

Influence of Self-Concept On Psychological Adjustment and Mental Health Status of Undergraduate Students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State

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Abstract:

The study examined influence of self-concept on psychological adjustment and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State. This study was a descriptive cross-sectional design which employed quantitative survey. The study population comprised of all undergraduate students aged of 16-24 from the Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 315 undergraduate students that participated in the study. A research instrument was used to collect data on patterns of psychosocial adjustment of students, self-concept and mental health status. The face and content validity of the instruments were determined by experts in Nursing Science and Tests & Measurement. The instrument was said to have facial relevance and concerned with the subject matter, it claimed to measure. The reliability of the instrument was analysed using Cronbach Alpha. A co-efficient value of 0.812 was obtained. The responses obtained were collated and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that there was moderate level of pattern of psychosocial adjustment by students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. In addition, there was influence of self-concept on the psychosocial and mental

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health of Adekunle Ajasin University students. It was recommended among others that there should be increased awareness of self-concept among the students through seminar, workshop, and symposium.

Keywords: Self-Concept, Psychological Adjustment, Mental Health, Undergraduate,

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Introduction

In the modern society, life is becoming very complex and conflicting day by day. One of the major challenges facing these technologically advanced societies is the need to adjust to various and sometimes conflicting social systems such as the family, friendships networks, works or school groups. Adjustment has been defined in various ways by psychologists to mean a process of maintaining harmonious relationship between a living organisms and its environment (Raju & Rahamtulla, 2007).

Ugodulunwa and Anakwe (2012), described adjustment process as a way in which the individual attempt to deal with stress, tension, conflicts and meet his or her needs while making an effort at the same time to maintain a harmonious relationship with the environment. This implies that the individual and the environment are the two important factors in adjustment (Ugodunlunwa & Anakwe, 2012). Psychosocial adjustment can be referred to as the ability to cope, to manage emotions and behave in socially appropriate and responsible way to meet up with challenges and responsibilities (Gladstone & Beardslee, 2019). This implies that adjustment involves coping ability of physiological and emotional components to meets up the social demands of the environment.

The level of understanding, views and belief of adolescence goes a long way to assists them on their psychological and social adjustment at any facet of life. Many mental health problems emerge in late childhood and early adolescence, recent studies have identified mental health problems, in particular depression, as the largest cause of the burden of disease among young people (WHO, 2015)

However, most basic task for one's mental, emotional and social health, which begins in infancy and continues until one dies, is the construction of his/her positive self-concept (Dudovitz, Li, & Chung, 2013). The beliefs and evaluations people hold about themselves determine who they are, what they can do and what they can become. These powerful, inner influences provide an internal guiding mechanism, steering and nurturing individuals through life, and governing their behaviour. People's concepts and feelings about themselves are generally labelled as their self-concept and self-esteem (Dudovitz, Li, & Chung, 2013).

The age of early adolescence is the critical age of the development of self-concept and it changes the concept of "self" profoundly (Maner & Park, 2018). On the course of development and self-actualization, every person actively begins to differentiate himself from others so as to perceive the differences between his/her experience which are part of his performance and others' experiences. Positive self-concept is not only seen as a basic feature of mental health, but also as a protective factor that contributes to better health and positive social behaviour through its role as a buffer against the impact of negative influences. It is seen to actively promote healthy functioning as reflected in life aspects such as achievements, success, satisfaction, and the ability to cope with diseases like cancer and heart disease.

Conversely, an unstable self-concept and poor self-esteem can play a critical role in the development of an array of mental disorders and social problems, such as depression, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, anxiety, violence, substance abuse and high-risk behaviours. However, despite this observation, there are sparse and inadequate information on the influence of self - concept on psychosocial adjustment and mental health status of undergraduate students in Nigeria context.



The study therefore examined influence of self-concept on psychological adjustment and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State. The study specifically:

- i. examined the pattern of psychosocial adjustment of undergraduate students;
- ii. determined the mental health status of undergraduate students; and
- iii. examined the relationship between the level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study

1. What is the pattern of psychosocial adjustment of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko?
2. What is the mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University?

Research Hypothesis

This null hypothesis was formulated for the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Methodology

This study was a descriptive cross-sectional design which employed quantitative survey to assess the influence of self-concept on psychosocial adjustment and mental health status of undergraduates in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. The study population comprised of all undergraduate students aged of 16-24 from the Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 315 undergraduate students that participated in the study.

A research instrument was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was made up of four sections. Section A addressed the socio demographic information of the respondents, Section B contained items on patterns of psychosocial adjustment of students while Section C contained items that measures self-concept and Section D contained items that measures mental health status.

The face and content validity of the instruments were determined by experts in Nursing Science and Tests & Measurement. The instrument was said to have facial relevance and concerned with the subject matter, it claimed to measure. The reliability of the instrument was analysed using Cronbach Alpha. A co-efficient value of 0.812 was obtained which was considered high enough to make the instrument reliable. The responses obtained were collated and analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages and graphs while the hypothesis postulated was subjected to inferential statistics of Chi-square analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the pattern of psychosocial adjustment of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko?



Figure 1

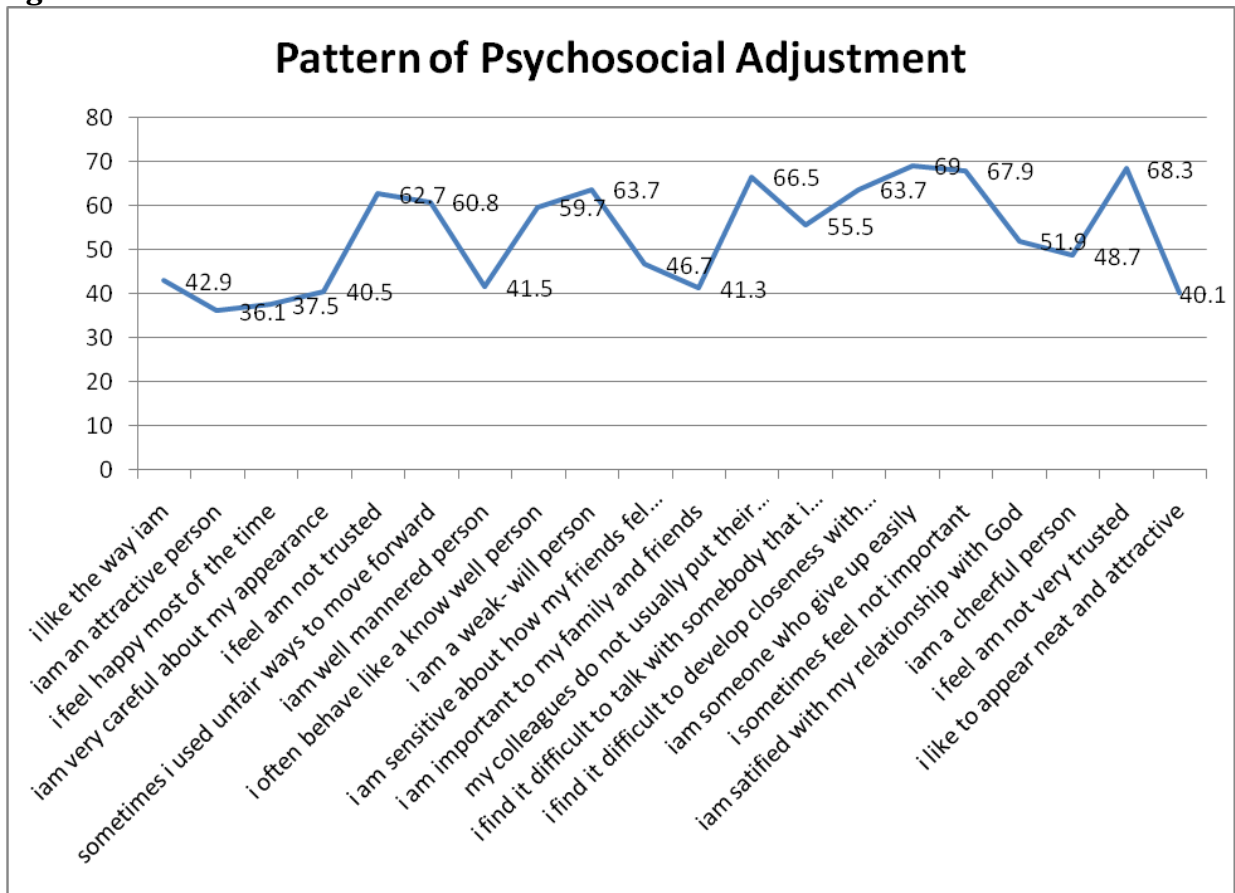


Figure 1 show that the students experienced moderate level of psychosocial adjustment in the school. From the table, apart from items 1, 4, 5 7, 8, 9,12,13,14,15,16 &18 with high percentage, indicating high level of psychosocial adjustment on those behavioural items, all the other items in the table were rated moderate as their percentage responses ranges between low and high. However, the overall percentage indicates moderate level of psychosocial adjustment among university students in Adekunle Ajasin University.

Research Question 2: What is the mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University?

Table 1: Mental Health Status of undergraduate students

No of Variables/Mental Health Queries	N	Expected Score on Mental Health	Observed Score on mental Health	Percentage/Status	Remark
20	315	31500	21567	68.5%	Moderate

Table 1 shows that the mental health status of selected undergraduate students was 68.5% as observed score on mental health was compared with expected score on mental

health. It was deduced from the above that the mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University is moderate.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko

Table 2: Chi-square analysis of level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4353.218 ^a	504	.000
Likelihood Ratio	1544.854	504	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.341	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	315		

Table 2 shows the results of Chi-Square analysis of the influence of self-concept on psychological adjustment of undergraduates. The results in the table 2 shows that the influence of self-concept on psychosocial adjustment of undergraduates was statistically significant as $\chi^2 = 4353.218$; $p < 0.05$. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between the level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Discussion

The findings of the study show that there was moderate level of pattern of psychosocial adjustment by students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. It implies that quite a good number of students are a bit stable and will not allow whatever distractions in the social environment to interfere with their personal and interpersonal relationships in the school. The students were able to achieve some level of equilibrium in order to achieve healthy outcomes in school. One explanation in favour of this could be that, varied factors may be associated with psychosocial adjustment of the individual in the environment. If the youngsters have a number of psychosocial factors operating in their favour, there is high tendency for them achieving stability in the environment allowing healthy outcomes to be attained.

However, the result further show that a small number of the students in University experienced low level of psychosocial adjustment. This is very true in situations, where the students experience an imbalance in their personal and interpersonal relationships and interaction with the environment. This can go a long way in interfering with the achievement of healthy outcomes that will enable the students keep or maintain a healthy living and make life worthwhile. This can simply be summed up in the explanation that the students may be lacking in proper social integration into the whole school system. This is supported by the



view of Arslan (2009) that, lack of social integration, which includes informal friendship, support groups, participation in extra-curricular activities, contact with administration, social networks, and so on increases chances of poor psychosocial adjustment.

The results further showed that mental health status of selected undergraduate students was moderate (68.5%). The result of Chi-Square analysis revealed that significant relationship existed between the level of self – concept and mental health status of undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Conclusions

Premised on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that there was moderate level of pattern of psychosocial adjustment by students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. In addition, there was influence of self-concept on the psychosocial and mental health of Adekunle Ajasin University students.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be increased awareness of self- concept among the students through seminar, workshop, and symposium.
2. Government or school authorities should employ psychology nurses that will work among the students.

Contribution to Knowledge

This work contributed to knowledge by making information available on the influence of self- concept on psychosocial and mental health status of undergraduate students. It is therefore expected that the information generated from this research would be essential in the higher institution.

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