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Research Question 2: To what extent do emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management) taken separately significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 2: Emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) taken separately do not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.2: Relative Contribution of Each Emotional Intelligence Competency to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t Value	Sig. Levels	Result
	β	Std. Error	βeta			
Constant	43.899	2.578		17.030	0.000	
Self-awareness	0.516	0.061	0.714	3.705	0.000	Sig.
Social-awareness	0.037	0.116	0.222	1.323	0.747	Not Sig.
Self-management	0.625	0.014	0.881	5.011	0.000	Sig.
Relationship mgt.	0.166	0.115	0.486	1.443	0.150	Not Sig.

Table 4.2 shows the relative contribution of each emotional intelligence competency (self-management, self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship-management) to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Using percentage, with reference to Table 4.2, self-awareness accounted for (0.714^2 x 100) 51% of the variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates, social awareness (0.022^2 x 100) 5%, self-management (0.881^2 x 100) 77.62% and relationship management (0.486^2 x 100) 23.62%. Further analysis as seen in Table 4.2 shows that self-management ($\beta = 0.881$) has the highest contribution to the prediction of academic adjustment followed by self-awareness ($\beta = 0.714$), then relationship management ($\beta = 0.486$), and lastly by social-awareness ($\beta = 0.222$).

In order to test the corresponding null hypothesis two that each emotional intelligence competency taken separately does not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates, t-values associated with the respective beta values were used. Hence, significant t-value indicates that the relative contribution of self-awareness ($\beta = 0.714, t = 3.705, p < 0.05$) and self-management ($\beta = 0.881, t = 5.011, p < 0.05$) competencies to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates were significant at 0.05 level of significance while those of social-awareness ($\beta = 0.222, t = 1.323, p > 0.05$) and relationship management ($\beta = 0.486, t = 1.443, p > 0.05$) were not significant at 0.05 alpha level. This means that social-awareness and relationship-management are not significant contributors to academic adjustment at 0.05 alpha level.

Research Question 3: To what extent does social support predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 3: Social support does not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.3: Contribution of Social Support to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

R = 0.420 R^2 = 0.176 Adjustment R^2 = 0.227 Std. Error of Estimate = 10.996						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sq.	F	P-Val	Result
Regression Residual Total	17.891 45943.795 45961.686	1 380 381	17.891 120.905	1.148	0.000	Sig.

Table 4.3 shows that R = 0.42, p<0.05. This indicates that there is a positive relationship between social support and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Table 4.3 further shows that social support accounted for 17.6% of the variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. That is, using the value on Table 4.3, R^2 x 100 equals 0.176 x 100, which is 17.6%. Finally, the Table (4.3) shows F-ratio of F (1, 380) = 1.148, and p< 0.05. Hence, hypothesis three was rejected. This implies that social support significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Research Question 4: To what extent does self-esteem predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 4: Self-esteem does not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.4: Contribution of Self-Esteem to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

R = 0.788 R^2 = 0.621 Adjustment R^2 = 0.348 Std. Error of Estimate = 10.993						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sq.	F	P-Val	Result
Regression Residual Total	41.562 45920.124 45961.686	1 380 381	41.562 120.842	2.344	0.000	Sig.

Table 4.4 shows R = 0.788, p<0.05. This indicates that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Table 4.4 further shows that self-esteem accounted for 45.9% of the variance in academic adjustment of first

year university undergraduates. That is, using the value on Table 4.4, R^2 x 100 equals 0.621^2 x 100, which is 62.1%. Finally, the Table (4.4) shows F-ratio of F (1, 380) = 2.344, and p< 0.05. Hence, hypothesis four was rejected. This implies that self-esteem significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Research Question 5: To what extent do coping strategies (problem focused, emotion focused) taken together predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 5: Coping strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused) taken together do not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.5: Multiple Regression Analysis of Coping Strategies and Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

R = 0.544
R^2 = 0.296
Adjustment R^2 = 0.162
Std. Error of Estimate = 10.998

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sq.	F	P-Val	Result
Regression	0.589	2	0.589			
Residual	45961.097	379	120.950			
Total	45961.686	381		3.005	0.002	Sig.

Table 4.5 shows that R = 0.544, p<0.05. This indicates that there is a positive relationship between coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. The result is that coping strategies taken together predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. The Table (4.5) also shows that R^2 = 0.296 implying that coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) taken together accounted for 29.6% of the variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Furthermore, Table 4.5 shows F-ratio of F (2, 379) = 3.005, p< 0.05. Hence, hypothesis five was rejected. This implies that coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Research Question 6: To what extent does coping strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused) taken separately predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 6: Coping Strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused) taken separately do not predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.6: Relative Contribution of Each Coping Strategy to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t Value	Sig. Levels	Result
	β	Std. Error	βeta			
Constant	44.171	2.370		18.635	0.000	
Problem focused	0.427	0.052	0.625	3.056	0.001	Sig.
Emotion focused	0.201	0.018	0.243	1.187	0.852	Not Sig.

Table 4.6 shows the relative contribution of each coping strategy (problem-focused coping, emotion-focused) to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Using percentage, with reference to Table 4.6 problem-focused coping strategy accounted for (0.625^2 x 100) 39.06% of the total variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates, and emotion-focused coping strategy (0.243^2 x 100) 5.90%. In order to test the corresponding null hypothesis six that each coping strategy taken separately does not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates, t-values associated with the respective beta values were used. Hence, significant t-value indicates that the relative contribution of problem-focused coping strategy ($\beta = 0.625, t = 3.056, p < 0.05$) to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates was significant, while the reverse is the case for emotion-focused coping strategy ($\beta = 0.243, t = 1.187, p > 0.05$).

Research Question 7: To what extent do emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies and self-esteem taken jointly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates?

Hypothesis 7: Emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies, and self-esteem taken jointly do not significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

Table 4.7: Multiple Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Coping Strategies, Self-Esteem and Academic Adjustment of First Year University Undergraduates

R = 0.846
R^2 = 0.716
Adjustment R^2 = 0.575
Std. Error of Estimate = 11.029

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sq.	F	P-Val	Result
Regression	102.646	4	25.662			
Residual	45859.040	377	121.642			
Total	45961.686	381		3.211	0.000	Sig.

Table 4.7 shows that R = 0.846, p< 0.05. This indicates that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies, self-esteem and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. The result is that emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies and self-esteem taken together predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Also, the Table shows that $R^2 = 0.716$ implying that all the independent variables investigated jointly accounted for 71.6% of the variance in academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Table 4.7 further shows that F-ratio of F (4, 377) = 3.211, p< 0.05. Hence, hypothesis seven was rejected. This implies that emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies and self-esteem taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Contribution of Emotional Intelligence Competencies (Self-Management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management) to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment

The result is that emotional intelligence competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management) taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Result also indicated that there is a high positive relationship between emotional intelligence competencies and academic adjustment. More so, significant t-value indicated that the relative contributions of self-awareness (β=0.714, t= 3.705, P<0.05) and self-management (β= 0.881, t = 5.011, p<0.05) competencies to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates were significant at 0.05 level of significance while those of social awareness (β = 0.222, t = 1.323, p>0.05) and relationship management (β = 0.486, t = 1.443, p> 0.05) were not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the present study is in agreement with that of Adeyemo (2006), Abdullah, Elias, Uli and Mahyuddin (2010). However, the present finding is dissimilar with Bang and Sim (2012) who found no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment to college life in nursing students. The divergent results for the present and past studies may be attributed to many reasons.

Contribution of Social Support to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment

The result is that social support significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Result also indicated that there is a low positive relationship between the predictor and criterion variables. This present finding agrees with Salami (2011), Friedlander, et al. (2007), and Cutrona, et al. (2007). However, findings that disagree with the present one were found by Ward and Kennedy (2007), and Otlu (2010).

Contribution of Self-Esteem to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment

The result is that, self-esteem predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Result also indicated that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic adjustment. This present finding lends credence to Friedlander, et al. (2007), Salami (2011), and Jung and Chung (2012). However, the present finding is in disagreement with Ndukaihe, et al. (2014).

Contributions of Coping Strategies (Problem-Focused and Emotion Focused) to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment

The result is that coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Result also indicated that there is a moderate positive relationship between coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) and academic adjustment. More so, significant t-value indicated that the relative contribution of problem-focused strategy ($\beta = 0.625$, t $=\beta = 0.625$, t $= 3.056$, p<0.05) to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates was significant at 0.05 level of significant while that of emotion-focused strategy ($\beta = 0.243, t = 1.187, p > 0.05$) was not significant at 0.05 alpha level. The finding of the present study is in agreement with Abdullah, et al. (2010), Pooley, et al. (2012), Park and Fenster (2006), and Otlu (2010). However, the present finding is dissimilar with Nader (2006).

Joint Contribution of Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Coping Strategies and Self-Esteem to the Prediction of Academic Adjustment

The result is that emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies and self-esteem taken together significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. Result also indicated that there is a high positive relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies, self-esteem and academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. None of the literature reviewed investigated the joint contribution of emotional intelligence, social support, coping strategies and self-esteem to the prediction of academic adjustment of university undergraduates however, this present finding agrees partly with Friedlander et al. (2007), Salami (2011) and, Bang and Sim (2015).

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of this study:

1. Emotional intelligence competencies (self-awareness, relationship-management, self-management and social-awareness) significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. But on individual basis, self-awareness and self-management are significant contributors to academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates while social-awareness and relationship-management are not significant at 0.05 alpha level.

2. Social support is a significant contributor to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates at 0.05 alpha level.

3. Self-esteem is a significant contributor to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates at 0.05 alpha level.

4. Coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) significantly predict academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates. However, on individual basis, problem-focused coping strategy is a significant contributor to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates, while emotion-focused coping strategy is not significant at 0.05 alpha level.

5. Self-esteem is the highest statistically significant contributor to the prediction of academic adjustment of first year university undergraduates followed by emotional intelligence, then coping strategies, and lastly by social support.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. University authorities should introduce personality development programmes that will provide training in emotional skills that will help university undergraduates in their overall adjustment to the new university environment.

2. University undergraduates should develop a greater awareness and understanding of significant and key people that can assist them cope effectively with challenges encountered in their new university environment.

3. University undergraduates should always have positive evaluation of themselves.

4. University undergraduates should learn effective ways of coping with stressful situations which they encounter in their new university environment. Effective coping strategies will help university undergraduates' adjustment to their new environment.

5. University undergraduates should make efforts to understand who they are, in terms of their abilities, strengths, aptitude, limitations and weaknesses.

6. University undergraduates should endeavour to tackle the challenges associated with their new university environment headlong rather than manage the emotional aspect of the stress.

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